

MINISTRY

5

THIS COURSE IS A COMPILATION OF THREE SECTIONS: (A) TEAM DYNAMICS, (B) SAVED TO SERVE, AND (C) HOW TO MAKE TEAM DECISION. THE STUDENT WILL LEARN WHY GOD PUTS PEOPLE TOGETHER IN TEAMS TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL, AND HOW WE CAN BECOME TEAM PLAYERS IN THAT PROCESS.

TEAM MINISTRY

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SERVANT LEADERS

MENTOR GUIDE



Servant Leaders RESOURCE

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Credits

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TEAM MINISTRY

Description:

This course is a compilation of three sections: (a) Team Dynamics, (b) Saved to Serve, and (c) How To Make Team Decision. The student will learn why God puts people together in teams to accomplish His will, and how we can become team players in that process.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to...

- Understand God's reasoning and design for ministry in teams.
- Articulate the 4 components of a team and how to achieve them.
- Explain how the entire church functions off the concept of teams.
- Understand his personal role in the church by evaluating (a) his personality, (b) his talents, (c) his spiritual gifts, and (d) his passions.
- Articulate the 4 methods of team decision-making (command, consult, congress and consensus) with an understanding of when and how to use each method.
- Employ the 5-finger method of reaching consensus.

Learning Inputs:

1. Attendance of course lectures
2. Completion of assigned reading

Outcome Activities:

1. Complete Homework Assignments
2. Complete Final Project



TEAM DYNAMICS

I. INTRODUCTION: TEAM LEADERSHIP - WHOSE IDEA IS IT ANYWAY? PSALM 133

UNITY, or working together in a covenant relationship, brings the blessing and power of God to our efforts. Living in unity brings a certain pleasure and satisfaction to man, versus going it alone. This coming together in diversity is something that is attractive to all who are looking on. It not only looks good, but gives off what this passage refers to as a strong, pleasing scent. This unity gives opportunity to demonstrate the spiritual truths of the very essence of the gospel: grace, mercy and, of course, love.

God has ordained teams throughout biblical history to accomplish His will. It is important to understand what a team is and how it is to function to best accomplish His work.

- Proverbs 27:17
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
- Luke 10:1-7
- John 17:20-23

II. TEAM DEFINED

A **COMMITTED** and **ORGANIZED** group of people who **NEED EACH OTHER** to accomplish a **COMMON PURPOSE**.

III. 4 KEY COMPONENTS OF A TEAM (ABBREVIATED)

There are 4 key components of a team. In short, they are:

A. COMMITMENT:

The act of uniting yourself to a group of people to accomplish a specific vision.

B. ORGANIZATION:

Team members are formed into a structured and efficient union.

C. INTERDEPENDENCE:

Team members work in synergy. They are stronger together than they are apart.

D. COMMON PURPOSE:

Each team member understands and takes ownership for the successful completion of the team goals and vision.



IV. COMPONENT #1: COMMITMENT

Commitment - Is defined as the act of binding yourself to a group of people to accomplish a specific vision

A. What am I committing to?

1. Vision
2. The Team

1. Committed to the VISION:

Each member can see clearly where the team desires to go and is committed to getting there together. A vision is **“A clear and challenging picture of the future.”** Aubrey Malphurs

*“The **Vision** is clear when those who are part of the ministry understand it well enough to articulate it to someone else.”* Aubrey Malphurs

2. Committed to the TEAM:

As a member of my team I am committed to building strong relationships that sustain our unity. I am committed to use my gift, talents and resources to assure the success of the members in the fulfillment of the team's vision.

“Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.” Vince Lombardi

B. Two ingredients that help produce and maintain commitment

The two ingredients that help produce and maintain trust are

- (1) vulnerability-based TRUST, and
- (2) Team COVENANT.

1. Vulnerability-based Trust

Trust is demonstrated when you show others on the team that you are willing to risk vulnerability by letting them into your thoughts, desires, struggles, dreams and fears.

Trust is... *“the reliance or confidence that a person or group will meet our expectations. When people fail to meet our expectations, trust is broken and disappointment results, making it more difficult to trust in the future. As a result, trust is hard to acquire and very easy to lose.”* Jay Desko

a) **Faith** and **Risk** are key to building Trust

1. **Faith** that my team will meet my expectations.
2. **Risk** that they will not let you down.



"When your people trust you, they dig deeper, listen better, and forgive more readily. When trust is low, there is more resistance, more fear, and communication doesn't work as well (because people don't believe each other)." Joshua Freedman

- b) **Our Goal** is to build trust that leads to and maintains strong **commitment** to others. We do this by meeting the expectations of others in 4 key areas.

1. **Communication**
2. **Character**
3. **Concern**
4. **Competence**

1. **Communication:**

Open and constant communication becomes crucial to building and maintaining trust amongst team members. The team should be a place where everyone feels safe to share thoughts and feelings without fear of rejections or judgement.

"Team members must communicate more openly than they normally would in everyday life. There must be honesty on all ends of the team, since withholding the truth could damage the team's integrity. Team members should always share information and feelings between each other. This allows for total trust between the team members." Alan Bass

2. **Character:**

My team members can trust in someone whose life is lived with both CONVICTION and CONSISTENCY regardless of the situation I am in or where I find myself. It is demonstrated in...

- a. The actions you take to carry out the values, ethics and morals you believe in. You are living by conviction, acting upon what has been established as important or truthful in your heart.
- b. By "consistency", we mean that that there is "... consistency between what you say you will do and what you actually do". www.characterunlimited.com

Destroyers of character are dishonesty and lack of consistency. Each member must speak the truth and do so in love at all times. When lies are shared or truth distorted, trust is broken. If members do not fulfill their obligations or do not fulfill their word to other teammates, trust is broken.

Proverbs 12:22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who work diligently are His delight.

Numbers 30:2 If a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.



3. **Concern:**

It builds trust when others see we are interested in them. True concern from my team manifests itself in time spent, resources spent, effort spent in their lives.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4

4. **Competence:**

As we meet the expectations by demonstrating competence we grow trust or we lose it by incompetence.

a. The greater the perceived COMPETENCY the greater the TRUST.

b. We frustrate people when we set them up for incompetence, placing them in roles where they lack ability and giftedness.

2. **Team Covenant**

The second ingredient that helps build and maintain trust is Team Covenant.

"A covenant is a binding agreement between two or more parties that involves the exchange of strengths for weaknesses." David Maxwell

Living in a deep relationship with my team will yield amazing fruit but at the same time require a lot of work to create and maintain. To live in covenant with my team means that I am committed to them as people first, not as tools or resources to accomplish a goal or a vision. Living in covenant means that their well being and flourishing is priority over my own.

Ingredients of a Covenant Relationship 1 Samuel 18:3-4

1. **PROVISION** - My resources, gifts and talent will be used for your benefit.

2. **PROTECTION** - Your challenges and enemies are now mine as well.

3. **PERSONHOOD** - You are my second person, I will seek to help you flourish as I would desire the same for myself.

V. **COMPONENT #2: ORGANIZATION**

Team members are formed into a structured and efficient union.

A. Two key parts to being organized

1. **Roles**

Teams work best when there is a balance of responsibilities and roles, which work to their strengths and actively manage their weaknesses.



2. Process

Teams work best when there are processes that guide and protect their interactions with each other.

a. Team **Processes** can be broken down into two parts

1. Documents:

Help the team to measure and guide their interactions through previously agreed upon standards and practices.

2. **Procedures**: Provide freedom and security to the team members because they know the accepted guidelines for times of interaction.

Examples of **Documents** and **Procedures**

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Team Structure | 4. Team Meetings |
| 2. Team Covenant | 5. Decision Making |
| 3. Rules of Engagement | 6. Conflict Management |

VI. COMPONENT #3: INTERDEPENDENCE

“The Purpose of a Team is to make the strengths of a person effective and his or her weaknesses irrelevant.” Peter Drucker

A. **Synergy** occurs when team members work in such a way that they are stronger as a unit than they are apart! Each member recognizes that in order to accomplish the shared vision, they need the other members to do so effectively.

B. B.Synergy occurs when in our team relationships we work to the benefit of the other team members. One loses himself in the process of accomplishing the intended end vision of the group.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 And one standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back to back and conquer, three is even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

*“If you want to be **incrementally** better: Be competitive. If you want to be **exponentially** better: Be cooperative.”*

author unknown



VII. COMPONENT #4: COMMON PURPOSE

A. Concept of Ownership

Ownership occurs when one's identity has become intertwined with that of the group. Each team member understands and takes ownership for the successful completion of the team goals and vision. Each member strives, giving 100% to the team, but not out of obligation. He does so because he believes in the team and the vision.

B. When ownership/common purpose is absent

1. When times get tough people jump ship.
2. There is no defense in numbers, someone is left standing alone!
3. When decisions are made it is way too easy to just go with the flow.
4. When the next best thing comes people leave.

C. How to Create a Sense of Ownership

We can create ownership with each member of our team by...

1. Having a CLEAR and SHARED vision
2. Creating an environment where members feel free to share opinions and concerns without FEAR of condemnation or judgement.
3. Celebrating WINS and mourn DEFEATS together.
4. Over communicating!



EXAMPLE OF TEAM DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES - TEAM COVENANT EXAMPLE -

COMMITMENT: As a member of this leadership team, I take seriously my unique role and accepted responsibilities. I understand that the members of this team—as well as members of this church—are depending upon me to exercise godly leadership with a Spirit of power, love, and self-discipline.

INTERACTION: As a member of this leadership team, I will love, honor, respect, and submit to each member as well as to the group as a whole. If, at any time, I have any questions, concerns, or grievances regarding a particular individual or the group as a whole, I will first speak directly to the individual or group—and not about them.

COMMUNICATION: As a member of this leadership team, I commit to be open, honest, and trustworthy in speaking my beliefs, opinions, feelings, and concerns. At the same time, I commit to listen and to seek to understand the beliefs, opinions, feelings, and concerns of fellow team members. I commit to building a team environment that inspires trust, honor, and respect for one another.

ACCOUNTABILITY: As a member of this leadership team, I pledge to be accountable to God, to this team, to the congregation. As a leader, I acknowledge that I am also a part of this faith community and, therefore, I willingly submit to the oversight of this body of leaders.

DECISIONS: As a member of this leadership team, I pledge to the decision making process laid out by the leadership team. I will attempt to influence through open and candid discussion as the result of personal communion with God as well as from dialogue with other spiritual counselors.

CONFIDENTIALITY: As a member of this leadership team, I promise to keep matters discussed within the group as confidential. The only exception will be those matters that by mutual agreement can or should be shared with others.

AFFIRMATION: As a member of this leadership team, I will affirm each member of the team as a church leader. I will respect and honor team members and will speak positively about them to others. In my words and actions, I will express God's love, as well as my own affirming love and commitment, as I attempt to build other team members up according to their needs.

In signing this document, I pledge to uphold the values and to exhibit the behaviors as stated in this covenant.

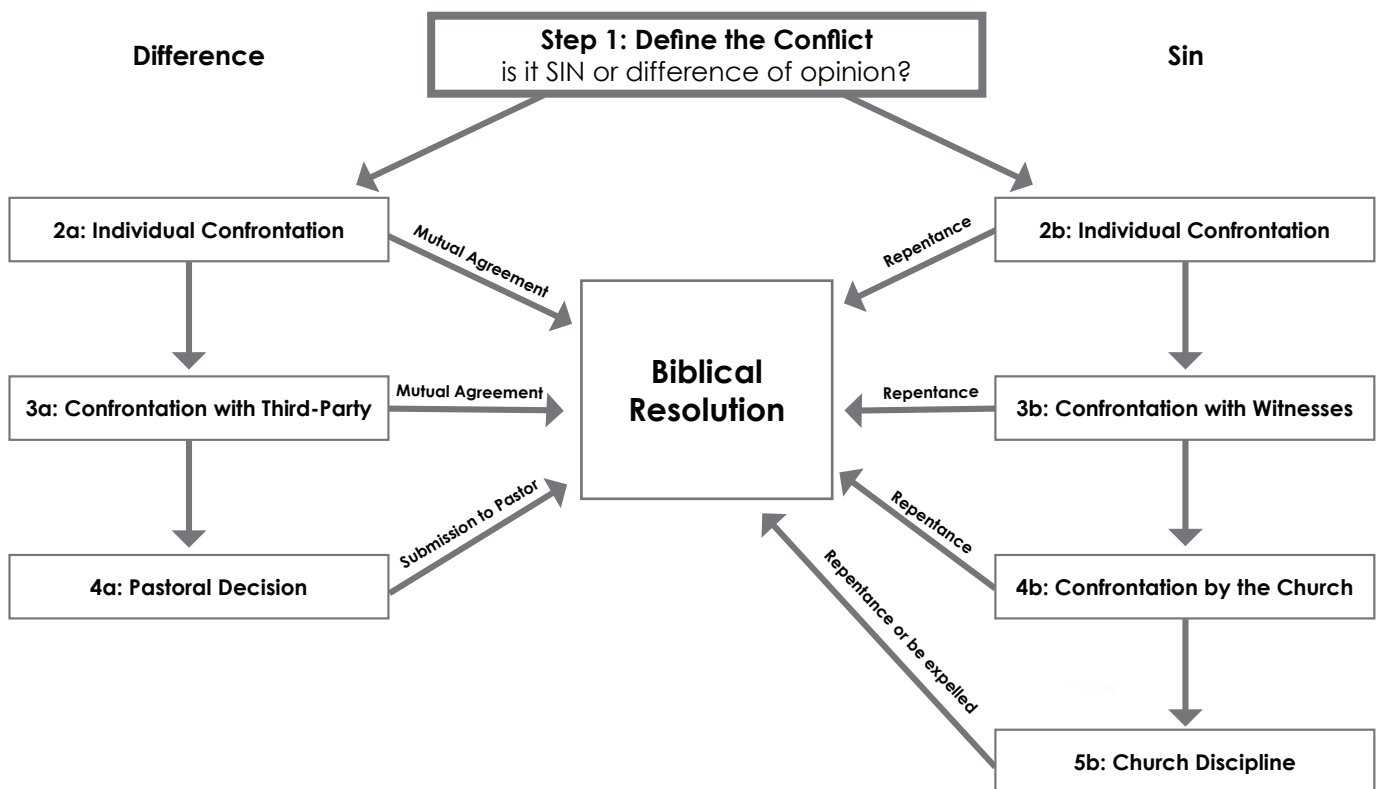
SIGNATURE

DATE



Rules of Engagement

1. We will not spend time trying to defend our reputation but rather we will defend the Word of God and His Reputation.
2. We will maintain an attitude of grace and mercy with those who criticize and speak badly of us.
3. We will seek to cover with love as many offenses as possible.
4. We will always speak the truth no matter the consequence.
5. We will follow our agreed upon conflict management process.
6. We will deal with conflict as soon as possible.
7. We will attack the problem not the person.
8. We will seek to live at peace with all men.



SAVED TO SERVE

- DISCOVERING YOUR ROLE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST -

INTRODUCTION

The 4 Components we will study in this course:

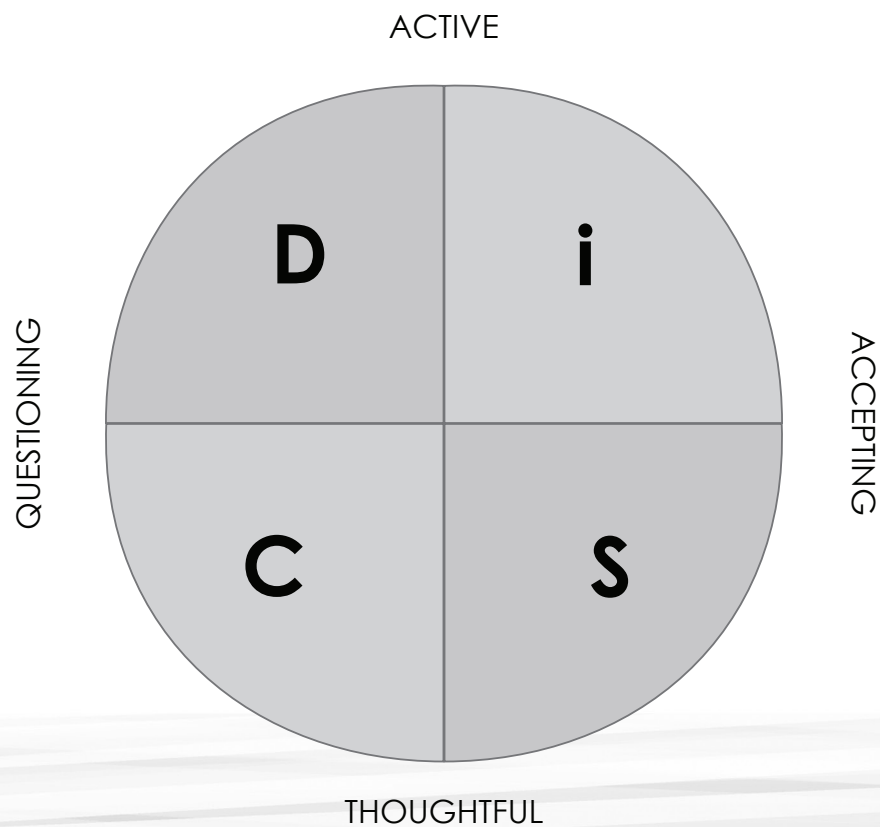
PERSONALITY

TALENTS

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

PASSION

I. Discovering your PERSONALITY



Visit www.discpersonalitytesting.com



Type D Personality:

D = DOMINANCE
 Does not get DISCOURAGED easily.
 INTOLERANT of mistakes.
 DECISIVE
 END justifies the MEANS.

Type S Personality:

S = STEADINESS
 PATIENT & TOLERANT
 HUMBLE
 CONSTANT
 TRUSTWORTHY

Type i Personality:

i = INFLUENCE
 OPTIMISTIC
 EXPRESSIVE
 INSPIRING
 IMPULSIVE

Type C Personality:

C = COMPLIANCE / CREATIVE
 ANALYTICAL / CALCULATED
 PLANNER / STRATEGIC
 INSECURE



Group Activity: Name that PERSONALITY:

C

MOSES

Exodus 32:11-14 _____
 Exodus 18:24 _____
 Exodus 18: 25-26 _____
 Exodus 3:10-11 _____
 Exodus 4:1 _____

S

BARNABAS

Acts 9:26-28 _____
 Acts 4:36-37 _____
 Acts 15:37-39 _____
 Galatians 2:11-13 _____

D

PAUL

Acts 14:19-21 _____
 Acts 13:45 _____
 Acts 15:37-38 _____
 Acts 9:1 _____
 Acts 16:9-10 _____

i

PETER

John 18:10 _____
 Acts 2:1-11 _____
 Matthew 14:28 _____
 Matthew 16:16 _____
 Matthew 16:22-23 _____



Free Evaluation (www.discpersonalitytesting.com)

Circle the Best Response:

1a.	In my work environment, it is MOST important to me...
A	To help co-workers and to be in a peaceful environment.
B	To feel that my co-workers admire me and to be free from rigid rules.
C	To know exactly what is expected of me and to finish one task before moving to another.
D	To get things done and to see results.

1b.	In my work environment, it is LEAST important to me..
A	To help co-workers and to be in a peaceful environment.
B	To feel that my co-workers admire me and to be free from rigid rules.
C	To know exactly what is expected of me and to finish one task before moving to another.
D	To get things done and to see results.

2a.	When someone offers an opinion or conclusion and I disagree, I am MOST LIKELY to...
A	Tell them that I disagree.
B	Say something humorous.
C	Ask for more information.
D	Nod and say nothing.

2b.	When someone offers an opinion or conclusion and I disagree, I am LEAST LIKELY to...
A	Tell them that I disagree.
B	Say something humorous.
C	Ask for more information.
D	Nod and say nothing.



3a.	When I am working on a team and we encounter a difficulty of some kind, I am MOST LIKELY to say...
A	Lighten up! Just go with the flow!
B	Let's make a decision!
C	How do you feel? I'd like to make sure that everyone is comfortable.
D	Let's consider this more carefully? Do we have all of the data we need?

3b.	When I am working on a team and we encounter a difficulty of some kind, I am LEAST LIKELY to say...
A	Lighten up! Just go with the flow!
B	Let's make a decision!
C	How do you feel? I'd like to make sure that everyone is comfortable.
D	Let's consider this more carefully? Do we have all of the data we need?

4a.	My attitude towards detail work — like research and data analysis — is MOST OFTEN...
A	Great. I enjoy research and analysis.
B	If it will get better and faster results, I'll do it.
C	If it will make others think more highly of me, I'll do it.
D	If it will help other people or make things easier, I'll do it.

4b.	My attitude towards detail work — like research and data analysis — is LEAST OFTEN...
A	Great. I enjoy research and analysis.
B	If it will get better and faster results, I'll do it.
C	If it will make others think more highly of me, I'll do it.
D	If it will help other people or make things easier, I'll do it.

5a.	When I am at an event with many people I have not yet met present, I am MOST LIKELY to...
A	Find a small group of people with whom I am already comfortable and speak with them in quiet conversation.
B	Seek a good vantage point to observe the event and sit quietly unless someone speaks to me.
C	Meet and talk with as many people as possible before the event is over.
D	Go to the people I need to speak with to fulfill my purpose for attending.



5b.	When I am at an event with many people I have not yet met present, I am LEAST LIKELY to...
A	Find a small group of people with whom I am already comfortable and speak with them in quiet conversation.
B	Seek a good vantage point to observe the event and sit quietly unless someone speaks to me.
C	Meet and talk with as many people as possible before the event is over.
D	Go to the people I need to speak with to fulfill my purpose for attending.

6a.	The way I see myself MOST is...
A	Doing, driving, and accomplishing.
B	Patient, kind, and helpful.
C	Logical, factual, and correct.
D	Friendly, fun, and persuasive.

6b.	The way I see myself LEAST is...
A	Doing, driving, and accomplishing.
B	Patient, kind, and helpful.
C	Logical, factual, and correct.
D	Friendly, fun, and persuasive.

7a.	When I hear about a coming change, I am MOST LIKELY to think...
A	How does it affect me?
B	Is there a good reason behind it?
C	What will it do to results and speed?
D	How does it affect everyone involved?

7b.	When I hear about a coming change, I am LEAST LIKELY to think...
A	How does it affect me?
B	Is there a good reason behind it?
C	What will it do to results and speed?
D	How does it affect everyone involved?



8a.	The MOST accurate way to describe my approach to work is...
A	Plan your work and work your plan.
B	How would you like for me to do this?
C	Who will do this with me? Is there anyone to talk with while I work?
D	Get it done. What's next?

8b.	The LEAST accurate way to describe my approach to work is...
A	Plan your work and work your plan.
B	How would you like for me to do this?
C	Who will do this with me? Is there anyone to talk with while I work?
D	Get it done. What's next?

9a.	The type of work activities that I enjoy the MOST involve...
A	Fast-paced, rapidly changing tasks that create progress.
B	Working alone and focusing on the task at hand to create excellence.
C	Comfortable and predictable tasks that support the team.
D	Interacting with many people to create new ideas and energy.

9b.	The type of work activities that I enjoy the LEAST involve...
A	Fast-paced, rapidly changing tasks that create progress.
B	Working alone and focusing on the task at hand to create excellence.
C	Comfortable and predictable tasks that support the team.
D	Interacting with many people to create new ideas and energy.

10a.	When I receive a phone call, I am MOST interested in...
A	Talking with the person who called.
B	What they want me to do.
C	Why they called me.
D	How I can help.



10b.	When I receive a phone call, I am LEAST interested in...
A	Talking with the person who called.
B	What they want me to do.
C	Why they called me.
D	How I can help.

11a.	The thing someone could say that would have the MOST positive impact on me is...
A	I really appreciate you.
B	You are fantastic!
C	You get a lot done.
D	You do excellent work.

11b.	The thing someone could say that would have the LEAST positive impact on me is...
A	I really appreciate you.
B	You are fantastic!
C	You get a lot done.
D	You do excellent work.

12a.	The projects or tasks that I enjoy the MOST allow me to...
A	Collect and evaluate information to build plans or systems.
B	Achieve big results and overcome a challenge.
C	Do what I already know how to do at my own pace.
D	Work with many different people on a wide range of tasks to keep things interesting.

12b.	The projects or tasks that I enjoy the LEAST allow me to...
A	Collect and evaluate information to build plans or systems.
B	Achieve big results and overcome a challenge.
C	Do what I already know how to do at my own pace.
D	Work with many different people on a wide range of tasks to keep things interesting.

----- End of Test -----



Your Personality Profile

Important Instructions: For all questions that end with “a,” add +2 in that column next to the letter you chose. For all questions that end with “b,” subtract 1 from that column next to the letter you chose. At the end, total each column at the bottom. Note: Some may end up as negative numbers.

Question	D	i	S	C
1	D	B	A	C
2	A	B	D	C
3	B	A	C	D
4	B	D	C	A
5	D	C	A	B
6	A	D	B	C
7	C	A	D	B
8	D	C	B	A
9	A	D	C	B
10	B	A	D	C
11	C	B	A	D
12	B	D	C	A
Total				

Graph your Personality Profile, using the totals from above, take the totals, and graph them below.

	D	i	S	C
+24				
+20				
+16				
+12				
+8				
+4				
0				
-2				
-4				
-6				
-8				
-10				
-12				



How does my personality influence my decisions?

D	i
<p>You are strong-willed. You like to make decisions for others, because you generally make good decisions. You do not flinch at obstacles, which allows you to be risky. You need to learn to value input from the "C's."</p>	<p>Your will is not particularly strong. You like new ideas, but sometimes lack the followthrough to make them happen. Your intentions are good, but you must learn to stick to past decisions when the going gets tough.</p>
<p>Being a calculated person, you typically resist taking risks. You have the ability to analyze future or potential obstacles, which can be helpful, but you must not let them keep you from moving forward. Allow the "D's" to spur you into action.</p>	<p>Decision-making is not your strength. You do not like to battle (or self-advocate), so you often settle for what others decide for you. Learn to avoid the path of least resistance. Find trustworthy "C's" and "D's" to guide you.</p>
C	S

How does my personality influence how I relate to others?

D	i
<p>Relationships can be problematic. You can often unintentionally disrespect others. You tend to be impatient, and you resist saying you are sorry. You can make a great leader if these weaknesses are overcome.</p>	<p>Relationships come easily for you. You accept people where they are at. You are tender, comforting and compassionate, but sometimes unwilling to confront out of fear that it will damage the relationship.</p>
<p>You tend to have high quality relationships, but not high quantity. You trend to see people's faults easily, which can cause you to write people off too quickly. You should seek to learn how to 'love the sinner, not the sin' so to speak.</p>	<p>You have a stabilizing influence on your acquaintances. People feel relaxed around you. You often will study people when you should be interacting with them.</p>
C	S



SAVED TO SERVE

- DISCOVERING YOUR ROLE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST -

II. Discovering your TALENTS

Paul's Analogy of the Body (1 Corinthians 12)

1. The Body requires people with DIVERSE talents. (v. 12-14)
2. Every part is DEPENDENT upon the others. None can SURVIVE alone. (v. 15-17)
3. Every person, along with his talents, was DESIGNED BY GOD to make up the whole body. (v. 18-20)
4. The 'WEAKER' roles are just as important as the more 'HONORABLE' roles. Each is INDISPENSIBLE. (v. 21-23a)
5. As such, we should be without DIVISION. We SUFFER as one body, and we are HONORED as one body. (v. 23b-26)

The Formula: $T \times I = S$

TALENT

(a natural way of thinking, feeling or BEHAVING)

x

INVESTMENT

(time spent PRACTICING, developing skill and building knowledge base)

=

STRENGTH

(ability to CONSISTENTLY provide near-perfect performance)

What is the Body of Christ called to do? (Matthew 28:19-20)

THE GREAT COMMISSION



What kinds of skills are necessary to complete that?

- LEADERSHIP skills!
- STRATEGIC skills!!
- ORGANIZATIONAL skills
- ANALYTICAL skills!
- COMMUNICATION skills
- SOCIAL skills
- MANUAL / PHYSICAL skills
- ARTISTIC skills
- etc.

Now imagine a church that completely lacks any one of these skills.

- ANARCHY
- DIRECTIONLESS
- CHAOTIC
- UN-EVOLVING / NEVER CHANGING
- UNATTENDED / INEFFECTIVE
- EMPTY / WHO WOULD COME?
- THERE'D BE NO BUILDING
- BORING / MISREPRESENTING GOD'S BEAUTY

What about you?

TALENT

(What do you like to do? What have you done well? What do others say you do well?)

x

INVESTMENT

(What would interest you enough to try it out?
What can you do to improve these skills?)

=

STRENGTHS



SAVED TO SERVE

- DISCOVERING YOUR ROLE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST -

III. Discovering your SPIRITUAL GIFTS

What's the difference between a *Spiritual Gift* and a *Natural Talent*?

1. A ***Spiritual Gift*** is like a PRESENT that just needs to be opened and utilized.
2. A ***Natural Talent*** is more like a MUSCLE that needs to be developed and exercised.

3 Biblical Passages that list the Spiritual Gifts:

Romans 12:6-8	1 Corinthians 12:7-11	Ephesians 4:11-13
PROPHECY SERVING TEACHING ENCOURAGING GIVING LEADING	WISDOM KNOWLEDGE FAITH HEALING MIRACLES PROPHECY DISTINGUISHING SPIRITS TONGUES INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES	APOSTLES PROPHETS EVANGELISTS PASTOR / TEACHERS

Observations from the 3 Biblical Passages:

1. No two lists are ALIKE, suggesting that neither list was intended to be EXHAUSTIVE.
2. All gifts are GIVEN by God, which distinguishes them from natural talents.
3. Only 1 Corinthians mentions the "SUPERNATURAL" gifts.
 - * 1 Corinthians is a transitional book, written just as the supernatural gifts (or "sign gifts") were beginning to fade away.
 - * In chapter 13, Paul warns them that certain gifts were about to cease. (See verses 8-10.)
4. The goal of ALL gifts was to serve the COMMON good.



What about you?

1. START by serving!

* God never tells us how to discover our gifts. As we serve, they will become EVIDENT. After all, they are "MANIFESTATIONS" of the Holy Spirit.

2. EXPLORE the options!

* Use the three biblical lists to get you going. Look for opportunities and try them out.

3. EVALUATE your giftedness!

* As you serve, and as you explore the options, evaluate your SUCCESS. Be TEACHABLE and allow others to give you honest FEEDBACK. We are all gifted, but sometimes not in the areas we THINK or WISH we were.



SAVED TO SERVE

- DISCOVERING YOUR ROLE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST -

IV. Discovering your PASSION

Definition:

an ardent desire that provokes an emotional response upon ponderance

CAUTION! Are our desires trustworthy? Should we trust them?

Ephesians 4:17-22

OUR DESIRES ARE DECEITFUL.

1 Timothy 3:1

THE DESIRE TO SERVE AS A BISHOP IS ADMIRABLE.

Psalms 37:4

IF WE DELIGHT IN THE LORD, HE GIVES US THE DESIRES OF OUR HEARTS. (NOTE: IT DOES NOT SAY HE GIVES US THE OBJECT OF OUR NATURAL DESIRES. HE GIVES US NEW DESIRES!)

Conclusion:

So, before we follow our passions, we need to do some soul-searching. We must make sure our passions are driven by GOD, and not by our SELFISH HUMAN NATURE.

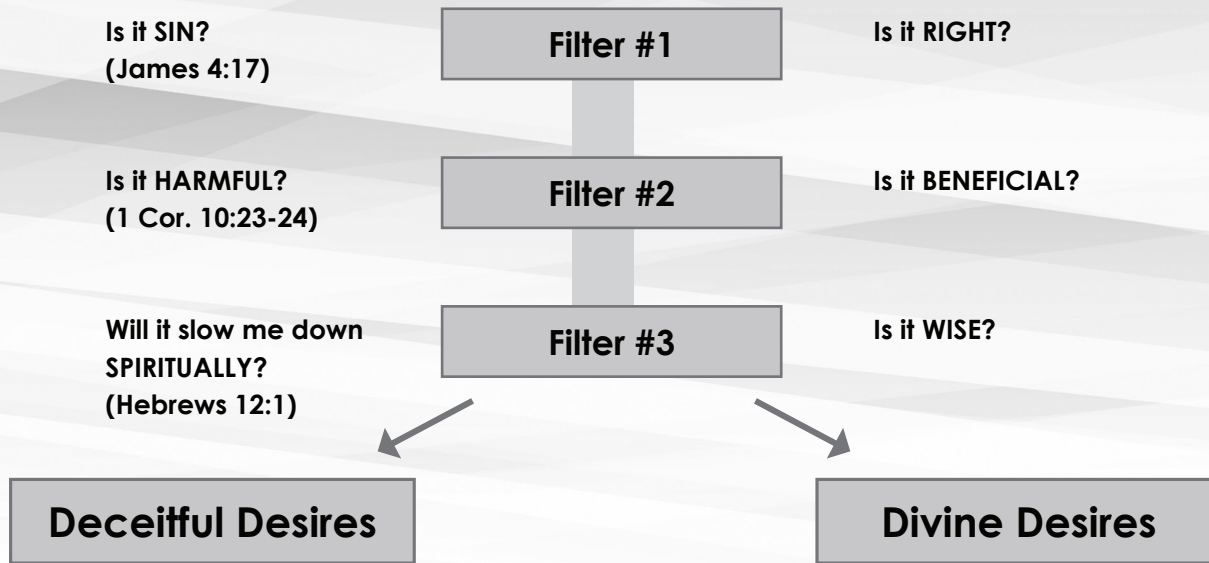
1 Chronicles 28:9 THE LORD SEARCHES OUR HEART AND UNDERSTAND OUR DESIRES

Jeremiah 17:10 GOD REWARDS/PUNISHES BASED UPON THIS.

Psalms 139:23-24 WE OUGHT TO ASK GOD TO TEST OUR HEARTS.



Discerning the Validity of our Desires:



What about you? What passions has God given you?

1. What are you passionate about?
2. Are these passions valid? (Are they from God?)
3. How could God use these passions?



TEAM DECISION MAKING

INTRODUCTION

I once read a satirical de-motivational poster that showed the hands of a team of people clasping each other's as if in some sort of huddle, and the caption read, "None of us is as dumb as all of us."

For those who have worked in team environments, this may strike you as funny. Why? Because we've been there! There is an element of truth to it. I have been in situations where the whole team would have been better off if we had allowed any one team member to make a decision, but because everyone was involved, we seemed to consistently make bad decisions. Working as a team actually decreased our ability to accomplish anything!

Why is that? Why is this so common? I propose that it is because putting people in a room together does not make them a team. Giving those people the responsibility for making a decision does not make them a team either. You would think that with more people, you would have more energy in play. More energy should result in greater productivity, right? But too often, it doesn't.

A team does not equal the combined ENERGY of multiple persons; it is the combined SYNERGY of multiple persons.

Energy vs. Synergy

What is the difference between energy and synergy? To answer that, let's break down the words etymologically. (Bear with me.)

Energy comes from two Greek words: "en" which means "in" and "ergos" which means "work." Energy, then, is the force that we use to accomplish work, whether it is productive and helpful or not.

Synergy also comes from two Greek words. "Ergos" is the same, but synergy carries the prefix "syn" which means "together" or "in cooperation." So synergy is work that is done in cooperation.

An unknown author stated it this way "If you want to be incrementally better: Be competitive. If you want to be exponentially better: Be cooperative."



Example

Look at it this way. Imagine two people in a canoe. If the person in the back is paddling forward, while the person in the front is paddling backward, what will happen to the canoe? It will stay relatively stationary. It will rotate counter-clockwise, of course, but it will not get you across a lake.

Now imagine the same two people, but both are paddling forward. There is the same amount of energy in both scenarios, but not the same amount of synergy. By simply aligning the energy involved, the entire canoe becomes infinitely more productive.

Is Synergy Biblical?

Synergy has been a buzz word in the corporate world for some time. So much so, that church leadership in general has almost rejected the idea as worldly. However, the idea of synergy amongst believers is actually a biblical concept. Consider the words of the Apostle Paul:

Philippians 2:1-4

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Here, Paul uses the word LIKE-MINDED to describe what we would call today, "synergy." As Christians, we should not avoid synergy. We should strive for it!

Where are we headed?

In this course, our desire is for you to value synergy, and to know how to achieve it on your ministry team. To accomplish this, we will walk you through the (a) attitudes, the (b) methods, the (c) process, and the (d) implementation of synergetic decision-making.



PART I: THE ATTITUDE OF SYNERGY

Let's take a closer look at the Apostle Paul's description of synergy in Philippians 2.

Philippians 2:1-4

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Paul uses the word like-minded to describe the synergetic decision-making process. He then goes on to describe this idea in three ways.

I. Having the Same Love

What does it mean for us to all have the same love? Jesus answered that question in Matthew 22. In verses 34-40 we read the following:

34 But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

For the Christian, we understand that all of the Law is fulfilled in the act of love. That love is directed both vertically and horizontally. Our love is vertical in the sense that is directed toward God Himself. Our love is also horizontal because it is directed toward others on the same plane as us - our neighbors.

If we love God, then we will love those whom He loves. And since God loves the world (John 3:16), we are to love people passionately!



We see examples of this all through the New Testament. We are told to love our brothers in Christ (Romans 12:10), to love those who have fallen away and been restored (2 Corinthians 2:8), to love our spouses (Ephesians 5:25, Titus 2:4), and even to love our enemies (Matthew 5:43-44).

According to Philippians 2:3, the opposite of love is SELFISH AMBITION and CONCEIT. A synergetic team needs to have individual team members that value the team over themselves. As the Apostle Paul put it, "...let each esteem others higher than himself."

II. Being of One Accord

A. What it Means

Being of one accord does not mean that everyone is doing the same thing, but rather that all team players are working off the same page. Consider a football diagram for a productive play. There are X's that represent the defensive team, and O's to represent the offensive team. Not all of the O's do the exact same thing, but they do work together with a common purpose - namely, to get the ball further up the field. That is what is meant by "being of one accord."

So what does this look like on a ministry team? It means that the team must share a common goal... a common end zone, so-to-speak. In a ministry setting, that means we must share three things.

B. Three Components for Being of One Accord:

1. Shared VALUES

It is important that team members share the same values, at least as far as the common ministry or project is concerned. Using the football analogy, shared values would be such things as (a) protection of the quarterback, (b) protection of the person with the ball, (c) creating open spaces, (d) advancement of the ball, etc.

2. Shared VISION

A synergetic team will have a shared vision. A shared vision is the idea of what the finished product should look like. In the football analogy, it is the end zone. In a ministry context, it is important to define the end zone, to ensure that all energy is productive. Remember the analogy of the canoe? A team can spend a lot of energy, but if it is not moving the whole team closer to its shared end zone, then it is counter-productive.



3. Shared RULES of ENGAGEMENT

Decision-making can be messy. You put a group of people, each with their own perspectives and problem solving methods, and you ask them to come up with one, singular solution, and it will get messy. You can help the team measure and guide their interactions through previously agreed upon standards and practices.

These rules can help your team navigate through times and circumstances that are crucial to its health and to the community they are leading. They can also serve as a reminder of the values and vision of the ministry.

Here is an example:

1. We will focus on collective results; not just our own areas of ministry.
2. We will not attack another person's character. Together, we will attack the conflict.
3. We will hold each other accountable by calling out counterproductive behaviors when observed, but in a caring manner.
4. We will forgive offenses when there is recognition of error and forgiveness is asked.
5. We will commit to team decisions, even if my personal preference was not selected.
6. We will support all team positions publicly as if they were our own preferences.
7. We will not accept or reject a person's opinion because of past offenses, if forgiven.
8. etc.

III. Being Like-Minded

Being like-minded simply means that your minds work in the same manner. In the context of ministry teams, this means that you agree to two things: (1) The Decision-Making Method that you will use, and (2) the Decision-Making Process you will use to determine future courses of action. These will serve as an outline for the next two major sections of this course.



PART II: DECISION-MAKING METHODS

There are four decision-making methods available to synergetic teams. All of them are useful, and a wise leader will recognize which method should be used in which circumstances.

To understand the relationship between the four decision-making methods, one must first understand the tension between COMMITMENT and EFFICIENCY.

I. The Tension between Commitment and Efficiency

In any team decision, you want team members to be committed to the decision. We often call this, "buy in." For example, if a team makes a decision to implement plan C, but some members are still emotionally attached to options A and B, then they may become unintentional (or intentional) saboteurs when it comes to implementation of plan C. They could be waiting for the first sign that something in plan C is not working, simply so they can say, "I told you so." Years of ministry experience teaches us that it is better to work together off a flawed plan, than to be pulling in separate directions. So ideally, you want a high level of commitment when it comes to important decisions.

On the other hand, efficiency is also important. Some decisions need to be made sooner than later, and a long, drawn out decision-making process can really harm the persons involved.

For example, imagine that the building you are in bursts into flames. There are several ways you could escape. What would you do if your superior called everyone together and said, "I'd like to hear from each of you, what you think would be the best exit for us, and why, followed up by a list of pro's and con's to each answer?" This would be a horrible decision-making method under the circumstances. This method values commitment and buy in very highly, but undervalues efficiency. The result is, you would probably all die.

Now take a look at the opposite extreme. Imagine now that your church's lead pastor dies. How do you think the congregation would feel if the deacon chairman stood up in front of the congregation and announced, "I have bad news and good news. The bad news is, our beloved pastor has died. The good news is, I hired a replacement this morning!" How do you think the people would respond? You would probably have a mutiny on your hand! Why? Because people require a high level of commitment and buy in before they are willing to submit themselves to a new pastoral authority.



So with this in mind, we will discuss the four decision-making methods according to their placement on the spectrum between commitment and efficiency. As you will see, Method #1 is for situations that demand high efficiency and low commitment. Method #2 will demand a little more commitment and a little less efficiency. Method #3 will demand more commitment with less efficiency. Method #4 will demand a high level of commitment and a low level of efficiency. (See chart.)

II. The Four Methods for Decision-Making

A. Method #1: COMMAND

Commandment is exactly how it sounds. One person, who is higher up in an authority structure, will tell another person or group of people, who have lesser authority, what decision he or she has made. This type of decision-making can be highly efficient in certain circumstances, but doesn't usually provide a lot of buy-in on the part of the subjects.

+Commitment / - Efficiency	Role of the Leader
Method #4. _____	
Method #3. _____	
Method #2. _____	
Method #1. COMMAND	Make decisions / Relay Orders
+Efficiency / - Commitment	

Before we throw out the method altogether, we should recognize that God Himself often uses this method. In Genesis 1, God displayed his authority over all creation. He spoke, and it existed. It is subject to Him. Man was created on the sixth day, and is thus a part of God's creation. This implies that Man is subject to the authority of God. In verse 28 of chapter 1, we find God's first words to Adam:

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Immediately after blessing them, he gave them a command. It was not optional. Adam and Eve did not negotiate. They simply needed to obey.



Some might argue that only God should use the command method of decision-making; however, we see several examples in Scripture where men gave commands to other men, and there is nothing in the context to suggest that it was wrong. On the contrary, it can be efficient. Isaac, for example, commanded Jacob not to marry a Canaanite woman (Genesis 28:1). The Canaanite women worshiped false gods and would lead Jacob astray. Isaac, being the father, commanded his son not to marry any of them.

God told Moses to use the commandment method in Exodus 27:20.

“Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning.”

Moses was speaking on God's behalf, so he had the authority he needed, and in the context, it was an efficient way to move things along.

The downside of commandment is that it does not create a lot of buy-in. We've all heard the phrase “Taxation without representation.” The colonists would use this phrase to describe the tyrannical English government. The English government would make decisions that would directly affect the colonists, but the colonists had no way of contending with those decisions. They would increase taxes, while providing next to nothing in return. The colonists resented it so much, that they decided to withdraw from England and start their own country. They paid a heavy price for that freedom, but to them it was better to die on their feet than live on their knees.

Commandment, when used inappropriately, can lead to resentment. Resentment is the antithesis of buy-in or commitment.

So when should we use the commandment method? The answer: When efficiency heavily outweighs buy-in, and when you have the authority to do so. I'll give an extreme example to make the point. Let's assume that you wake up one night to find that your house is on fire. Instinctively, you start shouting commands to your family members, like “Honey, go get the girls downstairs and take them out the back door!” and “Jonathan, wake up! Meet up with Mom outside in the front yard!” In this scenario, efficiency is extremely important. As a parent, you would be foolish to say, “Kids, there's a fire! Let's go down to the kitchen table and discuss an exit strategy! Once we all agree on which exit would be the most beneficial, we will all leave together.” That approach might lead to more buy-in, but buy-in isn't what you need when your house is on fire! Efficiency is what will save lives in this case.

I know that this is an extreme example, but the point holds true in leadership. When efficiency heavily outweighs buy-in, and you have the authority to do so, commandment just might be the right method for decision-making.



Important Tips when using the Command Method:

1. Do not overuse this method.

In most cases, people like to share some influence in the decisions that directly affect them. They may resent it if the authority makes decisions that they could have been contemplated by them. Remember how the original Tea Party members felt when there was “taxation without representation”? When an authority uses this method, he will usually expend some of his social currency with those under his authority. In the long run, he will gain that back if the decision proves to be the right call.

2. Don't underuse this method.

When I was a young Christian Education pastor, I remember a deacons' meeting where a broken door to the church came up. We had 22 deacons and close to 22 opinions on how to fix it. We had been discussing the issue for about 45 minutes when my mouth was unable to hold my words. “We could have fixed the door in less time than we have wasted discussing it!” As a leader, it is our duty to constantly observe and evaluate our present decision-making methods and select the correct one for the moment. In this case, the chairman should have simply made a decision and assigned someone to implement the decision.

3. Explain why you are using this method.

Even when there is not time to engage everyone involved in profound dialogue to reach a decision, you must make time to explain that to those involved. As a pastor, I have had to use this method when efficiency has demanded it. When explaining it to the deacons, I usually say something like, “I had to make an executive decision on the spot because...” It reduces the amount of social currency lost.

B. Method #2: CONSULT

When efficiency is still important, but you have the need for some level of buy-in, the Consult Method may be a good method for making decisions. Consultation, in this context, refers to cases where the higher authority INVITES INFLUENCE from the subjects, but they ultimately retain the authority to make the decision. They will listen to advice, and seriously weigh it out, but will then make the decision. This increases the likelihood of buy-in because the subjects feel like they have at least participated in the decision-making process.

We find an interesting example of the Consult Method in 1 Kings 12. Rehoboam is the obvious first candidate to be king over Israel. He is approached by an assembly of potential subjects who say, “Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you.” (v.4).



+Commitment / - Efficiency	Role of the Leader
Method #4. _____	
Method #3. _____	
Method #2. CONSULT	Invite Influence
Method #1. Command	Make decisions / Relay Orders
+Efficiency / - Commitment	

In verse six, we read that Rehoboam consulted the advisors of his late father, Solomon. He asked them for their advice.

Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who had served his father Solomon during his lifetime. "How would you advise me to answer these people?" he asked.

Imagine that! Solomon was the wisest man who had ever lived on the planet up until that time. He was also wise enough to know that even he needed advisors. He must have chosen them wisely. Rehoboam had access to these advisors. What an advantage! Of course, we know how the story ends. Rehoboam also consults his teenage buddies (v. 8) and they gave contradictory advice.

Rehoboam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him.

9 He asked them, "What is your advice? How should we answer these people who say to me, 'Lighten the yoke your father put on us'?"

Rehoboam followed his peers' advice instead of the advice of Solomon's advisors, and the kingdom was divided from that point on. How foolish! It was wise to use the consultation method. It was foolish to reject the wise consultation and accept the consultation of inexperienced peers.

We can find positive examples of the consultation method in Scripture too. Jehoshaphat consulted the people of Israel before appointing men to become members of the army choir (2 Chronicles 20:21). The fact that he "appointed" them shows that he ultimately made the decision, but he sought out advice beforehand. Hezekiah consulted his officials and military staff about blocking off the water from the springs outside the city (2 Chronicles 32:3). It worked.



Proverbs 15:22 states:

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

The word “adviser” implies the action of consultation. According to Proverbs 15:22, many leaders fail because they do not tap into this decision-making method. If a leader over-uses the commandment method, his plans will fail.

So when should we use the consultation method? Answer: When you are unsure what to do and you need advice, or when you need at least some level of buy-in on the part of those below your authority. Of course, you must also have the authority to make the final decision. Without the authority to do so, others will feel that you have usurped their right to give input. They would be right too.

Important Tips when using the Consult Method:

1. Do not PRETEND to consult.

People will realize when you are asking them for their input, only because you want to appear to be a good listener. You can't fake consultation. You have to genuinely weigh the opinions and perspectives of the subjects if you are going to call it a “consultation.” If your mind is already made up before you consult, then it is not really a consultation. It would be better to simply explain that you have made an executive decision and why.

2. INFORM that you are consulting.

People get upset very quickly if they feel their opinions are going to carry more weight than they actually do. I remember another deacons' meeting when the pastor forgot to inform the deacons that he was switching to the Consult Method. He brought up an issue of a possible policy change. Several deacons voiced their opinions in one direction (to maintain the current policy), and a few in another (to change the policy). The pastor announced in the following meeting that he had decided to change the policy. Several of the deacons were furious! If the pastor had told them from the beginning that he was ultimately going to make the decision, they would not have been so upset, and it would have increased their commitment and buy in.



C. Method #3: CONGRESS

When buy in is important, the Congress method of decision-making is useful. I use the word "congress" because it's the method used by Congress to make decisions - They vote. The majority wins, the minority loses. For major changes, like constitutional changes, the vote often requires an even higher percentage to pass. It makes sense that the Congress method is useful for creating buy in, because it always allows the majority of people to get their way. If the majority "buys into" an idea, you will usually have a smoother process when it comes to the implementation. Sure, there are winners and losers, but even losers usually admit that it was fair.

+Commitment / - Efficiency	Role of the Leader
Method #4. _____	
Method #3. CONGRESS	Procure Democracy
Method #2. Consult	Invite Influence
Method #1. Command	Make decisions / Relay Orders
+Efficiency / - Commitment	

Notice the increasing levels of buy-in. In Commandment mode, you may not even have a say in the decision. In Consultation mode, you at least have a say. You have no real authority, but you at least have the opportunity to voice your opinion. In Congress mode, your opinion actually carries weight. It may not carry any more weight than anyone else's opinion, but you do get to vote. The more influence you have in a decision, the more likely you are to "buy into" the implementation of that decision.

The Congress method is often touted as the "fairest" method for making decisions, but I don't believe that is always the case. For example, let's assume that 60% of the people always agree with each other, and the other 40% of the people always agree with themselves too. Using the Congress method will ensure that the 60% of the people get their way 100% of the time. If all things were fair, they would get their way only 60% of the time.

My point is this: It stinks being in the minority. Let's face it. Every time we vote, there are disappointed people who didn't get their way. If you're voting on where the team wants to eat lunch, the disappointment is minimal, but if you're voting on a new pastor, things can be quite different. Before choosing the Congress method, make sure you weigh the consequences.

I think it is important to clarify something here. I am not talking about the overall form of church government. I am not advocating that a pastor can simply bypass the congregation and decide that he wants to make certain large scale decisions on his own. By all means, the congregation



needs to vote on issues that affect the whole church. What we are talking about, is the decision-making methods used by ministry and leadership teams.

For example, as a Christian Education pastor, I had a Christian education committee. In that committee, I would vary the use of the four decision-making methods based upon the needs at the moment and my authority to do so. As the pastor over that committee, I had the authority to make all the decisions if I wanted to. That gave me the liberty to use Consultation or Congress methods whenever I needed higher levels of buy-in. I was also a member of the pastoral team. I didn't carry the same authority there; my Dad did, as the senior pastor. It is extremely important then, that every team defines the authority structure that exists and explains the methods of decision-making that it will utilize.

So when should we use the Congress method? When buy-in is more important than speed or efficiency. But what if buy-in is extremely important? That's where "consensus" comes in to play. We will discuss this momentarily.

Important Tips when using the Congress Method:

1. Do not skip healthy DIALOGUE.

Consider the following scenario. There are seven of us trying to decide where to eat lunch. There are only two restaurants nearby: (1) Bob's Burgers and (2) Ted's Tacos. Immediately, four shout "Bob's Burgers" while three shout "Ted's Tacos." The Congress Method would demand that they go to Bob's Burgers, right? Not necessarily. Why? Because you skipped the dialogue. Perhaps one of the three in the minority is sensitive to gluten. Ted's Tacos offers a gluten-free tortilla, but Bob's Burgers does not offer a gluten-free bun. In that case, people can weigh the importance of their first choice and weigh out new possibilities.

2. Listen to the MINORITY

The majority is not always right. Take the time to genuinely hear out the opinions of the minority. Weigh them heavily. Do not approach a decision with closed ears. Set your opinions aside for a moment and try to see things from other people's perspective. This is not only a good idea; it is Biblical.

James 1:19-20 states:

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.



D. Method #4: CONSENSUS

Consensus is a method of decision-making that allows everyone to share their opinions until everyone comes to the same decision. The role of the leader is to find mutual agreement. It's the best way to achieve buy-in, but it is the least efficient way to make a decision. I'll go back to the fire analogy. Commandment is the most efficient way to get everyone out of the burning house and to a safe place, as quickly as possible. If you were to try the consensus method in this case, you probably wouldn't survive. Consensus is not very efficient. It's time-consuming.

+Commitment / - Efficiency	Role of the Leader
Method #4. CONSENSUS	Find Mutual Agreement
Method #3. Congress	Procure Democracy
Method #2. Consult	Invite Influence
Method #1. Command	Make decisions / Relay Orders
+Efficiency / - Commitment	

While this is true, there are also times when buy-in is extremely important, and there is ample time to allow efficiency to take a back seat. For example, let's assume that you are a lead pastor of a pastoral team. Your team includes yourself, an administrative pastor, an education pastor and a youth pastor. As your church has grown, you have come to a place where you can afford to bring on a new worship pastor. In a case like this, it is extremely important that all the pastors agree on whom they should recommend to the church for that position. The four of you will be working very closely with the new pastor, so it is important that you are all on board. In this case, the Consensus Method will help you create the level of buy-in you need to proceed. Even if it takes a few extra weeks or months, it will be worth it in the long run.

Now imagine that the lead pastor decided to use the Commandment Method. One morning, he arrives at the pastoral team meeting and says, "I'd like to introduce you to our new worship pastor! Tah Daaaahhh!" How much buy in do you think the other pastors would have? Not much. Now imagine something much worse. Imagine that the lead pastor decided to use the Commandment Method with the whole congregation! He stands in front of the congregation one Sunday morning and says, "I'd like you all to meet our new worship pastor!" The congregation didn't even know they were looking for a pastor. How much buy in do you think they will have? Sound far fetched? It is exactly what happened in a church near where I grew up. Under that pastor's leadership, I watched a church of over 1,200 attenders dwindle to about 200.



On the other hand, the Consensus Method can be abused too. At one church that I was working closely with, they were looking for a new lead pastor to replace one who had recently retired. They had a relatively large search committee, that hit the ground running. They sorted through over five hundred resumes, visited multiple churches, listened to hours and hours of sermons, looking for their next spiritual leader. However, over a year had passed and it seemed to the people in the congregation that there had been no real progress. Upon closer examination, I found that the problem wasn't in the quality of pastors who wanted the job; it was in the decision-making process. They had decided that they would not move forward on anyone unless there was consensus. That's right. Unanimity. Taking an even closer look, I found that one man among the search committee had a strong bias toward a certain translation of the Scripture. The church was not a King James only church, but there were a handful who strongly preferred it over other translations. This man had decided that he would not give his consent unless the pastoral candidate planned on using the KJV from the pulpit. There was another man on the search committee who disagreed. He felt it was time to start using a more modern translation. He decided that he would not give his consent to any pastoral candidate who planned on using the KJV. So it became mathematically impossible to reach consensus, because these two men would never give consent to the same candidate.

In a case like this, efficiency becomes more and more important over time. The thought of striving for consensus was a noble one, but not practical. When the Consensus method is abused, too much power is put into the hands of any one individual. Any single individual can act out his fleshly nature and sabotage the entire process. That's exactly what happened in this case. It wasn't until one man resigned from the committee that they agreed upon a pastoral candidate.

So what's the solution? It's simple. Even when the goal is consensus, there should be a reasonable time frame in place. If too much time goes by, and the team is still at a point of indecision, then efficiency becomes more important. It's time to employ the Congress method.

So when do we use the Consensus method? When buy-in is extremely important, and efficiency is not. If efficiency becomes important, an effective team will resort to the Congress method. So the two key factors to consider are: (1) Buy in and (2) Efficiency. As the importance of buy in increases, and the importance of efficiency decreases, you should move from Commandment to Consultation to Congress to Consensus.



PART III: THE PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING

In order for a team to be synergetic, team members must be working out of the same playbook, so-to-speak. They must all be following the same process for decision-making. A synergetic process for decision-making will always include the following 5 steps:

- (1) Define the ISSUE.
- (2) Determine the Decision-making METHOD (Command, Consult, Congress, or Consensus)
- (3) BRAINSTORM ideas.
- (4) SELECT the perceived optimal option.
- (5) IMPLEMENT the plan.

This will serve as an outline for Part III.

I. Define the Issue

Clarity is critical in big decisions. With this in mind, follow the following four steps to create clarity.

- A. Clearly STATE the problem or opportunity that exists.
- B. INVITE and clarify questions from team members. Answer questions until everyone can agree on the core issue.
- C. Give the BACKGROUND of the issue (the *what, when, where* and *how* of the issue).
- D. WRITE the problem or opportunity in a clear and concise way for everyone to see.
- E. CONFIRM that everyone agrees on what the core issue is.

II. Define the Decision-Making Method

It is important that team members know which method is in play at all times. In my deacons' meetings, for example, I tell them that my default method is CONGRESS. I will let them know whenever I am switching methods. I change methods frequently enough that the deacons do not lose the meaning or vocabulary of each method.



III. Brainstorm ideas

Once the issue is clarified, and the method is commonly understood, it is time to discuss possible options and solutions. Take the necessary time to investigate all possible ideas.

Ask each team members to generate ideas and/or solutions no matter how crazy they might sound. Make sure they get placed on a white board or large piece of paper. No one can criticize or give their opinion on the ideas at this point. The team facilitator then should take time to narrow the ideas into not more than three main solutions if possible.

These questions can be used to help that process.

1. Do we have the resources and time to do this?
2. Has this ever been tried before with any success?
3. Could this solution have a negative influence on the overall ministry or church?

IV. Select the perceived optimal option

I say "perceived" optimal option because it is important to maintain a level of humility and teachability. There is no synergy unless all parts are working toward the same end, but sometimes that end will have to be reconsidered. As decision-makers, you will have to make decisions in the moment. Sometimes, you will make the wrong decision. As a team, you can reconsider, as new evidence comes in, if a change of course is necessary. For synergy to work, all members must be willing to surrender their individual preferences for the sake of the team. There should be no "I told you so" type of retorts if things fall apart. No one outside the team should be able to tell that the team decision and your personal preference are not one in the same.

V. Implementation

Implementation has two parts: (a) Making the Decision, and (b) the Action Plan. We have dedicated an entire section to these two concepts.



PART IV: IMPLEMENTATION

I. Making the Decision

Servant Leaders has developed a tool for making the final team decision. The goal of the tool is to ensure that every team member has the opportunity to be heard, understood and evaluated. All team members owe it to the team to support the decision, so long as they have been heard, understood and evaluated. So in this manner, the team gets to take advantage of each member's contribution and wisdom. Simultaneously, this tool also ensures that the decision will not get bogged down in endless debate if consensus is unlikely. We call this tool, "The 5 Finger System."

At the point of decision, the team is asked to vote. Each team member will vote with between one to five fingers. Here's what each option means.

Five Fingers	I completely agree. I will support the decision with my whole heart.
Four Fingers	I agree with the decision, but I have a few small reservations.
If everyone votes with 4 or 5 fingers, the motion passes, and everyone is to support the team decision in public. He should strive to see this decision through as if it were his preferred option.	
Three Fingers	I have some serious reservations. I will support whatever the team decides, but let's talk first.
If one or more members vote with 3 fingers, the motion is postponed. The discussion continues until all have HEARD, UNDERSTOOD and EVALUATED his or her arguments. There will be a 2nd vote. All votes with 3, 4 or 5 fingers are considered positive votes.	
Two Fingers	I do not agree with the decision. I will support the decision publicly if approved by the rest of the team, but I don't like it.
One Finger	I do not agree with the decision, and I can not support it publicly. I will resist it!
If the majority votes with 1 or 2 fingers, the motion ends. If the motion does not require unanimity, and 1 or more vote with 2 fingers, everyone will listen, understand and evaluate the argument of the dissenter. There will be a 2nd vote. If the majority votes with 3, 4 or 5 fingers, the motion passes. Anyone who cannot support the team decision should be dismissed from the team.	



II. The Action Plan

To ensure that a decision is implemented properly, an action plan must be formed. To do this, you should ask who, what, when and how.

A. Who?

Who is responsible for the implementation? Who is responsible to follow up and make sure it gets done correctly?

B. What?

What are the responsible parties supposed to do? What resources need to be allocated in order for this to happen?

C. When?

By when should the implementation take place? When will the team follow up on the implementation?

D. How?

How will the team follow up on the implementation? How will the team evaluate the outcome?

Conclusion

We have walked through the attitudes that promote synergy, the 4 methods for decision-making (and when to use them), the process for decision-making, and the implementation of those decisions. If your team is willing to work off these same principles, then you are fulfilling the spirit of Philippians 2:1-4, which states:

Philippians 2:1-4

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

God's ways are effective! They make sense, too! If your team will follow these biblical concepts, your team members will grow in its Christ-likeness and accomplish more while they are at it!

