

Handbook for Spiritual Leadership Training

Preparing for Change, Risk & Making Decisions

SL Coach Trainer's Guide for Long Distance Learning:

Week/Session 3 – Making Decisions

Resources:

- Article in *SpiritualLed.com*, *Preparing for Change, Assessing Risk and Making Decisions* – article on *SpiritualLead.com*
- *Handouts for Discussion – Session 3 (PDF)*
- *Power Point – Session 3 (PDF or slides)*

Before the Training: Read or review, *Fundamentals of Preparing for Change, Assessing Risk & Making Decisions* with particular focus on the portions addressing decision making. Also, read the decision making portion from the section, *Scriptural Principles of Preparing for Change, Assessing Risk & Making Decisions* and then complete the DiscussionHandout questions before this session. Also, finish the article by reading *Practice, Hints and Helps in Preparing for Change, Assessing Risk & Making Decisions*; the last section in the article.

Purpose of the Session: There are many ways to reach a decision in a team environment. There are also hazards in decision making.

Begin: Pray with your SL Learner. Ask,

What were some “ahah”s that came out of your reading?

What specific area in the reading was either confusing or you didn't understand?



Discussion Exercise #1 How's the Weather?

The SL Learner has completed a Decision Making Climate Assessment Worksheet. As a coach your task should not be to help solve climate issues. Your role as a coach is simply to make sure the Learner has gained the insight and understanding to make assessments and decisions from the worksheet.

Questions for Conversation

Describe the decision making environment you chose as your frame of reference.

What climate categories did you rate above at 7 or above?

For each climate category at 7 or above, ask, *What are some examples of situations or circumstances in that category that contribute to a positive decision making environment?*

For each climate category score below 7, ask, *What is happening that is keeping you and your team from an optimum decision making environment?*

After reading the article and filling out this Climate Worksheet, what specific actions do you now see you can you take to improve the decision making environment in your teams?

Decision Making Climate of Our Team	Evaluation (1-10)
FUNDAMENTALS	
• <u>Foundation of Trust</u>	
▪ <u>Trustworthy</u> I trust my spiritual leader to always address decision making in a Godly, upright manner.	
▪ <u>Safe Place</u> I feel this is an environment where tension and differing views are respected and sought out for perspective.	
▪ <u>Meaningful Work</u> I feel the decisions we make are at the vital core of the heart of this ministry.	
▪ <u>Trustworthy Acts</u> I can trust any key ministry leader with making a good decision affecting me even in my absence.	
• <u>Equanimity</u> There is a strong sense of unity in purpose, even when we disagree on individual issues.	
• <u>Diversity</u>	
▪ <u>Team Player</u> There is a good mix of collaborator, contributor, challenger, communicator in our team.	
▪ <u>Conflict/Engagement</u> There is a good mix of competitor, collaborator, accommodator, compromiser and avoider.	
▪ <u>Communication</u> There is a good mix of feeler, thinker, intuitor and sensor.	
▪ <u>Spiritual Gifts</u> There is a good mix of spiritual gifting.	
▪ <u>Experience in Group Processes</u> All of our team members have extensive experience in processing decision making and tolerating tension.	

Decision Making Climate of Our Team	Average Evaluation
ESSENTIALS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Openness</u> I feel I can express my thoughts and ideas and my team members are interested in hearing them. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Emotionally Healthy, Mature</u> My ministry team is not dominated by individual emotional baggage. 	
MIRY BOGS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Over-Spiritualization</u> We have a healthy and relevant balance of the practical and the spiritual dimensions for making decisions. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Authoritative/Autocratic</u> I do not feel we operate in an environment that is dominated by the wishes and will of my spiritual leader. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hidden Agendas</u> Whatever needs to get discussed gets discussed without the feeling of ulterior motives. 	
Total Score (Maximum score 150 points)	

Questions:

What categories above did I score 7 or ABOVE?	What am I/are we doing that contributes to that score?

What categories above did I BELOW 7?	What am I/are we doing that contributes to that score?

Discussion Exercise #2 Methods for Making Decisions

Scenario: *This is the scenario for the Learner.* After several months of discussion, your ministry team has reached a point where you need to determine if it is time to start the process to build a bible school. After having gone through a Change Meeting and a bible school with a permanent physical location is agreed, in principle, to be a necessity, the leadership team had a risk assessment meeting to consider all the risks. The leadership team is now ready to make a decision whether the need, the risks and the rewards line up for a “go” decision. In this exercise you will have to assume the change and risk meetings have already taken place. In doing this exercise, you are free to include what you think are the foreign element(s) and the risk issues as you go through a decision making process.

Exercise: The Learner has completed three worksheets for this scenario. Your job is to help the Learner discover the pros and cons of using each decision making tool. Review the worksheets the Learner did not use and engage in conversation with the three they specifically made examples of.

Other Experiences – Ask the Learner to describe if they have experienced any similar situations. If so, have them describe what was decided and the outcome of the decision. Discuss the importance of a network either by email, personal contacts, blogs, search engines, etc. where the leader is able to keep abreast of what is happening in their environment.

Pareto’s Principle – Try to define the “20% factors”—those items, issues, or people that have the greatest potential to affect 80% probability of a successful outcome. Decision making is not getting 100% of all the information necessary to make a decision. It’s simply knowing how important the influence of that information is on your decision.

Vote – Voting may or may not be binding. A non-binding vote is a good way to start determining the prevailing opinions of the team. If someone has an opinion diverse from that of the rest of the group, ask him to explain so that previously undiscovered ideas or concerns can be brought to light. Be careful of voting though because it causes people to get stuck. Non binding voting allows the leader to hear from the team in a simple way and to help discern, in a sense, what’s God’s intention here?

Force Field Analysis – This helps get a sense of perspective. How much are forces pushing against us, how much are they pushing with us. It may be a single person or entity could be a decision killer or maker simply because of its weight in outcome.

Decision Tree – Some decisions are complex with a large number of variables. A decision tree can help sort them out. The best way to work a decision tree is to start with what you now know. What is the first decision you need to make? Write it down. Then put two branches off of the first decision: Yes and No. If the answer you are about to make is yes, what is the result? Are there decisions that branch from the yes result? Keep working those out. Then go over to the no. What are the consequences of no? Do those require decisions? If so, what are the consequences of a yes and a no for each of those? Building a decision tree gives you the best information for a contingency plan and builds in considerable flexibility to any decision making process.

Brainstorming – The creative form of problem solving and making decisions works best in the early stages and pulls the non-obvious ideas out of team members. Here are a few rules if you plan to use it.

- No criticism, evaluation, judgment, or defense of ideas during the brainstorming session.
- No limit on "wild" ideas, no matter how outrageous or impractical they seem. Every idea is to be expressed.
- Quantity is more desirable than quality.
- "Piggybacking"—building on ideas—is encouraged.
- Everyone must be encouraged to participate.
- Record all ideas, i.e., on a piece of flipchart paper.
- Choose "Top 5 Ideas." Combine similar ideas when appropriate.
- Individually rank ideas.
- Decide, as a group, which idea will be enacted first.
- Begin the brainstorming process again as necessary.

The leader's most important role in brainstorming is to preventing participants from grading ideas and assuring that the team works for creativity. Most teams are so accustomed to solving problems in a linear, task-focused format that the leader may have to work hard to keep the ideas (including wild ones) flowing.

"What If?" Scenarios – The best way to prepare for a decision is to begin asking the leadership team, What if we decided to do nothing? What would be the gain, what would be the loss? What is compelling us to do anything at all?

The next line of questioning asks, What if we decide to postpone this decision? Why would we do that? What would be the gain? What would be the loss by waiting? Why do we have to make any decision right now?

Then on the flip side of that, What if we decide to go forward as a result of this meeting? What would be the costs, risks, gain and loss? Why do we have to make this decision right now and begin implementing?

Discussion Exercise #3 Stopping the Runaway Train

Have your SL Learner describe how they can stop a runaway train whose decision making process is flawed or incomplete. Briefly discuss each of the Errors.

Error of Preemptive Conclusion How can you reach a timely decision yet not just take the first option going by?

Error of Confirmation Bias How can you ask questions and press for deeper thinking on a major decision with being tagged as either negative, resistant or a nit picker?

Error of Information Cascade What is the best way to make sure your team isn't just seeing the simple or easy answer because all the information seems to be pointing that way?

Error of Consensus How do you avoid falling into the consensus trap?

Error of Social Comparison How do you help the youngest or newest or least credentialed team member from discounting their own views and ideas?

Error of Spiritual Presumption How do you find the balance between seeking the mind of God and seeing God in the mind of you and other team members?

Error of Talkativeness How do you keep decision making meetings from dragging on until the wee small hours of the morning?

Error of Abdication If your team leader seems to be playing it safe when it comes to a tough decision, how do you encourage him or her to follow through on their role as a leader?

Discussion Exercise #4 Going to the Source

Question for Conversation

Describe a time when you fasted and prayed and God gave you a clear direction or answer to your question.

Wrap Up

Ask, “For you personally, how and where does prayer, fasting and solitude enter into the decision making process?” Be sure and pray with the Learner as you conclude this coaching topic.

Ask if there is anything you can agree in prayer for.

Remind the SL Learner to fill out the SL Learner Training Assessment and email to their Area Director.

Fill out the SL Coach Training Assessment electronically and email to ronkuest@spirituallead.com.

Conclude with prayer.