

## **Counseling with Our Councils**

### ***Key Quotes and Ideas for Your Role as a Campus Leader***

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*“The ideal model is straightforward and simple: call good people to serve with you, listen carefully to their counsel and consider their input, and then listen to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit as it leads you to make good decisions. Functioning successfully as a council doesn’t mean making group decisions. It simply means the council leader draws from the various abilities, insights, experiences, and inspiration of council members to help make good decisions under the influence of the Spirit.”*

(M. Russell Ballard, Counseling with Our Councils, p. 68)

#### What prevents us from “counseling with our councils” correctly?

- Lack of knowledge about how to “counsel with our councils.”
- Lack of practice (i.e. practicing the principles of “counsel with our councils”).
- Individual personality traits and/or issues (i.e. the social and emotional intelligence of the leader or various members of the group).
- Habits (e.g. maybe a leader initially learned a different way of leading).
- Lack of an agenda or ineffective use of an agenda.
- Lack of preparation for the meeting (by the leader and/or the council members).
- Trying to hurry through too many items in a short period of time.
- Focusing too much on coordination, calendaring, etc., instead of focusing on people and issues.
- Leaders who feel like they need to control and/or do everything (e.g. micromanagement).
- Lack of group cohesion/unity (maybe from unkind feelings, pride, back-biting, or selfishness).
- When “wanting to be right” outweighs “doing what’s right.”
- As a member of the council, being too easily offended.
- Lack of participation by council members.
- An indolent or indifferent attitude.
- Council members who exercise disproportionate influence or monopolize the discussion.
- A “protectionist” mentality (i.e. protecting your own turf; making sure you get your “slice of the pie”).
- Breaches of confidentiality.
- Pride (see D&C 121:39-45).
- Fear.

#### What “counseling with our councils” is NOT

- Political posturing and debate.
- A democratic procedure (i.e. whoever has the most votes wins).
- A traditional “command and control” model of leadership.
- An exercise in domination, compulsion, or threats.
- A place where people feel unsafe (e.g. where people feel they will be berated, reprimanded, or that what they say will be used against them later).
- A place where people feel that their input is not valued.
- A free-for-all (this often happens with a passive or tentative leader).
- Divisive, offensive, or abusive.