

The Leadership Principle of Understanding People



“For the Lord grants wisdom! His every word is a treasure of knowledge and understanding.” Proverbs 2:6

By John E. Schrock, Businessman

Underline the key concepts found in this principle.

Why should I want to understand people? That’s a good question. There are many reasons, but let us look at a few of the important ones:

1. It will save us from a lot of conflicts.
2. We will be able to lead and motivate people.
3. It will give us a forgiving heart.

The wise man, Solomon, talked much about certain types of people—the fools, mockers, rebels, the lazy, and others. He was wise because he understood them and knew how to deal with them. He experienced great fame and success by understanding them, and they called it “wisdom”. If we don’t understand mockers and rebels, we will have a lot of unnecessary conflicts with them and then develop a bad attitude toward them—which will in turn hurt us more than it will them. As people in business, we need to understand our employees in order to motivate them, or we will have poor production which will put us out of business. We also need to understand our customers—what they want, and why they want it. Without understanding them and their needs, we may be serving them well but not satisfying them. Sometimes all they want is to be appreciated or recognized. Every one of us have at least four basic needs:

1. To be loved and appreciated.
2. To experience a sense of achievement or self-worth.
3. To have a sense of belonging.

4. To feel secure.

We should keep these in mind whenever we deal with people, regardless of the situation. Business management consists of motivating people to service others. It is pretty hard to manage and motivate our people if we don’t understand their personal needs. We need to understand their strengths and their weaknesses, and place them accordingly. A good team is made of a variety of people with a variety of gifts. The weakness in one should be covered by the strength of another. Out of the Lord’s mouth comes knowledge and understanding, and if we sincerely seek Him to gain wisdom, He will give it. God says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”. When we understand why people do what they do and why they are what they are, we will know how to direct them to get the proper response.

A good understanding will also give us a forgiving attitude. Jesus understood His accusers. That’s why He could say, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

What an attitude! Forgiveness came easily because He understood their ignorance or why they did what they did. We too, can forgive easily if we understand ourselves and the situation of others. Generally, people want to be nice and good, but situations and pressures of life push them past their hope or dreams. Many times, they feel bad immediately after they have reacted. This gives us an opportunity to speak a word of wisdom to them. The time to build people is when they are down; they won’t listen to us when they are up. We need to commit ourselves to the task of understanding people. God will bless and reward us with a forgiving heart, and will give us peace and happiness in a world that is full of frustration and conflict.

This principle is part of the one year character development program:

Foundations For Achievement.

Thoughts to Ponder:

Many people will close their ears to advice but most people will open their eyes to example.

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