

## **Counseling with Our Councils**

### ***Key Quotes for Effective Council Member Participation***

(Reference: M. Russell Ballard, Counseling with Our Councils, © 1997, Published by Deseret Book, SLC, Utah)

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#### **Council Leadership**

- 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. **While we seek unanimity, the final decision is always up to the council leader.** (p. 68) (emphasis added)
- It is important that all council members understand the significant and very distinct role of the council leader **and learn not to be offended when the decision is different from the course they would have chosen.** Decision making isn't the primary responsibility of counselors. **Counselors are called to do just that – to provide counsel – as well as to assist, strengthen, and support. Their role is to participate – actively and candidly – in the decision-making process, to support and sustain all council decisions, and to execute their implementation through their respective organizations.** (p. 70) (emphasis added)

#### **The Value of Listening in Council**

- While it is true that final decisions and directions rest with the person who has been called to preside, there is little reason to have council members with unique insights, experiences, and abilities if you're not going to pay attention to what they have to say. (p. 65)
- Let your council members know that you ... **expect them to express themselves.** (p. 65) (emphasis added)
- One who is called to serve on a Church council should remember that his or her participation on the council is a privilege. And with that privilege comes responsibility – responsibility to work within the parameters of the organization, **to be prepared, to share, to advocate vigorously the position he or she believes to be right. But just as important is the responsibility to support and sustain the final decision of the council leader.** (p. 66) (emphasis added)

#### **Confidentiality in Council**

- It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of keeping council proceedings confidential. (p. 64)
- **Each council member is obligated to keep confidential the matters he or she discusses and hears.** (p. 64) (emphasis added)
- Breaches can have enormously destructive repercussions. (p. 65)
- There is never any reason for council members to share with others (including their spouses) details of the business of the council, particularly with regard to individual needs or differences of opinion. **If we are to bless people's lives and avoid hurting them, we simply must learn to keep confidential things confidential.** (p. 65) (emphasis added)

#### **Unanimity in Council**

- **Unanimity should always be sought through free and open discussion.** (p. 63) (emphasis added)
- **We seek consensus** in all that we do. (p. 60) (emphasis added)
- There have been times when an issue has remained under consideration for a period of time. (p. 60)
- **Support and sustain the [final] decision of the council leader.** (p. 60) (emphasis added)