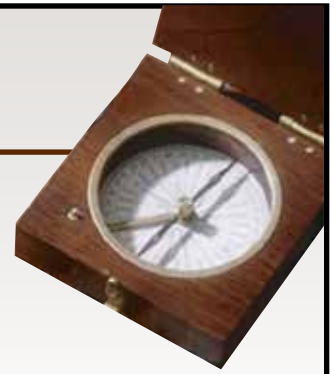


# The Leadership Principle of Confrontation



*“A soft answer turns away wrath.” Proverbs 15:1*

*Underline the key concepts found in this principle.*

Conflicts become confrontations when we say unkind things, raise our voice or become aggressive with our expressions. When we are confronted by someone, our natural tendency is to get defensive and argumentative because we don't want to be proven wrong. To be wrong is humbling, and it hurts our pride. We defend our position even when we know we are wrong or have exaggerated the truth.

No one is always right in every situation, yet all of us are usually partly right and that is what gets us into trouble. Since we know we are at least partly right, we open our mouths and freely give our opinions even though we may have only one side of the situation. Sometimes it's because we like to be heard and noticed. Once we have spoken our opinions, we are committed to defend our position. Each time we defend ourselves it is more costly to admit that we were wrong in some way, which is not easy to do.

When we have disagreements, which we all have, it is important to manage and control the tone of our voice. A soft answer turns away wrath. When our response is soft and gentle, our opponents will respect us and consider our point of view, this gives us a chance to continue the discussion. It is amazing how powerful words are in the hands of those who know how to use them. The words “I'm sorry” are powerful, but when they come from a soft, sensitive tongue, they are disarming. A soft slow answer is more powerful than tanks and guns.

Good relationships give us the right to express our opinion without confrontation. Poor communication destroys relationships, wastes time and energy and hinders us in resolving the problem. We may win the argument, but lose the

point we were trying to make, and possibly lose the relationship in the process. We can't have good communication without good relationships.

## **BENEFITS**

1. Learning to manage confrontation teaches us how to respond to situations, this is a great advantage. When we respond in a calm and peaceful way we are letting people know that we have information and that we are sure about our position.
2. Successfully managing confrontation will maintain good relationships and keep communication open. It is not about winning at all costs, when a discussion develops into an argument an aggressive attitude may have us believe that we won the fight, but the truth is we only win when we maintain good interaction and keep communication open.
3. Handling confrontation properly will keep us humble. Learn to be comfortable saying we don't know or we are not sure. No one knows everything and admitting that in front of others is a key aspect in having great communication.
4. Dealing with confrontation will train us to see the other point of view. “You may be right”, or “That's an interesting point” can disarm the situation and your point will be more easily accepted as well.

## **STEPS TO FOLLOW**

1. Maintain good relationships so that you can communicate your opinions without fear of it escalating to a confrontation. It is more

# Action Plan for Confrontation



important to maintain healthy relationships than lose friends through the need to always be right.

2. Look for a way to agree. Try to see where they are coming from. When there is a misunderstanding, it is important to maintain open communication. This does not mean at any cost or not expressing your own opinion. What it means is that you are in disagreement with the opinion they have, or the position they hold, not negating it.
3. Notice where things are going and see if it is worth engaging in at the present time. If you go on the offensive and they go on the defensive you are only going to build walls of separation.
4. Control confrontations using soft answers and a smile, a smile has power. If someone wants to argue with us and we are right, if we smile and have a soft answer, the conversation is going to become difficult for the other person. Control your emotions; breathe deep before you respond on the defense. Your body language is also crucial in managing confrontation.
5. Always finish with a peaceful close. Shake hands after a disagreement and acknowledge that you don't have to agree on everything, making room for a difference of opinion.
6. Develop the skill of seeing value in others and their opinions. Don't be boastful or have an over confident attitude, but rather downplay your knowledge. By acknowledging that they may be right you can defuse the situation and then you win the right to express your opinion. It is better to get part of something than nothing at all.

The way we use and handle words may determine war or peace, friends or enemies, and failure or success in life. If we know something for sure, we do not have to scream or get loud and abrasive, that is only a sign of insecurity. It

can be very embarrassing to be wrong at the top of our voice. Confrontations exist and are a reality but try to remember that disagreement does not equal rejection. The best way to win is to forget to keep score.

***Remember... thoughts produce actions, actions become habits, habits form our character, and character determines our destiny!***

## REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. How do you react when someone speaks to you with anger or arrogance?
2. What aspect of this principle challenges you most?
3. Have you had the opportunity to lose the argument and gain a friend?

Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
What specific action can you put into practice to test the benefits of this principle?										
Check list for the daily reading of this principle	M	T	W	T	F	S	S			

Completed

Not completed