

CHAPTER 52

ON GIVING ADVICE — HOW TO HELP YOUR BOSS SUCCEED

No human being has the sum total of wisdom, understanding and knowledge. Therefore God intends that men give and receive counsel. In fact, the Bible exhorts men to actively seek wise counsel and advice. The benefits of being well-advised include safety, success and wisdom.

God Himself has twenty-four elders surrounding His majestic throne in heaven (Rev. 4:4). One of the titles of Jesus Christ is Counselor (Isa 9:6). In ancient Israel, Moses established a system of counselors to aid him in his daily administration (Ex. 18:13-27). David, a man after God's own heart, had counselors — for example, Hushai and Ahithophel (II Sam. 16:16-23).

For those in authority, whose decisions affect the lives of scores, hundreds or even thousands of others, wise and trustworthy counselors becomes vitally important.

I.D.E. Thomas in his book A Word From the Wise (p. 121) wrote:

'Concerning those who rule over us, Solomon had much advice to offer.

'First, rulers should secure truthful aides. 'Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness' (Prov. 25:5).

'A king, not being omniscient, is dependent most of the time on aides and advisers that surround him. He thus becomes vulnerable to their particular prejudices. Because of this, he is advised to exercise every care in the appointment of such aides, and to take swift action to remove such aides whenever their advice proves false and corrupt. Failure to take such action will damage the king's reputation, and may even bring down his house. Aides wield great power, but little responsibility. They take chances and remain unaccountable. A king has to be on guard, for his reputation is in their hands.'

As the above quote points out, an advisor has a high degree of responsibility. Therefore, he must be deeply aware of his power to influence decisions, whether for good or evil. It is a job to be taken seriously. To be a really good and effective adviser requires the proper fear of God and strong Christian character.

Adam Clarke, in his Commentary (Volume 5, p. 156) stated:

'The best service a subject can render his prince [superior] is to lay before him, in the plainest but most respectful manner, what the law of God requires of him, and what it forbids. How unutterable must the punishment of those be who are chaplains to princes [advisers] or to great men, and who either flatter them in their vices, or wink at their sins.'

This paper gives practical guidelines on how to be an effective adviser.

THE IDEAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD ADVISER

I. Have close daily contact with God through prayer.

- A. Pray daily about your job, realizing you need God's help and guidance.
- B. Realize that you must be close to God in order to have the confidence that your counsel is right and sound.
- C. Pray regularly for greater wisdom and understanding in order to serve more effectively.
- D. Grind up your prayers into details asking God for specific answers to particular problems.
- E. Never try to go it alone — doing what seems right in your own eyes.
- F. Realize that the hidden influence of Satan, the world and your own carnal nature, if followed, will lead you into wrong paths.
- G. Dan. 2:14-18 — Daniel sought God in prayer before giving advice to King Nebuchadnezzar.
- H. Eph. 6:18 — *'Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.'*

II. Be led by and respond to the Holy Spirit.

- A. Keep tuned in to God's wavelength so that your mind will attract God's thoughts, attitudes, insights and understanding.
- B. Aim to have a continuous, uninterrupted fellowship with God.
- C. Remember that God's Spirit is a source of power and strength that you can draw on instantly to guide you in everyday situations you face on the job.
- D. Understand that to be led of God's Spirit on a consistent daily basis demands total repentance, faith, surrender and self-sacrifice.
- E. Rom. 8:14 — '*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*'

III. Desire above all things to glorify God and to do His will.

- A. Strive to please God in every area of your life and to be a proper vessel in which God may dwell.
- B. Have God's Word and will constantly in your thoughts; remember that following your own devices and schemes will eventually result in humiliation and failure.
- C. To glorify God as a begotten son is a privilege of the highest magnitude.
- D. Therefore, look to God with all your heart in fulfilling your responsibilities and serving your boss.
- E. Rom. 15:5-6 — '*Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*'

IV. Keep God's Kingdom constantly in view.

- A. This should be the center around which your life revolves.
- B. Make God's Kingdom a beacon of light that keeps you on track.
- C. Weigh your advice and counsel against this backdrop — this grand, overall perspective.
- D. Make the Kingdom the criteria by which you judge the value of every plan, thought or decision.
- E. Remember that taking your eyes off God's Kingdom is tantamount to losing contact with God.
- F. Matt. 6:33 — '*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*'

V. Ensure that true love and concern for others is your daily guide and motivation.

- A. Make it your primary desire to truly help and serve in a positive way all with whom you interface on the job and especially your boss.
- B. Strive to create an environment of peace, good will and friendliness.
- C. Watch constantly for opportunities to encourage and motivate others.
- D. Remember Galatians 6:10 — '*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*'
- E. Eph. 5:2 — '*And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.*'

VI. Know and apply the Bible to everyday life.

- A. Make the Bible your bedrock of knowledge — saturate your mind with its common-sense principles and living truths.
- B. Consider it your first and foremost textbook on life.
- C. Let it be a quick and ready guide — an instant reference.
- D. Before offering advice or answering a question, scan your memory for a scripture or principle that applies to the situation.
- E. Remember that for every human problem, God has provided an answer in His Word.
- F. Matt. 4:4 — '*But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*'

VII. Be highly dependable, loyal and responsible.

- A. Be reliable — always keep your word and any commitments you have made.
- B. Never let up when the pressure is on. If necessary, work overtime to meet a deadline or fulfill a pressing assignment.
- C. Ensure that you are always 'there' when needed so that the boss can count on you.
- D. Make any written reports of the highest caliber — thorough, accurate and complete.
- E. Prov. 20:6 — '*Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?*'

VIII. Strive for excellence in your field of endeavor or expertise.

- A. Know your business — become a real professional.
- B. Stay up-to-date — keep abreast of trends and patterns affecting your job.

- C. Keep pertinent information at your fingertips.
- D. However, avoid being radical or overly aggressive in your attitude or actions.
- E. Combine sound-mindedness, caution and objectivity.
- F. Maintain a clear perspective — keep the big picture in view.
- G. Prov. 22:29 — 'Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.'

IX. Practice true humility.

- A. Avoid being a glory-hog or a thief who steals ideas from others and takes the credit.
- B. Do not advertise or grandstand your accomplishments.
- C. Don't neglect to express appreciation to peers and associates for their help and service.
- D. Acknowledge that you can't go it alone and that others deserve praise and recognition for their part in your success.
- E. Ask God daily for the power to see and overcome vanity.
- F. I Pet. 5:5 — 'Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.'

X. Develop the qualities that Moses looked for in his captains.

- A. Develop your skills, talents and abilities.
- B. Fear God.
- C. Do not compromise with truth or principles.
- D. Hate covetousness, deceit and hypocrisy.
- E. Judge righteously and fairly between kindred and strangers.
- F. Do not respect persons in judgment but listen to the small as well as the great.
- G. Do not worry what others may think.
- H. Ex. 18:21 — 'Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.'
- I. Deut. 1:15-17 — 'So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes. And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.'

KEYS TO GIVING EFFECTIVE ADVICE

I. Have the right Christian approach and attitude when advising the boss.

- A. Recognize that you are under his authority and that as a loyal and dedicated servant you should honor and submit to him.
- B. Respect his office — never become overly familiar or 'palsy-walsy' with him or take him for granted.
- C. Strive to make him successful and give him your best effort.
- D. Be willing to go the extra mile — do more than you are asked or paid to do.
- E. Serve him as though serving Christ — with humility, enthusiasm and gratitude.
- F. Eph. 6:5-7 — 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing-service, as to the Lord, and not to men.'

II. Remember, your responsibility is to assist the boss, not to take over and do his job.

- A. Guard against being pushy, presumptuous or having a superior attitude.
- B. Don't assume rights and authority that haven't been given.
- C. Keep within your area of responsibility. Don't branch out, wield power over others, meddle in their affairs, unofficially give orders or 'run the show.'
- D. Never work around your boss, using tricks, schemes or political chicanery to implement your ideas or get your way.
- E. Remember that your role is to serve and support the boss — not to become jealous and resentful of his position or to try to steal his honor.
- F. Don't become exalted with pride and try to undermine his position.

III. Keep in mind your power of influence and use it wisely.

- A. As a confidante or adviser to the boss, you play a vulnerable role.
- B. You can influence him for good or evil, for his success or failure.
- C. Your words, tone of voice and over-aggressiveness may have a greater and more far-reaching impact on him than you realize.
- D. Build and maintain a high level of trust and integrity in your working relationship by trying to be 100% reliable.
- E. In weighty matters, never advise without facts or give a precipitous viewpoint or solution.
- F. Consider the impact your counsel may have not only on your boss but on yourself and others.

IV. Get to know your boss and adapt to his temperament, moods and sensitivities.

- A. No two bosses will do things exactly alike or see things the same way.
- B. Because of their background, upbringing and personal experiences, each will think and act differently.
- C. Study your boss's habits and emotional make-up — note what makes him tick, what he likes and what upsets him.
- D. Get to know his value system — what he considers important, what his goals and priorities are and what he hopes to achieve.
- E. Be flexible — adapt to his personality.
- F. Don't become discouraged or feel intimidated if your boss occasionally blows up — we all have our bad days. This does not mean you are to become a 'yes-man'; it does mean using the art of tactful interchange so as to serve him in the most effective way possible.
- G. Maintain a calm and steady head under all circumstances — show that you're durable and will not fold under pressure or criticism.

V. Choose the right time to offer advice.

- A. Use common sense as to when to approach your boss — particularly when important decisions and weighty matters are involved.
- B. Choose a time when he's free of pressure or personal problems.
- C. Look for the time when he's happy and in a positive frame of mind so that he can give you his undivided attention.
- D. Pick a time when conditions are right and he has had few interruptions and distractions.
- E. Catch him when his mind is fresh and clear — not at the end of a long day when either of you are likely to be tired or irritable.
- F. Sharpen your powers of observation, test the air and use good judgment.
- G. Prov. 15:23 — '*...a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*'

VI. Before challenging or questioning the boss's method, try to understand his reasons.

- A. Don't rush in and try to change your boss's approach or the direction he's trying to take — that is the height of presumptuousness and vanity.
- B. David beseeched God, *'Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me...' (Ps. 19:13)*.
- C. Realize that once the boss has explained his course of action and you see his logic, you may 'come out with egg on your face' (Prov. 18:13).
- D. The proud peacock doesn't know any better when it struts around, but for you to behave in this manner as a mature and intelligent adult is reprehensible.
- E. Work first at understanding your boss's needs, wishes and plans — then you'll have a clearer view of how to help him.

VII. Get the facts so you will know whereof you speak.

- A. This is a point that can't be emphasized too strongly or too often.
- B. Realize that your boss is relying on you to give him accurate information.
- C. Prepare thoroughly — seek counsel from those who are experts in their field. Remember that in the multitude of counsellors there is safety (Prov. 11:14).
- D. Double-check your information — make certain it's correct.
- E. Leave no stone unturned until all gaps are filled and all questions that may be asked are answered.
- F. Consult with all involved parties for counsel and feedback.
- G. If you have done your homework, generally the facts will speak for themselves.
- H. Remember Prov. 25:19 — '*Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*'

VIII. Always be prepared with written, backup material in case it is called for.

- A. Writing down facts will help you to thoroughly think them out and organize them the most logically.
- B. It allows your boss to have a permanent record of what you discussed with him. He can go back, re-examining the details before making a final decision.
- C. A written memo is also evidence of your efforts and integrity, should they ever be questioned.
- D. It can also be referred to retrospectively, for the purpose of follow-up.

IX. While gathering and organizing information, periodically update your boss of your progress.

- A. This can be done orally or in memo form.
- B. Mention what you have come up with so far and what steps you plan to take next.
- C. Regularly get the boss's feedback or direction for follow-up.
- D. This will enable you to stay on target and help your boss to think through the facts gathered so far.
- E. At the same time you fortify your value as a faithful and responsible servant.

X. Present information in an easy-to-follow and well-organized manner.

- A. Try to present your case in such a way that the answer is obvious or that the facts speak for themselves.
- B. Be concise — repeat key points or proofs for emphasis.
- C. Anticipate questions and objections that may be raised and have ready answers.
- D. Make sure that your boss understands your input — use clear transitions and tie things together.
- E. Remember that what is not clear can cause confusion and is subject to misunderstanding, the consequences of which can be costly.
- F. Don't just try to sell your 'baby' or 'pet theory'; present the best and well-thought-out idea that will benefit all.

XI. Give a complete picture — present all sides of the issue.

- A. Don't just present a ready-made or one-sided answer but give a complete overview.
- B. Show the boss the pros and cons — advantages and dangers — but allow your boss to draw his own conclusions.
- C. If he wants your opinion, be prepared to express your reasons.
- D. Do more than just give an off-the-cuff answer — show that you've considered all angles and have weighed carefully every detail.
- E. You might say, 'I would do it this way, for these reasons...'

XII. Always be honest and truthful.

- A. For your boss to trust your word and judgment is one of the greatest compliments he could pay.
- B. To be an effective and trustworthy aide, you must be honest even if it means being unpopular.
- C. Express your feelings from the heart — humbly, openly, sincerely and tactfully.
- D. Tell the truth even if the information is unpleasant.
- E. Give him all the information you have or can find on a project. Don't hide some of the facts or try to deceive him.
- F. Withholding needed information may lead to an even more unpleasant situation when it causes your superior to make a bad decision.
- G. Your boss may perceive that you do not enjoy giving this type of information, but he will respect you for your honesty.
- H. Preserve your integrity at all costs, for if you lose it, your usefulness as an adviser has ended.

XIII. Use God's form of psychology.

- A. Put your ideas in such a way that they become his ideas.
- B. Suggest, ask questions, get your boss thinking about ideas or approaches he may have never considered.
- C. Stimulate his mind, arouse his curiosity, plant the seeds so that he will want to take the ball and run with it.
- D. Stress the pluses, demonstrate the advantages — perhaps show him how others are already using these ideas and principles successfully.
- E. Remember Prov. 25:11 — 'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.'
- F. Avoid the impression that you've hatched out a 'brilliant brainstorm' — thus calling attention to yourself and exposing your vanity.
- G. Do not be wise in your own conceit (Prov. 26:12).
- H. If for no other reason, the boss may reject your ideas in order to keep you in line.

XIV. Use tact and wisdom when giving advice.

- A. The calm, mild and mature approach is best if the atmosphere is conservative or calls for caution.
- B. Try to avoid language that is incriminating; put everyone at ease — work at removing barriers.
- C. Don't come across as a know-it-all or one who enjoys using others as the brunt of your jokes.
- D. Strive to win the cooperation and good will of all by hearing out their ideas and viewpoints.
- E. Apply Prov. 15:2 — '*The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*'

XV. Give advice in private — unless you're in a group discussion.

- A. In presenting matters that you've thoroughly researched, it's better not to have others present who are unfamiliar with the facts — they will complicate or hinder the decision by raising already answered questions.
- B. This does not mean to avoid what others may say for fear of being challenged or shot out of the saddle.
- C. Common sense dictates that the fewer people present, the more freely your boss can think and evaluate the facts.
- D. However, this presupposes that you have the integrity and professional courtesy to consult with all involved before presenting ideas that may affect their lives or the welfare of the organization.

XVI. When your boss introduces a subject, don't go off in a thousand directions.

- A. Keep on target, try to avoid bringing up unrelated matters or details.
- B. To interrupt a discussion by introducing side issues, criticisms or judgmental remarks is not only rude, but counterproductive.
- C. Be interested in your boss's problem — get on his wavelength.
- D. Your involvement and interest will enable you to give your boss better advice and thereby help him find an answer.
- E. Remember that your boss needs your help — not clever quips or arguments.

XVII. Keep your emotions under control — especially in an open give-and-take discussion.

- A. In a brainstorming situation, it's only natural to attack an idea or suggestion you don't like or strongly disagree with.
- B. Feelings can heat up. Remember Prov. 25:28 — '*He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.*'
- C. Remember that your boss is looking for ideas and solutions — everyone should be allowed to express his views.
- D. The boss is in a better position to know what he wants, or how to evaluate the worth of a suggestion.
- E. Don't stifle a free give-and-take situation with ridicule, sarcasm, personal putdowns or intimidation.
- F. Out of twenty ideas offered, only one may be of value — but it may take twenty to find the one that works.

XVIII. Recognize when it is better to present your input or viewpoint in writing.

- A. Realize there are times when you can communicate better by writing than orally.
- B. This may be when the issue is very complex and many factors are involved.
- C. When figures and statistics are important to the decision, tables or graphs can be most effective.
- D. When your boss is extra-busy, it may be a good idea to present your thoughts in a memo, which he can study as time allows.

XIX. Be team-oriented — build up and give credit to others where due.

- A. Think in terms of helping to build up and edify everyone in the organization.
- B. Realize that on the human plane, people — employees, fellow workers, associates — are your boss's greatest asset and most important resource.
- C. Try to be fair and concerned for all, sincerely desiring to see them succeed.
- D. Praise them to the boss and boost morale — call his attention to their special contributions and creative efforts.
- E. Show empathy and regard for their needs and well-being when speaking to the boss on their behalf.
- F. Keep in mind, however, that the goals of your boss or the organization must take precedent and never be minimized or subjugated to the whims of complaining employees.

XX. Before presenting faulty, premature or incriminating evidence about others to the boss, make sure you have the facts.

- A. Don't rush to the boss with every little insinuation, innuendo or tidbit of gossip.
- B. As far as possible and within your realm of responsibility, check out the validity of the story.
- C. Avoid upsetting the boss with a rumor that has no real basis in fact.
- D. Don't be a tattletale — yet, don't withhold damaging information you know to be true.
- E. You will lose credibility and create distrust if your rumor-mongering proves false.
- F. Remember Prov. 18:13 — '*He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.*'

XXI. If in doubt about a rumor, suggest a fair and honest investigation.

- A. You have the responsibility to protect the name and reputation of all with whom you work.
- B. Think of how you would like to be treated if roles were reversed.
- C. You'll win the respect and admiration of everyone, including your boss, if you show largeness of heart and a sincere desire to protect and uphold the good names of others.
- D. Don't give way to evil forces by perpetuating slander on flimsy evidence.

XXII. Jog the boss's memory about things he may have forgotten.

- A. Think of yourself as a 'backup memory' in case your boss forgets.
- B. Jot down dates, deadlines, commitments, etc. so you'll remember.
- C. Keep track — within your realm. Check on progress.
- D. Be sure to always come across as being helpful and not critical.

XXIII. Encourage and reinforce the boss's confidence when necessary.

- A. Things can go wrong — unexpected trials and events have a way of intruding into his life and plans.
- B. Peers and associates can become critical, enemies from without harass and malign.
- C. Your boss is vulnerable — he's human and subject to the stresses and strains of life like anyone else.
- D. Usually, however, because he's the boss — the responsibility he shoulders is much greater than that of the average 'Joe Blow.'
- E. At times he will want to throw in the towel and quit.
- F. It's during these dark moments that he needs a lift and positive reinforcement.
- G. Get his mind back on track by reminding him of his past achievements and successes.
- H. Infuse him with hope and courage — and remind him that with the help of God he cannot fail.

XXIV. Pray for humility and remind yourself daily of what you are — a simple servant.

- A. Be ever watchful of the tendency to become puffed up with vanity or an attitude of self-will.
- B. Restraine the urge to be insistent, independent or to do things the way you want.
- C. Remember that pride and lack of submission are displeasing to God (Jas. 4:6).
- D. Pray for a submissive and willing spirit — be responsive and obedient.

WHAT NOT TO DO WHEN GIVING ADVICE

I. Don't try to manipulate your boss to get what you want.

- A. Never use your close relationship to secure special favors, gain recognition or receive promotion.
- B. This puts your boss in an awkward position and will strain the relationship — he will eventually recognize that you are using him.
- C. Consequently, he may begin looking to others for counsel resulting in you being put more and more out of the picture.
- D. Remember that getting the breaks through manipulating your boss will likely result in quick demise because your qualifications will not match your responsibilities.
- E. Instead, keep a humble attitude and let your good works speak for themselves.
- F. Work on improving yourself so that you will be ready for a higher position when one is opened up to you.

II. Don't try to flatter and make points with the boss.

- A. Realize that flattery is falsehood — it is lying — and as such breaks the Ninth Commandment.
- B. Excessive compliments or false praise are not going to be of benefit to you, your boss or the organization (Prov. 26:28).
- C. David considered flatterers his enemies (Ps. 5:8) and asked that God 'let them fall by their own counsels' (vs. 10).
- D. Your boss is interested in good, productive ideas that will help the organization, not in flattery which is vain and helps no one.

III. Don't think in terms of self-preservation or 'what I can get out of it.'

- A. Don't give or withhold information simply to preserve your position.
- B. This selfish, narrow-minded approach may result in your boss making a poor decision that will adversely affect the entire organization, including you.
- C. If possible, try to refrain from giving advice in a situation where you stand to benefit personally — bow out due to a conflict of interest, knowing that you will be tempted to give biased advice.
- D. If you are unable to avoid this type of situation, be totally up front with the boss about your dilemma so that he can take this into account. Then go on to advise him as neutrally as you possibly can.

IV. Don't allow personal prejudice, envy or pride to reject others' ideas.

- A. Refrain from judging a person's idea by his status, rank or background.
- B. Avoid a tendency to ignore input from younger members of the team — there is no reason why it can't be valuable.
- C. Never elevate your ideas, intimidate others or 'drop names' because of your position.
- D. Remember that to show partiality or to have respect of persons is hurtful and unfair to others (Prov. 28:21).
- E. Think through each idea, logically and rationally, irrespective of who gave it.

V. Don't use sarcasm, put downs or intimidation in a group situation.

- A. Such practice reflects immaturity, rudeness and a lack of godly character.
- B. Any cutting remarks will quickly stifle discussion and prove counterproductive.
- C. Ridicule or other expressions of contempt shows lack of love or concern for others.
- D. By elevating yourself you will soon lose your boss's respect as well as that of your fellow employees.

VI. Don't give advice in order to get even or harm someone who may have done you an injustice.

- A. Strive to be fair and impartial when your advice will affect someone with whom you may have had a conflict in the past — never allow personality conflicts to color your recommendations.
- B. Forget the past. The inner bitterness that results from holding a grudge will hurt you more than anyone else.
- C. Matt. 6:14-15 — '*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*'
- D. Carefully examine your motives before making recommendations.
- E. Forebear giving advice in a situation where you feel that you cannot remain neutral, rather than presenting tainted and therefore harmful advice.

VII. Don't be afraid to say 'I don't know.'

- A. Never give information you are not certain of.
- B. Your motive behind coming up with any sort of an answer when you don't have a good one is probably self-protection or vanity.
- C. Your employer will respect you more for admitting that you don't know the answer than for giving him erroneous information that will cause problems later.
- D. Remember that decisions based on incorrect input can be very damaging to those directly affected by the decision as well. As the reputation of your organization, boss and yourself.

VIII. Don't present just problems, but offer solutions.

- A. Your role as an adviser is to present the boss with information that would otherwise be too time-consuming for him to gather personally.
- B. Think of all the possible alternatives to the problem — and then offer the best options.
- C. Point out the pros and cons of each suggestion, trying not to show partiality, unless one is obviously the best solution.
- D. Let your boss select and decide which is the best. Always keep in mind that your boss has asked you to advise him, not make decisions for him.

IX. Don't put pressure on your boss to accept your advice or decide the way you think best.

- A. Don't try to hardsell your idea by being pushy or presumptuously this will only tend to irritate and make your boss less receptive.
- B. Keep calm and logical, remaining open to any feedback your boss may give.
- C. Remember that your boss is more likely to understand the ramifications of his decision than you are.
- D. Avoid repetition — it will make you seem insistent. Present your thoughts clearly the first time around. (If your boss does not understand something, he will ask.)

- E. Don't pressure your boss into making a decision before he is ready to make it — a rushed decision is likely to be wrong.
- F. Your impatience will soon become annoying and may also cause you to appear immature. Patience (also called longsuffering) is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
- G. Don't use phrases like 'this must be done' or 'it cannot wait' — these sound as though you are giving orders, not advice.
- H. Even if your boss makes an error in judgment, he certainly does not want to be reminded of it by an employee chiming in with a childish 'I told you so.'

X. Don't get upset if your advice is not taken.

- A. Bear in mind that the boss is in charge and the ultimate decision rests with him.
- B. He must make the decision he feels is best because of being held responsible for it.
- C. Realize that even if your advice is not taken, you have served your boss by helping him understand more about a decision than he would have without your counsel. (Don't forget that he is in a position to see more of the angles than you are.)
- D. Reacting emotionally if your advice is not taken will only cause your boss to hesitate asking you for advice in the future.
- E. Just because your boss has not followed your advice does not mean he thinks less highly of you than before.
- F. No matter what the final decision, submit to it, remembering Eph. 6:5 — '*Servants, [employees], be obedient to them that are your masters [bosses] according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.*'

— END —