

## **The Four Way Test Presentation Speech**

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[Greetings Prime Minister Said Musa, Hon. Dean Barrow, Rotarians,  
members of the media, and guests]

Mark Twain said, “Always do right. This will gratify some people, and  
astonish the rest.”

As corporate scandals –Enron, Qwest Communications, Tyco, American  
International Group and too many others– continue to break around the  
world, ethics in business and professions has become a global hot-topic.

Rotary International is ahead in the discussion by several decades through  
the introduction of our Four Way Test of the things we think, say, or do:

**Is it the truth?**

**Is it fair to all concerned?**

**Will it build goodwill and better friendships?**

**Will it be beneficial to all concerned?**

Created by Rotarian Herbert J Taylor in 1932 and adopted by Rotary International in 1943, the Four Way Test, a 24-word test of business ethics, has since been translated into more than a hundred languages.

We Rotarians are meant to ask ourselves these four Test questions as a guideline to making the proper decisions. Are the four questions infallible? No. Do we make the best decisions 100% of the times we ask them? No, not if we're human. Do they enable us to focus our thoughts more clearly and guide us to the most positive outcome for all? Yes, absolutely. Can these questions be applied to decisions outside of business? Most emphatically, yes.

As we bring the ethics discussion to Belize, there is no doubt in anyone's mind that it is necessary for some kind of guideline or test to be introduced. The line between right and wrong seems to have blurred for many people in our society, and we note that the subject of ethics, when it is taught in schools, is rarely taught in any form below the tertiary level. We humbly submit that it should be introduced earlier, and our intention therefore is to begin by introducing our Four Way Test into primary and secondary schools, in the hope of sparking a debate on right and wrong from which the next generation can benefit.

Our experience as leaders in our professions has taught all of us that leadership carries certain responsibilities. Through our actions as leaders, we set examples for those who wish to follow us, and whether those examples are good or bad, they will be followed. In fact, the bad ones are more likely to be followed, aren't they? In view of this, we decided to launch our project by presenting the Four Way Test to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, and ask both of you, as the nation's leaders, to use it to set the right example as you work with your teams to determine Belize's future.

For all of us present here today, it is important to keep in mind that while it is easy for us to quote the Four Way Test, and present posters to schoolchildren, it's only by living up to the spirit of the Test that we can truly make a difference to the next generation. It is only by setting a positive example that we can expect positive outcomes. Let each and every one of us follow Mark Twain's advice, and gratify and astonish people by always doing what's right.

Now, I hereby present these framed copies of the Four Way Test to the Prime Minister, Honourable Said Musa and Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Dean Barrow, and ask each of you, gentlemen, to say a few words in support.

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**Dated: October 20, 2004**

**Presented by: Alberto Young – President of the Rotary Club of Belize**