

Management

The information in this section on management can be applied to several areas, whether you're operating a church or a secular business. The concepts are the same for each.

Operating a church or nonprofit organization is not as easy as some would presume. It takes great organization, patience, kindness, compassion, budgeting, and the list goes on and on. Your job is not the cakewalk that some would believe.

Many people think the boss at their workplace has high expectations. What they don't realize is that, for pastors, having God as your supervisor is like nothing else. While He has the highest expectations, He is also the most merciful and is not subject to fits of rage and selfishness. Unfortunately for the rest of the church staff, well, your boss is still human and you're in the same boat with everyone else.

General Management Philosophies

- As a manager, your ability to ask the right questions is just as important as having the right knowledge.
- Positive cash flow is more important than profit in the early stages.
- It's harder to get in motion than it is to stay in motion.
- Take your time in hiring, but firing needs to happen quickly.
- The quality of your profits are in direct proportion to your ability to manage your time.

The Quickest Way to Destroy Your Organization

- Start without having the final goal in mind.
- Begin more projects than your team has time to complete. This causes a lack of focus.
- Fail to delegate. You can't do everything yourself; plus, your goal is to raise up new leaders. Delegating is empowering the next generation of leaders.
- Not having a written business plan.
- Not taking care of the small details.
- Let your ego get too big.
- Assume you know what others want without asking them.
- Have team members that do not share your vision.
- Not treating people with respect and consideration.
- Let your actions differ from your words.
- Not having a sensible budget and financial plan.
- Not accepting good advice and constructive criticism.
- Not seeking to increase your knowledge.

Managing Interruptions

There are few instances in today's society when you are not susceptible to interruptions while you are involved in a task that needs to be completed. Interruption is defined as *the act of stopping or hindering by breaking in; breaking the uniformity or continuity of some other action.*

An interruption may be welcome or unwelcome, depending on the task and time-frame you're working on. Everyone needs contact with other humans and that is a benefit of being interrupted. But you must be careful that the need for human contact is not hurting your effectiveness. People usually have good intentions and don't realize they are being inconsiderate or a hindrance. Controlling interruptions is the key to maintaining your effectiveness.

Interruptions can be categorized into two basic types.

- **Intrusive** – Instances in which you have to stop what you are doing (i.e. someone dropping by your office). How do you handle intrusive interruptions?
 1. If you're on the telephone when someone drops by, use head or hand gestures to let them know you're busy and will get back with them later.
 2. Have meetings in others' offices when possible. That way you are able to decide when the meeting is over and you can excuse yourself.
 3. Try hard not to interrupt others.
 4. Reorganize your workspace. Those whose desks face away from the door tend to be interrupted less than those who face their door.
 5. Don't ask people to "just drop in." This puts you at the mercy of their schedule. Try to prearrange meetings when possible.
- **Non-intrusive** – Instances that allow you to decide how to handle the interruption (i.e. e-mails, phone calls, letters, etc.). While non-intrusive interruptions tend to be less of a time-waster than intrusive, they must still be controlled and minimized. Do not accept phone calls or e-mails during times when it is important that a task is completed timely.

Preventing an interruption

Now you know how to react to an interruption, but how can you prevent them from happening?

- Plan ahead – Make sure you have all the material, supplies, input/research, tools, etc. that you need before you begin.
- Avoid unnecessary breaks – Resist unnecessary snacks, walks, phone calls, etc. during your work.
- Establish a clear policy – Make clear to your assistant what constitutes an emergency and what he can handle on his own.
- Block out time – Let others know that a specific time has been set for work and that you will return their calls after that time.
- Schedule your time – Schedule as many meetings as possible in advance and encourage others to save their questions until that time.
- Empower others – Encourage others to take responsibility and handle as much as possible without you.

Shorten accepted interruptions

Sometimes you don't mind being interrupted, but you do mind how long the interruption lasts. Here are some ways to shorten the duration of an interruption.

- Let people know how much time you can spare for them.
- As the allotted time draws to an end, change positions. If you're sitting at your desk, stand up; if you're standing, sit down at your desk.
- Talk as you walk. Once you reach your destination, you can ask if there is anything else you can do for them. That should let them know time is up.

Use Technology to Become More Efficient

- Instead of using the telephone for routine follow-ups, use e-mail. This shows more respect for their time.
- Stop printing your e-mail, unless you need to pass along a hard copy to someone without e-mail.
- You should have no more than one business voice mailbox and one personal voice mailbox.
- Use auto responders to respond to commonly asked e-mail questions.
- Make it easy for others to purchase from you electronically using a website, fax order forms, and voice mail. Orders can be placed 24 hours without the customer having to be placed on hold.
- Choose a cellular phone with caller ID, so you can tell if the call is important enough to take now or return later.
- If you use a PC, a scheduling program would be helpful to remind you of important tasks or events that require your attention.
- Subscribe to a good technology magazine to stay abreast of rapidly changing technology. Spending money up front will save much more time and money lost later through inefficiency.

Management Ethics

Ethics defined is *the study of morals and the specific moral choices an individual makes in relating to others*. For the purpose of this book, let's clarify that we refer to ethics as more than just the **study** of moral choices, but choosing to do right instead of wrong. In today's society, good ethics aren't as obvious and clear-cut as they used to be. Morality, today, is subjective. We are told to do what is right to **us**—that morality can't be dictated by someone else. Many assert that there is always the right thing to do and it is based on moral principles. Others assert that deciding right or wrong is based on the situation and it is ultimately up to the individual.

Within the context of work, “business ethics” means knowing what is right and wrong in the workplace and choosing to do what is right. Good management ethics are crucial in times of organizational change; values that are taken for granted are brought into question during stressful times. Human nature is such that we tend to jump to conclusions and our imagination runs wild when we are on edge. When there is a crisis in an organization, it is imperative that management retains strong moral leadership. There are certain situations that can send messages to the employees that you, as a leader, are not ethical. Just because someone is a leader, they are not exempt from the temptations and problems that plague others. There are many issues, whether illegal or unethical, that people in leadership have become involved in, such as misuse of funds, moral misconduct, and lying.

Misconceptions about business ethics

- **Business ethics are not based on a religious experience.**
One can be religious and still be unethical. There are groups that adhere to a code of honor to tell the truth at all costs, but they are not religious in nature. A true relationship with God, adhering to Biblical principles, will affect your ethical beliefs and morals, encouraging you to “do the right thing.”
- **The organization's employees are ethical, so they don't need training in business ethics.**
All organizations should address the issue of business ethics. An organization is composed of people from all lifestyles with their own perception of what is ethical. In business there needs to be a standard of business ethics that all adhere to.

- **Only theologians or educators should teach business ethics.**
Everyone should be a student of business ethics, teaching and encouraging others to display good ethical standards..
- **Stressing business ethics is unnecessary – everyone is honest.**
It is expected that all people will be honest and not steal. But since dishonesty has been a recurring problem since the beginning of time, then a policy of honesty should not be thought unreasonable. A code of ethics helps the members of an organization with their priorities and focus regarding certain ethical values in the workplace.
- **Ethics cannot be legislated.**
Ethics cannot be legislated, but they can be managed indirectly by example. The behavior of the leader will strongly influence the behavior of employees in the organization/workplace.

The benefits of ethics in your organization

- **Ethics programs help maintain a direction in tough times.**
Business ethics is fundamental in times of change. Leaders find themselves dealing with situations that bring into question the issue of right and wrong. Applying ethical principles consistently can have a calming effect on the staff.
- **Ethics programs help avoid acts of omission.**
Focusing on ethics tends to help organizations detect issues and violations early, so they can be addressed. If a violation is not properly reported, it can be considered a criminal act. (For example: a 501c3 nonprofit organization engaged in a profit-making enterprise is in violation of IRS regulations.)
- **Ethics programs create a strong public image.**
The fact that an organization regularly gives attention to its ethics can portray a strong positive image to the public. People see those types of organizations valuing people over money. These organizations are considered to be of high integrity.

Characteristics of a highly ethical organization

The following principles should be applied as you examine the ethical standards of your organization. They should be reflective of the leadership in the organization.

1. The organization is at ease in working with diverse people. People feel welcomed. There is legitimate concern about the community around the organization.
2. The organization is fair with both its employees and constituents. The organization's leaders are genuinely interested in the members of the organization.
3. The leadership believes responsibility falls on the individual rather than collectively. The organization becomes more than just a job to the individual; it becomes a part of him or her.
4. There is a purpose. This purpose articulates the way the organization operates. This is highly valued by the employees and management. The employees know why they are there and how their work has affected the community or the world.
5. There is a clear vision, which is reflected in integrity throughout the organization.
6. The vision is accepted and owned by the leadership.
7. Contribution and integrity are rewarded.
8. The policies and practices of the organization are fair and ethical. Everyone is treated the same. There are no mixed messages and no bent rules that can jeopardize the integrity of the organization.
9. Every significant management decision has an ethical values aspect.
10. Everyone is expected to work through conflict, whether with employees or with the people the organization serves.