



Leadership Training for Leaders Inside and Outside the Church

“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman



Today's Scripture References

Psalm 32:2

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Proverbs 1:19

Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.

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The TCL E-Leadership Resource Is Manipulation Slowing You Down?

In the last issue of TCL E-Leadership we focused on some reasons why it takes so long for godly vision to spread. We deferred the reference to vision that was impacted by bad behavior. In this issue we will explore one specific element of bad behavior, and that is manipulation. In fact finding this element in leadership can mess up a lot more than the vision. It damages relationships and leaves a lasting impact.

There are two distinct approaches in development and implementation. They are:

1. Godly strategic planning
2. Manipulation

Do you know the difference between the two approaches? The first one is hard to define but almost everyone can affirm when it is taking place. When you leave those meetings you are confident of the results of the meeting and have a general sense that the Holy Spirit was involved. When you leave meetings that have contained manipulation, people leave unsure of the outcome and leave without the confidence of each other's affirmation.

In my last 2 seminars I asked each group to raise their hands if they were ever manipulated. Everyone raised their hands! I then asked how many of them knew they were being manipulated when it was occurring. 80% of them raised their hands again!! I believe most of you that read this will agree. What is certainly amazing is that the people who use manipulation actually think that those they manipulate don't know they are being manipulated.

So how do you know if you are a user of manipulation? There are always two components present if you are manipulating.

1. A form of deceit
2. You are a benefactor

Deceit comes in many fashions. Most of the time you find deceit in the delivery of information. It is not a lie; it is just not the whole truth. It is not showing all the expenses, it is hiding them on a bunch of pages. It is not telling a story about a person, it is holding back a portion of the story.

The other element is whether or not you are a significant benefactor of the vision or actions being considered. Sometimes how you benefit is overt and everyone can see it. But sometimes it is covert and only you know. Either way the plans don't feel right, it is hard to get any traction and some wonder why. There is always a few in the group that know exactly why, and that is because there is manipulation taking place.

Now please don't be anxious that you cannot plan anything that you might benefit from because you might be accused of manipulation. A key requirement in manipulation is that deceit AND personal gain are BOTH present. A simple self test is all you need. Ask yourself if you are presenting the information in a complete and truthful light and ask yourself if you are going to be a benefactor. If you find a potential problem with the information just clean it up. If you are going to benefit from it then spell that out so everyone understands and offer to talk about it openly.

Do you believe a righteous end justifies its means? A righteous end can really draw us into manipulating things. Friends, don't do it. Over the long run it will always be what it was in the beginning ... sin. Take note that every manipulator can deny being one. Deceit is so subtle and motive is hidden in ones heart. But just because it cannot be proved does not make it any less a reality, sinful and detrimental to the organization.

Try talking about this at your next meeting. Commit to eradicating this tool from your methodology. You never know ... it might speed things up!

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