

Chapter Three

Leadership

Skills

Notes

Leadership is a topic that piques our interest, especially as we try to translate principles from the business world to ministry settings. One of the challenges we encounter is modifying business-world leadership concepts into ministry settings based on the servant leadership model. We learn about servant leadership as we watch Jesus wash the disciples' feet. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12 about our various gifts and how they form the Body of Christ.

Leadership is more about who we are rather than what we do. Bible stories of great leaders remind us that their success was not based on having the right information as much as being in a place where they heard God speak and were willing to obey. For instance, reading how Nehemiah listened to and obeyed God gives us some good leadership principles:

1. A leader demonstrates genuine compassion and love for the people she leads—a desire to see them experience God's very best. This compassion is what brought Nehemiah into leadership. He saw his people's needs and was moved by love to do something about them (Neh. 1:1-4).
2. A leader doesn't act before she has spent time alone with God in prayer. Nehemiah's first response was a time of mourning, fasting, and prayer before God (Neh. 1:4).
3. A leader is willing and able to overcome fear and take risks for the sake of the vision. Nehemiah was afraid to speak to the king on behalf of his people, but he did it anyway (Neh. 2:2-3).
4. A leader knows and accepts the fact that when she attempts anything significant, she will face opposition and negative people. As soon as Nehemiah finished his presentation to the king, two of the king's officials criticized it (Neh. 2:10).
5. A leader does her homework, studies the situation, evaluates possible solutions, and is careful and timely about communication. Nehemiah scoped out the project before he started talking publicly about it. He timed his communication carefully (Neh. 2:11-18).¹

¹ Jeren Rowell, "Careful, Your Leadership Is Showing," *The Communicator*, Nazarene Publishing House: Kansas City, July 2001.

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While we can learn many other leadership principles from Nehemiah, remember that Nehemiah never became self-conscious about his leadership. He apparently wasn't so much trying to be a leader as he was simply trying to be faithful in fulfilling the passionate vision that God gave him to be an agent of restoration among his people.

Leadership Is a Process

Leadership is a process rather than a position. Consider this acrostic, developed by Kerrie Palmer, which defines a leader.

L— **Led by God and leads His people.** It is awesome to realize that God trusts us with the privilege of leading His people. When we see leadership as a God-given privilege, we're less apprehensive, knowing God is holding our hands.

E— **Enabled and energized by God.** Jesus promised power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and enables you to be His witnesses in your world (Acts 1:8). Your leadership in Women's Ministries is part of your world. The main purpose of Women's Ministries is to proclaim the Gospel message to the women of your world. Although ministries and methods may vary, the message is the same. All ministries are intended to draw people to Christ, for He commissioned you to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching them (Matt. 28: 19-20).

A— **Aspiring to accomplish God's will.** Romans 12 is a leadership textbook in itself, explaining how to lead in God's will. First, a leader offers herself to God as *a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, which is really a spiritual act of worship*. This is a conscious decision that does not automatically happen. Once you have committed all of yourself to God, your next step is to be continually transformed by the renewing of your mind. Through this act and process, you will be able to discern God's will for you and your ministry, *His good and pleasing and perfect will* (Rom. 12:1-2).

The renewing of your mind occurs as you communicate with God in prayer and through His Word. Inspired

by the Holy Spirit, cast a vision and establish a purpose and a mission for the ministry to which God has called you. An effective leader has a vision; vision energizes every effort and provides the force that pushes through obstacles. With vision, the leader has a mission and a contagious spirit. When she has these in place, the team comes alongside her to fulfill God's purpose and mission for ministry.

D—

Developing leaders. Leadership is a spiritual gift that Paul says we need to exercise with diligence (Rom. 12:8). Eugene Peterson in *The Message* explains that a leader leads without manipulation—which is maneuvering or using people for her own purposes. John Maxwell links his definition of leadership (influence) with the responsibility of leadership (people development). He asks, “How do we who influence others truly motivate and develop them? People tend to become what the most important people in their lives think they will become.”

Leaders are developed as we affirm and encourage each member of the leadership team. As your team players observe your diligent leadership, they will follow your example and become good leaders themselves.

E—

Enlisting and equipping a team. Each member is part of the Body of Christ. *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully* (Rom. 12:4-8). Each gift should be represented in your ministry team. A leader may have several of these gifts, but God does not expect you to do the full ministry alone.

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The analogy of the body is a beautiful picture of God's design for ministry. If women are given the opportunity to use their gifts, the Body will be complete. A leader prayerfully considers her council and, with the proper approval, enlists women on the team.

R—

Reproducing herself, releasing the ministry. . . . *That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way (Eph. 1:19-23).* The analogy of the body to the Body of Christ appropriately describes the Women's Ministries Council. Christ is the Head; and we are a part of the Body. We are important in fulfilling what the body was created to do.

Max DePree in *Leadership Is an Art* writes, "The art of leadership is liberating people to do what is required of them in the most humane way possible. Thus, the leader is the servant of his followers in that he removes the obstacles that prevent them from doing their jobs. In short, the true leader enables followers to realize their full potential."²

Characteristics of a Leader

In the book, *Managing People Is like Herding Cats* by Warren Bennis, these traits were identified as common to all effective leaders.

- 1. Self-knowledge.** Knowing who you are and recognizing and using your talents is a basic ingredient for good leadership. When we understand our gifts, we can form a powerful leadership team by surrounding ourselves with individuals possessing other strengths.
- 2. Open to feedback.** Although at times feedback may be difficult to hear and accept, choosing honest and caring people who will provide feedback will help us to grow.

² Max DePree, *Leadership Is An Art*, (New York: Dell Publishing, 1989), p. xx.

- 3. Eager to learn and improve.** Asking questions and listening to answers are key characteristics of good leaders. Many leaders are open to change and eager to learn new methods and strategies.
- 4. Curious risk takers.** While it almost sounds like an oxymoron, taking curious risk reflects the adventurous nature of leaders. Good leaders look for ways to challenge the routine and then develop plans before taking risks.
- 5. Focus on tasks.** Persistence is a quality that leaders possess. They are able to concentrate on the tasks at hand.
- 6. Learn from adversity.** Great leaders frequently endure setbacks. They use the setbacks to learn about themselves, other people, the organization, and relationships.
- 7. Balance tradition and change.** Good leaders recognize the value of tradition while recognizing the need for change. They have developed skills that allow them to integrate tradition while making change.
- 8. Work within the system.** Good leaders soon realize it is impossible to accomplish the task alone. They work with the system to cope with problems and challenges, and they rely on others to help them achieve goals.
- 9. Serve as models and mentors.** Good leaders understand the necessity of having “leaders-in-training.” They feel a sense of accomplishment as they watch new people move into leadership roles.³

Leadership will also include challenges, situations that test our abilities, and opportunities to work with different personality types. As we lead, we may need to occasionally return to this list to remind us of the traits that are characteristic of strong leaders. At other times, this list may remind us of traits we, as leaders, need to continue to develop and strengthen.

Ideas regarding leadership have changed dramatically in recent years. Rather than the leader being the driving force for a ministry, current leadership models have moved from a team concept to a more fluid style. No longer is the leader “in charge” giving direction, dreaming the dreams, and formulating the vision alone. The leader communicates the purpose and mission of the ministry to others, including those involved in the ministry and church leaders. She also implements methods to accomplish the purpose and mission, develops the leadership potential in others, and facilitates change and transition.

Building relationships is a vital aspect of leadership. People want to

³ Warren Bennis, *Managing People Is like Herding Cats*, (Provo: Executive Excellence Publishing, 1997).

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know that the leader is a “real” person—that she has faced and survived challenges and failures. Authenticity is a key characteristic of today’s leader. A great leader understands the importance of being authentic in relationships. She develops her self-understanding, interpersonal skills, intuition, and communication skills. She develops others through team building, mentoring, coaching, and networking.

Today’s effective leader knows the importance of being a life-long learner. She capitalizes on learning opportunities within her networks. She adapts skills and insights from other organizations to her ministry setting.

An effective leader knows the importance of listening. She works to develop the skill of active listening in conversation. She listens to identify gifts, talents, and passions and then assists individuals as they develop and use them to build God’s Kingdom.

Foundations of Leadership

Leadership takes time to develop and involves time for others to recognize leadership skills. According to John Maxwell in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, seven key areas are found in leaders.

- 1. Character.** Leadership begins as you develop your inner self, enabling others to see your character. Character is necessary for trust, and trust makes leadership possible.
- 2. Relationships.** Leaders have followers. Relationships make it easier for people to follow. The deeper the relationships with followers and those involved in the ministry, the easier it is for them to follow.
- 3. Knowledge.** The leader must comprehend the ministry potential, the ministry needs, and a vision for the future.
- 4. Intuition.** As important as knowledge is, leadership requires more than raw data. A leader can communicate passion for the present and vision for new ministry strategies.
- 5. Experience.** A leader needs experience to demonstrate abilities. It is possible for the experience to be in a related, but transferable, field. Experience is not a guarantee, but it encourages people to give you opportunities to show your abilities.
- 6. Past success.** Proven experiences show what you’ve accomplished. Additionally, each success is another example of leadership ability.
- 7. Ability.** People will follow as long as you demonstrate the ability to lead. When people no longer believe in your abilities, they will stop following you. ⁴

⁴ John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers), 1998.

Leaders view life experiences from a leadership perspective. Some are born with this ability while others develop it. This may be described as the ability to grasp intangible factors, understand the factors, and work with them to accomplish ministry goals. This involves the ability to read the situation by capturing the details others miss. Understanding the context of the bigger picture and observing trends are other elements of this ability. Good leaders learn to read themselves as well as others. Reading themselves includes knowing their strengths, skills, and weaknesses. This enables leaders to develop a leadership team that complements them.

Key Functions of a Leader

A leader is a busy person; and the position is rarely under your control. You may face conflict between council members, stress as all the ministries vie for available meeting space, financial problems as an event goes over budget, ... the list is endless. In *Empowered Leaders*, Hans Finzel identifies some key functions of a leader. These functions can keep you focused on your responsibilities.⁵

- 1. Cultivate the vision.** The leader cultivates the vision cast by leaders within Women's Ministries. It is important to remember that women involved in determining the vision are more willing to work to achieve it. The leader helps articulate the vision.
- 2. Create a clear organization.** The structure of Women's Ministries may remain essentially untouched through leadership transitions; however, a new director may add or shift ministry emphases. A key element of any organization is putting the correct person with the right task.
- 3. Choose the right team.** Women on the council play an important role in determining your level of success. Each woman has unique gifts, talents, and abilities. As we've emphasized before, make certain your council mirrors the women in the congregation.
- 4. Change the culture.** Culture is defined as the shared values and behaviors that knit a community together. Understand the unwritten values and norms of your community and congregation.
- 5. Coach the team.** Since a leader is only as good as her team, you must guide and empower the team. Each member brings specific strengths and weaknesses that complement the ministry and create a synergy for effective leadership.
- 6. Care for the troops.** Caring for the members of the

⁵ Hans Finzel, *Empowered Leaders*, (Nashville: Word Publishing), 1998

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council and leadership team involves providing resources and opportunities for growth and development. Time and money invested in these women will yield returns.

7. Curing the problems. Part of the director's responsibility is to solve problems and resolve challenges. Part of this process is to teach and enfranchise council members to address the situation on their own. Risky? Perhaps, but remember you must clearly state the amount of freedom council members have to make decisions.

8. Check on progress. Humans tend to do what is inspected more than what is expected. Develop a system to help track the progress of ministries, programs, events, and other delegated responsibilities.

A leader's job often seems endless. Responsibility starts and stops with the leader. Leadership is a complex set of gifts, skills, experience, respect, emotional strength, discipline, vision, and developing a leadership team.

Leadership Gifts

Do not assume that only women with the gift of administration are spiritually equipped for leadership. Leaders often lead through other areas of giftedness.

A woman with a gift of teaching may lead a Bible study. A woman with a gift of mercy may lead a support group by creating a safe atmosphere. A mercy-gifted woman may also organize food and clothing drives for the needy or set up a soup kitchen. A woman with a gift of exhortation may motivate others through her ability to challenge and encourage them to love and do good works. An evangelist may lead women to be more committed and trained in witnessing to the unchurched.

Discovering and Developing Gifts

A baby may be born with good intelligence but show a significant lag in mental development from living in an environment where learning is not stimulated. So, a Christian may have an aptitude for ministry (a spiritual gift) that has not been encouraged to grow. Spiritual gifts need to be discovered and developed.

A number of tools are available to help Christians discover their spiritual gifts. Many books on spiritual gifts are available for study. Ask your pastor for recommendations.

Do not overlook secular sources for learning how to express spiritual gifts with greater effectiveness. Teachers can learn to teach better by taking classes in teaching methods. Speakers can learn to speak more effec-

tively by taking courses in communication. Leaders can become more capable by attending seminars on management, administration, and leadership skills. Also, consider both Christian and secular books as resources for growth. Finding a mentor with the same gifts is another wonderful learning opportunity.

Knowing a woman's gifts and plugging her into a ministry where she can express them builds her sense of significance, competency, and contribution to the church. Encouraging a woman to serve as she is gifted lessens burn out. It is easy to become weary in well-doing when a woman is working outside her area of expertise and effectiveness. But we are more energetic in our tasks when we're doing something that we love and that comes naturally.

Taking a woman's gifts into consideration can save leaders the headache of placing square pegs in round holes and the need to dislodge them. Just placing a woman in leadership without considering her skills may lead to a difficult situation when a woman is incompetent in a position she wants to hold because she perceives it as prestigious.

Ultimately, the greatest advantage of taking a woman's spiritual gifts seriously is to use these gifts as God intended—for His glory and the Church's good.

Working with Volunteers ⁶

Almost all ministries of the church require lay or volunteer participation. Motivating, recruiting, and retaining volunteers requires thoughtful preparation, and continued effort. According to Leslie Parrott in *Motivating Volunteers in the Local Church*, "The first step in motivating potential volunteers is to understand and appreciate their personal values and priorities."⁷ Before deciding to volunteer, church members must first learn about the need and determine the importance of the need. Then they must decide whether or not to volunteer to serve.

The decision to volunteer is easier when the church atmosphere is positive and the congregation is happy. Positive church experiences create an environment that fosters volunteerism. On the other hand, many people do not volunteer because they are afraid. "And fear in the mind of a potential volunteer turns to apathy."⁸

Make certain you carefully explain the task you are asking a volunteer to do. A clear challenge produces more volunteers than an ambiguous one. Choose jobs to fit volunteers, carefully give instructions, establish specific deadlines, and insist on quality work. When volunteers see their work as significant, and when it gives them opportunities for personal growth, they continue serving. "Repetitive work without significance fosters a high dropout rate among volunteers."⁹

⁶ This section on volunteers is adapted from materials written by Anita Greening in completion of the requirements for a degree in Management and Human Relations from MidAmerica Nazarene University.

⁷ Leslie Parrot, *Motivating Volunteers in the Local Church*, (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1991), p. 27.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

Notes**Natural Abilities, Talents, and Spiritual Gifts**

“Real ministry takes place when perceived needs are strategically matched by the person who has the gift to meet that need. The matching of needs to the gifts of people is essential for meaningful ministry to take place.”¹⁰ How can we effectively match jobs to volunteers and volunteers to ministries? One method is to search for natural helpers. While we give and receive help from time to time, some people see helping as a more central activity than others. These people are sometimes called natural helpers. They willingly make themselves available to meet needs in organizations they're part of, their families, neighborhoods, or workplaces. They have the type of personal skills, similar to those of helping professionals, which make them particularly effective problem solvers. Some natural helpers hold positions of leadership, but many prefer to work behind the scenes.¹¹

John Ed Mathison, author of *Every Member in Ministry*, suggests that an attitude of ownership is extremely important in motivating volunteers. When lay people prayerfully consider their own gifts, and then match them to a particular ministry, they have ownership of the decision. When volunteers have ownership of a commitment, they are more likely to follow through on it.

To match jobs and volunteers, use a short questionnaire that asks participants for specifics about willingness, the ability to serve, and the type of service they enjoy. Volunteers and ministry opportunities can be matched as you identify what the volunteer feels she is especially well-equipped to do and the situations in which she feels comfortable.¹²

Effective caring people will reflect a spiritual aliveness in how they meet life, and how they respond to, empathize with, and relate to others. Empathy, familiarity, ownership, and personal preferences all help determine volunteers' involvement in the ministries of the church. Yet we should ask volunteers to serve based on their God-given spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are given to build up the church (I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4). People's gifts should match the committee or function where the gifts are most likely to be used.

“Church leadership is mostly a matter of letting spiritual gifts do their ministry.”¹³ Unfortunately, many people do not know what their gifts are or how to discover them. Many believers have never been told about God's gifts for the benefit of the church, nor have they ever recognized or identified spiritual gifts in themselves or in others. When lay people are “talked into” a ministry, they often leave it. Then we end up recruiting people for the same positions over and over again. When God calls people into ministry, they often find new meaning and purpose in their lives; and they enjoy a God-given ministry.

¹⁰ John Ed Mathison, *Every Member in Ministry*, (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1988), p. 21.

¹¹ Diana S. Garland and Diane L. Pancoast, *The Church's Ministry with Families*, (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1990), p. 67.

¹² Howard W. Stone, *The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 99.

¹³ Brian Kelley Bauknight, *Body Building: Creating a Ministry Team Through Spiritual Gifts*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996). P. 17.

When looking for a church, most people seem to want an atmosphere they describe as friendly, spiritual, and accepting. Gareth Weldon Icenogle writes, "We are hungry to be with others. Our spirits cry out to be known by another, to be loved by another, to be affirmed by another."¹⁴ According to Garland and Pancoast, authors of *The Church's Ministry with Families*, people are not able to form meaningful social networks in large-scale, fast-paced, impersonal settings.

God has called us to be in Christian community. Community is a gift from God; and by God's power and grace, it is a human responsibility. The universal community of faith takes form in local congregations as they are called to share life together in ways bearing witness to God's love and mercy. Studies show that when people join a church, if they are not involved in a group or ministry within six months, 50 percent of them will become inactive. The best way to avoid inactives is to involve every member in meaningful ministry.

Although most lay volunteers have strong biblical, theological, and spiritual reasons for volunteering, they are still human beings who will eventually stop to examine the returns on their voluntary efforts. This is a human reaction. Volunteers expect material benefits, social approval, honor, or a sense of well-being from doing a good job. From the negative aspect, volunteering releases them from the guilt that they "should be helping."

Training Volunteers

All volunteers should be trained before actually being placed in some ministry function. Proper training gives them confidence in their ability to perform the ministry effectively. As lay people are recruited and trained, we must help them learn to support, encourage, and grow from one another. Training workshops, seminars, retreats, lectures, and discussion groups all can nurture and enable lay leaders. But training alone is not adequate. In too many programs, people are trained well, and then they are left on their own to sustain their ministry. Without some form of continued support, natural helpers can lose their effectiveness.

Women's Ministries, along with the other ministries and programs, must use volunteers to reach our goals. These volunteers must feel ownership of the areas in which they are involved. Without this ownership, they tend to lose interest, burn out, become discouraged, and quit. To avoid losing volunteers and lay leaders, publicly and privately acknowledge their roles in the success of the ministry or program. Women's Ministries, regardless of church size, requires many individuals to reach its potential.

¹⁴ Gareth Weldon Icenogle, *Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), p. 27.

Notes How to Approach a Potential Volunteer

Many leaders shy away from inviting people to volunteer because they are never quite sure how to ask in the best way. It is not difficult—but it does require forethought and a belief that what you are asking the volunteer to do is worthwhile.

These phrases *do not* belong in your invitation to a potential volunteer:

“I know you’re busy, but. . .”

“Would you mind doing a little thing for our program?”

“We’re desperate for new people to help us. We really need you to say yes.”

“Could you at all possibly do this?”

“We can’t find anybody else to do it. . .”

Here are some simple, clear phrases that do belong in an invitation to a potential volunteer:

“We are looking for someone with real gifts in this area for this responsibility.”

“Do you have interests in this area?”

“How can we help you contribute some of your many talents to Women’s Ministries?”

“I’ve observed that you seem to be gifted in this area.”

When issuing an invitation, never apologize. For example: “I can guess that you are too busy to help us, but I’d like to ask anyway. . .” By apologizing, you communicate the thought that the potential volunteers have something more important to do or that what you are asking them to do is not worthwhile. Make your invitation to the volunteers positive, simple, and straightforward.

Here are three things volunteers want to know:

1. Is it meaningful? Does it fulfill God’s plan? Will I have a sense of significance?
2. Will I have authority and structure? What is the chain of command? Will I have the freedom to get things done?
3. What about training? Will someone help me learn to do what I’ve been asked to do?

Remember to care for the individuals you ask to volunteer, whether they accept or decline your request. God’s love can reach through your willingness to listen, support, and understand those with whom you minister. Your willingness to form a relationship with the volunteers and to appreciate their work and family situations may strengthen and empower them for future, transforming service.¹⁵

¹⁵ Adapted with permission from Sue Nilson.

Delegating Responsibilities

An effective leader enfranchises her team members so they can effectively complete their responsibilities. She also recognizes that people want to accomplish their goals in a way that reflects their personalities and styles. However, some responsibilities are reserved for the Women's Ministries director:

1. **Be responsible for communications with the church leadership.** As the leader of Women's Ministries, you need to meet with the leadership to ensure that your volunteers have a clear understanding of the Women's Ministries goals and how they fit into the picture for the entire church. Keep the leadership informed. I'm convinced that you can't give too much information.
2. **Be responsible for communications with the Women's Ministries Leadership Team.** Volunteer leaders need to know they are valued. Keeping them informed is part of that. Remember all communications involve giving and receiving information. If the leader doesn't listen to others, communications with the leadership team will usually cease.
3. **Be involved with the promotional process.** It isn't necessary for the director to develop all promotional materials. However, be involved in the process so you can be certain that the materials are quality.
4. **Be involved in selecting new team members.** Take time to get to know those interested in joining the team. Without limiting involvement, maintain a congenial team.
5. **Be sure to follow up**—whether it's details for events or garnering information for new attendees. Make sure follow-up occurs without making those responsible feel as if you are monitoring them.
6. **Express appreciation to your leadership team.** Volunteers need to receive personal notes and calls as well as hearing words of praise in public meetings.
7. **Keep informed of the finances.** The leader is responsible to maintain the budget and make necessary adjustments.
8. **Address problems promptly.** Remember the buck stops with the Women's Ministries leader. Resolve issues quickly and with love.¹⁶

Resolving Conflicts

Whenever individuals work together to create a ministry or to achieve a common goal, conflicts occur. Based on *The Peacemaker* by Ken Sande, here are five ways to resolve conflicts:¹⁷

- 1) The first way is to **overlook the offence**. Some dis-

¹⁶ Adapted from Women's Ministries, Issue # 131, Thursday, August 15, 2002. <http://www.womensministry.net>

¹⁷ Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker*, (Grand Rapids: Baker), 1997.

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putes are insignificant and, therefore, are easily resolved when we quietly and deliberately overlook the offence and forgive the person who wronged us. An example is when someone makes flippant remarks that offend you.

- 2) **Discussion** uses confession or loving confrontation to resolve the conflict. In this method of reconciliation, individuals talk about the circumstances that led to the conflict, the role each played, and what they can do to resolve the issue. Discussion involves naming the problem, identifying your role in the conflict, using “I” statements, and accepting the role each party played.
- 3) Some **negotiation** is necessary. Typically, negotiation issues involve money, property, or other rights. In negotiations, the parties seek to reach a settlement that satisfies the legitimate needs of all involved. Negotiations attempt to make the conflict a win/win situation—that is, both of you get some things while you compromise on others.
- 4) If negotiation doesn't result in solution, the next step is **mediation**. One or two people are asked to meet with the individuals to help them communicate more effectively and explore possible solutions. The mediator's role is to ask questions and to give advice, rather than forcing a certain solution.
- 5) The final step is **arbitration**. This involves appointing one or more people to listen to the arguments and settle the matter with a binding decision. Typically, this is done in business and legal circumstances.

Perhaps you haven't considered using negotiations, mediation, or arbitration to resolve conflicts. More than likely, you've used some form of negotiations without recognizing the process. For instance, mediation may have occurred as you discussed problems with mutual friends. Their insights may have caused you to resolve the conflict without recognizing the process.

At some point, conflict may develop among members of the leadership team and you may be asked to serve as a referee. Finzel suggested a step before you accept the role of referee—ask those involved to talk about the problem with resolution as the goal. Finzel recommends the following guidelines.

1. **Mediate rather than judge.** Encourage those involved in the conflict to solve the problem and let them determine how to accomplish it.
 2. **Give it time.** Give all sides adequate time to express their positions and understand the other person's perspective instead
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of hurrying to end the conflict.

3. Don't accuse or lay blame. Keep people focused on the goal—finding a resolution. Emphasize *what* is right rather than *who* is right.

4. Gain admissions—and forgiveness—of mistakes. Let people gracefully admit to shortcomings. Remember some of the hardest, but most powerful, words are, “I was wrong.”

5. Find grounds for cooperation. Create ways for those involved in the conflict to work together for a common goal.¹⁸

When you are involved in a conflict, ask yourself, “What results do I want?” Honestly answering this question will direct the approach you take.

Remember that anger and differences of opinions are part of daily life. It's how you cope with and react to these differences that matters. Anger is an emotion, a feeling, with nothing good or bad about it; therefore, even as Christians, we will become angry and experience conflict. However, our Christian experience should help us handle the situations effectively and peacefully.

¹⁸ Finzel, p. 81

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