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When You Don't Know What To Do

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Moses, one of history's greatest leaders, couldn't solve every problem by himself. And neither can you. Fortunately, Moses had what we need. He possessed the wisdom and humility to allow others to provide him insight and guidance. Nobody gave him more strategic advice than his father-in-law, Jethro (Exodus 18:13-26). If you think settling disputes in your family is tough, imagine having to settle every dispute for 2.5 million people.

Avoid Burn Out With This Advise

While visiting with Moses, Jethro observed Israel's leader individually settling every personal and legal dispute for the people. The long line of people, the sweat on Moses' brow and the deep bags under his eyes no doubt triggered a red warning light in Jethro's mind. Something was seriously wrong. People were exhausted by the long wait and the endless pressure drained Moses. Imagine having to settle every dispute for 2.5 million people.

Jethro quickly formulated a plan that revealed an acute awareness of how organizations can be effectively structured to maximize resources. First, he urged Moses to educate all of the people in the kind of behavior God expected of them. Such widespread education would no doubt enable the people to determine God's will regarding many of their problems.

Build a Quality Team With People of Character

Next, he urged Moses to select men to serve as judges over "thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens" (v. 21) so they could decide the simple cases. The difficult cases would still be brought to Moses. Of course, Jethro recognized only qualified men could serve in such roles. He said these judges should be "capable."

In the Hebrew language the word for "capable" means "faithful." They must be men with a proven track record. Men with a demonstrated ability to look out for the interests of others , , , men "who hate dishonest gain." Such men would flee extortion. And they would be trusted.

Seek Good Advice

Fortunately for the people of Israel, Moses listened to Jethro's advice. Effective leaders lead effectively because they welcome advise from wise counselors.