

General Leadership Principles

Lesson designed by: Bob Turner

Course description: General Leadership Principles Part 1

This course is the first of three lessons that discuss how leaders influence others to their way of thinking. The intent of these courses is to address several needed components in leadership today to help guide the direction of the church toward the body God intended. The material for these classes is based out of Dale Carnegie's book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Identified and discussed the first four components of how to influence people to our way of thinking.
- B. Listed out ways to accomplish each component in influencing others.

Outline of the class:

- A. Divide the class into groups of four. Ask each group to spend 10-15 minutes making a list of as many areas as they can think of that would help influence others to our way of thinking.
- B. After they complete the task, ask each group to share their suggestions. Make a list on the whiteboard of these areas. From the suggestions made, discuss the four that align with the four listed in the next point.
- C. Four areas we want to dig more deeply into today include the following.
 - 1. Avoid arguing
 - a. It has been said, the best way to get the best of an argument is to avoid it.
 - b. Too often, we fight to win the battle, but fail to realize how we lose the war. We need to ask ourselves a couple of questions:
 - i. What are we really trying to prove?
 - ii. Does being right and proving someone else wrong mean that much to us?
 - iii. Is the final price worth the effort we put forth to be right, or win?
 - c. Ask the class to discuss what we can do to avoid arguing with others and write down their answers on the whiteboard.
 - i. Avoid specific subjects that tend to lead toward arguments.
 - ii. Be aware of our own issues that tend to make us angry or confrontational, and avoid them.

- iii. Show greater interest in the other person's point of view.
- iv. Learn to ask questions that lead to clarification instead of inserting our thoughts, feelings, or opinions.
- v. Don't raise our voice.
- vi. Talk about our feelings before we get angry.
- vii. If we learn we have offended the other person, learn three powerful words, "I am sorry."
- viii. We can also ask for time to think about the situation before engaging in further discussion.

2. Show respect

- a. Learning to demonstrate respect for the other person—including their opinions—is vital to influencing others to our way of thinking.
- b. Without respect, there is no chance of entering the discussion. The key word is "opinion."
 - i. Never tell people their opinions are wrong. They are just opinions, and we all have them.
 - ii. People only discover through learning that their opinion may need to change. Oddly enough, we may learn through the process that our own opinion is the one that needs to change. We will never know without respect.
- c. Ask the class to share their thoughts on how we can show respect to others. Review the lesson of respect in the Leadership course under "Character." This will provide areas to consider with regards to how we gain and lose respect.

3. Admit wrong

- a. Admit it quickly and emphatically. When we are wrong and do not admit it, we lose every opportunity to influence others to our way of thinking. We are seen in a negative light and others are unwilling to listen to what we have to say.
- b. The reason this is important to understand is because no one is perfect, including us, and everyone knows it.
- c. Ask the class to list out the reasons it is so hard for us to admit it when we are wrong:
 - i. Pride or arrogance / lack humility

- ii. No one wants to be wrong
 - iii. We are in denial that we are wrong
 - iv. We don't believe we are wrong
 - v. Our dislike for the other person
 - vi. We possess an attitude of rudeness, disgust, or meanness
4. Be friendly
- a. This is an area that is so simple, yet so often overlooked when it comes to influencing others to our way of thinking.
 - b. We need to learn that we can disagree on many matters, but still be friendly. There is no reason to drive a wedge or create feelings of anger and anxiety, be friendly.
 - c. Ask the class to describe ways we can show friendliness:
 - i. Do not criticize, condemn, complain, or be negative.
 - ii. Give honest and sincere appreciation (not flattery)
 - iii. Arouse in others an eager desire: How? Do not overwhelm them with our attention; be eager to be with them. Enjoy doing things together. Be a friend.
 - iv. Become genuinely interested in the other person: be real, not phony, people see through insincerity (kids especially, they look at what we do; they do not listen what we say).
 - v. Smile – do not be phony, but comforting and warm.
 - vi. Remember the person's name (are we really a friend if we can't remember their name?) – Do not let “brother” or “sister” become a title we use.
 - vii. Be a good listener – encourage others to talk about themselves.
 - viii. Talk in terms of the other person's interests. Be interested in them, their likes.
 - ix. Make the other person feel important and be sincere.

Conclusion:

- A. We all want to influence others to our way of thinking, especially as we consider the spiritual needs of the soul.

- B. In order to achieve this task, we need to apply a few simple principles that will help us influence others in ways that will bring about positive results.
- C. Next week, we will consider four additional ways we can approach the winning combination of influencing others to our way of thinking.

Recommending Reading:

Carnegie, Dale. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*