Task Vs. Relationship Resource

Lead Like Jesus by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, presents the topic of balance in leadership. An exercise in the workbook asks the reader to place a mark on the line that represents his/her natural tendency towards either "results" or "people."

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Results **People**

We have used two other terms to illustrate this concept:

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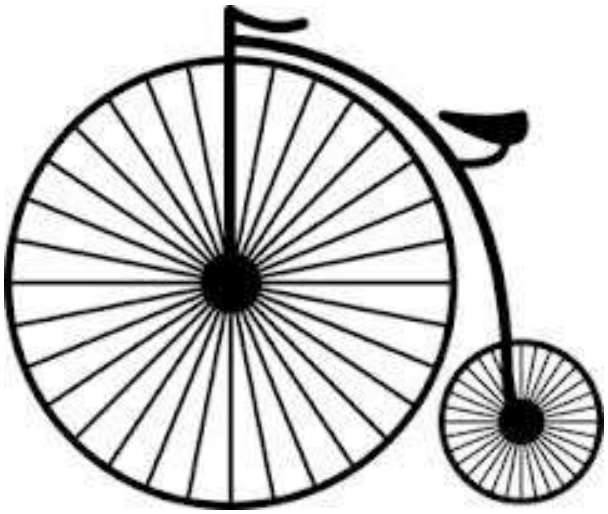
Task **Relationship**

Our little bike shows those two focuses "out of balance." We want to be leaders who can balance task and relationship in our leadership. But we each start with a tendency for one or the other. If you ever took the "animal" personality quiz, you may remember that the Otters and Golden Retrievers will be more *relationship*- focused and will need to work harder to be accountable for *tasks*. On the other hand, Lions and Beavers can get so *task*-focused that they may completely miss *relationship.*



Task Relationship

Virtually everything we do effectively as leaders requires two skill sets. We can't be an ***effective*** leader without mastering both the task and relationship skills of our position. You ignore one to the peril of the other! Usually we are stronger in one area and weaker in another. Here, we need to remember the model of both Jesus and the Apostle Paul; they were equally strong in *both* areas. With the help of the Holy Spirit, you *can* become proficient in both kinds of skills. Philippians 4:13 promises "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength."

In the Women's Ministry Manual, every Board position has been carefully described. Read your job description carefully. Where are you strong? Where are you weak? There may well be a few things regarding your position that will challenge you. There may be things you don't "like" to do. Every single position has some unpleasant, difficult things to do. With your position you have tasks you are responsible to do with excellence. Not fulfilling your responsibilities is damaging to your whole team and your ministry. One way to handle those weak areas is to bring along a team member that is strong in your area of weakness, so the task is still fulfilled by your team and does not need to be picked up by other Board members.

For example, if you are the PWOC President, you may *want* to spend all your time with people. However, if you don't have a well-planned agenda for the next Board meeting, if you don't talk to your Board members between meetings to discover important needs, if you haven't notified your Board in a timely manner of the meeting and provided them with an agenda beforehand, your meetings will lack focus and your team may lose interest. How far can you go when your "relational" tire is filled with air and your "task" tire is flat?

The opposite example may be a PWOC President who is more comfortable focusing on the tasks of ministry. She sends out many emails, agendas, is busy getting things set up on PWOC mornings, and sends reminder emails or text messages when board members do not respond to her deadlines. She could find board members missing meetings without explanation, board meetings could be efficient, but board members could be frustrated or afraid to share their challenges. Team members could drop out because they don't feel affirmed. How far can you go when your "task" tire is full of air, but the "relational" tire is flat?

Ephesians 4:16 illustrates the connection between task and relationship on a team. "From Him, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, *grows and builds itself up in love* (relationship)*, as each part does its work* (task)."

There will be times when we *cannot* complete a task for which we are responsible: an acute emergency, such as a death in the family, or a child's sudden illness… In such cases, those "supporting ligaments" are indeed needed on a temporary basis. But a team member who simply neglects her responsibilities on a chronic basis places undue stress on the entire team. She is not walking in love.

If you think of all the "one-anothering" verses in Scripture, you'll see that those who neglect relationship skills are not walking in love either. Both are needed, and accountability in both areas is necessary for an effective leadership team. Being aware of our personal tendency to lean towards either the *task* or *relationship* end of the spectrum, is half the battle. We just need to be accountable to others and work together to bring balance in our leadership.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3: 23-24.