



4. Competence

TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEO

The quality of relationships – both personal and business is built on TRUST. As mentioned before TRUST is the product of Integrity, Competence, Concern, and Dependability. Having looked at Integrity for two weeks we turn our attention now to competence.

King David's ability to gain the trust and be a successful leader is summed up beautifully by Asaph in Psalm 78 verse 72, "David cared for his people with a faithful and honest heart. With skilled hands he led them." David led his people with his integrity and his competence. John Maxwell, the leadership guru puts it this way, "David's excellent leadership combined both heart and art." (*John Maxwell*)

Integrity without competence or competence without integrity are sure recipes for failure. When we read the Bible, we realize that skills are not some type of cosmetic that one puts on and takes off. It is a much more important. It is the element that enables a person to live out God's calling for their life. Can we imagine the following people being able to live out their calling without possessing competency?

Imagine Moses without his skills of delegation he learned from his father-in-law Jethro? Or Nehemiah without the ability to manage projects and people? Or Paul without his exceptional communication skills that led to the spread of spiritual truth to his readers?

Yes, competencies have played an important part in these individuals fulfilling their God-given calling. Competency is the ability to know and define what needs to be done and then to plan it and actually do it or to get it done. Without competency it is impossible to increase trust and credibility among followers.

Jesus also highlights the importance of competency in the two stories found in Luke 14 where the protagonists don't have it. The first story is of a builder who lacks the competencies of planning, budgeting and executing but begins a tower building project. Due to his lack of competencies the tower never gets finished and he becomes and object of ridicule.

The second story is of king who lacks the competencies to assess the strength of his army vs his enemy's army. Despite this he threatens to go to battle and does so. But, very soon he realizes he has made a wrong call and has no option other than to call for a face-saving truce.

In simple words, competence is being good at doing something. It involves knowing what to do and knowing how to do it. Both knowledge and skill together result in competency. For example, if I am asked to paint a wall, I must know how to paint a wall, and equally important is to know which wall to paint. Otherwise, I may end up painting the wrong wall very well or I may paint the correct wall very badly. Both results are the fruit of incompetency.

Competency does not happen overnight. It is developed over a period of time and with consistent practice. The single slingshot that brought Goliath down was not a one-shot wonder. David must have been using his sling for years to protect his sheep before he brought Goliath down.

I believe competency also grows when the paradoxical phrase “positive dissatisfaction” is an integral part of all we do. Jim Collins famously said, “Good is the enemy of great.” In other words, if you are satisfied with good you will never aspire to be great. To improve our competency, we must have this kind of positive dissatisfaction and always aspiring to improve it.

While being competent is so important both for our ability and credibility, there are times I have lacked confidence in my competence to do something. In those not so infrequent times of hesitancy, there is a verse that strengthens me. A verse that helps me attempt things beyond my known capabilities and that helps me stretch my competency muscles is 2 Corinthians 3:4-5. It says, “*Such confidence we have through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.*”

As we journey on the road to build trust, may our confidence be in Christ and our competence come from God. God bless you!!

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