

Attitude Plays Huge Role in Being Authority Figure

Recently, a young man asked me how I have handled authority and accountability in my life and career. This is a topic every leader should consider. The information below is adapted from my answer to him – I hope it stimulates your thinking as well.

That's a great question, about how I have chosen the people to whom I have placed myself under authority. This may be more than what was asked, but I hope it is helpful.

It may seem obvious, but I have to start with an attitude that is willing to be under authority and accountable. Basically, to have the humility at any time to be able to say that I may be wrong and I may need correction. Without that, the rest of the structure you put in place won't matter.

Then, my highest level of authority is Christ. Practically, that means that I need to be willing to do whatever God wants me to do. That's not always obvious, but a lot of the time it is. I need to listen for Jesus in His word, prayer, my friends, wise counsel, and circumstances.

Next I am under the authority of my **church** and its **elders**. Unfortunately, this does not often impact my day-to-day decisions but I still take it seriously. (There are very few churches where elders/leaders actually shepherd people, know what is going on, and serve as a resource. Those are rare in America, especially if they aren't really small.)

At work, I am under the clear authority of **Pat Morley and our board**. I also consider myself under the authority of our management team (collaborative approach, I would rarely override the group unless I was absolutely convinced and it was a huge issue) and to some sense even the entire staff,

since I need to serve them.

Then, at various times I have had **men in my life** that I give permission to speak to me about things that they see going on. Sometimes those were in small groups, other times through work. This is where I often would go with difficult decisions or tough situations.

Lastly, I consider myself under the authority of **writers and pastors** who are wiser than me. I think long and hard before dismissing things from John Frame, Don Carson, Wayne Grudem, Tim Keller, etc. Basically, I give them the benefit of the doubt that they are right until I become truly convinced that they are wrong.

Below is a helpful concept from Ray Hilbert at [http://www.rayhilbert.com/2012/05/01/personal-board-of-directors/](#) called a "Personal Board of Directors." It's a way of systematically thinking through the accountability and resources available to you through your relationships.

Click [here](#) for the original article at [http://www.rayhilbert.com/2012/05/01/personal-board-of-directors/](#).