A professional is **motivated**. Our personal example of self-motivation should serve as a standard for others to emulate.

A professional is **team oriented**. How often is the Super Bowl, the World Series, or another sports finale won singlehandedly? The answer is "never."

A professional is **self-reliant**. A refrain often heard "No one told me to do it, so I didn't." We simply must be accountable for our actions. A true professional will take the initiative and go beyond what is expected.

A professional is **focused**. There is a time to be playful and a time to be serious. Active participation is another trait of professionalism.

A professional is **enthusiastic**. Enthusiasm is contagious. Get involved! Volunteer for committees/clubs, become a mentor, request new and ever more challenging assignments.

A professional is **confident**. What are your known fears and weaknesses? Once you have identified them, seek measures to eliminate or at least improve them. Growth really does occur when you venture out of the comfort zone.

A professional is **introspective**. Simply put, we learn from our own mistakes and the mistakes of others. It brings to mind the old quote, "Experience is a hard teacher--it gives the test first." Self-examination and constant improvement are ongoing trademarks of the professional.

A professional is **open-minded**. The close-minded person is already left behind.

A professional has a **positive attitude**. This is possibly the greatest of all attributes. We can all think of someone who exhibits a positive attitude on a daily basis. We can think of many others that do not. We tend to remember those on each end of the spectrum. Which do you wish to be known as?

A professional is **prideful**.

A professional is **honest**. Honesty is a trait that simply cannot be compromised. Lying and cheating are not desirable attributes in any profession.

A professional is **supportive**. At one time or another, each of us needs a nudge or possibly a helping hand. A supporter always fares better than a detractor. Take time to help your fellow brother or sister; it will pay huge dividends down the road.

A professional is **educated**.

A professional is **opportunistic**. When opportunity knocks, we must be ready to open the door. This opportunity often involves change. Usually, we humans are wary of change. We crave the norm, the constant, what we are comfortable with. Opportunists will not only seek change, they will embrace it. A professional will always challenge the norm and seek a better way.

A professional is **proud**. These individuals walk with an air of confidence. They are proud to be a part of the organization and not afraid to show it. Their appearance overflows into their personal as well as professional lives.

A professional is **dedicated**. A willingness to always do the right thing is admirable. True professional dedication does not waver from day to day.

A professional is **disciplined**. It is imperative that we learn self-discipline and keep our tongues in check. If you can't walk the walk and talk the talk, then others will not respect you. It is extremely important to display a high degree of self control.

A professional is **loyal**. One must always remain true to the team. Remaining steadfast, in good times and bad times, to the organization is a hallmark of the professional.

So how do you measure up? Are you a true professional?