

6 Check Points for Second in Command

Many of us have had the pleasure of serving a team from the bench.

The only times I made the second string in team sports is when the team didn't have a third string. Athletics served me well in teaching me to provide support to the first team. I learned to serve better than to run, jump or tackle.

God has continued to show me the importance of having a strong number two in the leadership team. I've seen leaders who refuse to select, train up, or even endure someone with strength in a supporting role.

Loner leaders often fail because they do not allow anyone to tell them the truth. A strong lieutenant isn't afraid to tell the captain about fatal flaws. In fact, the best lieutenants strengthen the power of leadership by intentional submission.

A strong number two doesn't even care what his number is. From any position within the organization, a supporting leader:

1. Honors the king. The model servant teaches the organization how to give honor to the leader, in good times or bad. Effective leaders demonstrate how to submit, especially when the troops do not agree with the leader. Lieutenants model submission at all times.

2. Protects the mantle. A strong supporting leader will be welcomed by the chief to share opinions and speak the truth. Highly effective leaders are quick to acknowledge the importance of having a cabinet leader who will tell it like it is. The lieutenant is not a sycophant and will speak counterpoint as a daily practice.

3. Performs heavy lifting. A supporting leader works in the trenches. This leader has the gift of getting things done through others. She sees what needs to be done and doesn't wait for orders to get it done.

4. Trains the troops. Training is the hallmark of excellent organizations. A training curriculum is developed, organized and often delivered by servant leaders. Executive leaders are continually focused on team development.

5. Covets NOT the throne. It's such a blessing to serve without a desire to be king. Coveting any throne is misguided and unhealthy to an organization. Anyone can be a king in this land of entrepreneurship. Start-ups pop up with every sunrise. But true supporting leaders are called and are comfortable as servants.

I'd rather make a king than be one.

6. Models effective service. Modeling is probably the best summary word for any supporting leader. Every day, in every way, lieutenants show the way. Showing is their favorite tool of service.

If you are currently a king, how are you developing lieutenants? How do you receive those who serve you?

If you currently serve in a supporting role, consider your motives daily as you serve and submit.

Reflect light.

"Then He came to Simon Peter, and Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered him, 'You do not understand what I am doing now. But later you will understand.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He

who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean'” (John 13:6-10).