# How Christian Business Owners Should Lead in a Time of Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic is testing the leadership capacity of business owners and CEOs across the nation and world, and that's perhaps especially true for those whose spiritual lives are fully integrated with their business lives.

Christian business leaders face the onerous task of making difficult management decisions in uncertain times while still holding true to their Christian values.

"Leaders are charged with the threefold challenge of learning from the past, assessing the present and declaring the future," says Michael Sipe, author of the Amazon No. 1 bestseller *The AVADA Principle* and founder of the Christian executive coaching firm 10x Catalyst Groups (), which provides guidance to businesses organized on a foundation of biblical principles.

"The risk of being wrong in making those distinctions is enormous. Lives, cultures, organizations and economies are at stake based on the competence, character and actions of our leaders."

Rarely has that been the case more than it is now, as many businesses have had to close their doors while others operate with their employees working under stressful conditions or fulfilling their duties remotely from home.

The question is: How do Christian business leaders navigate unsettling times such as these so that their businesses—and the people they lead—will continue to thrive? Sipe says meeting that challenge comes down to engaging three core attributes of truly wise and effective leaders: heart, head and hands.

He offers these ideas on how to do that:

**Guard your heart.** When Sipe speaks of the heart in this context, he means the metaphorical one, not the physical organ. “Your heart includes your mind, will and emotions and is the very essence of who you are as a human being,” he says. “When leaders fail to guard their hearts against the inherent human tendency to drift toward deceitfulness, their hearts become shallow, hard or evil. Followers will suffer and the leader’s declared outcomes will be thwarted or diminished.” Christian leaders, he says, need to model love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control for those they lead.

**Sharpen your mind.** While having a big heart is wonderful, it’s not sufficient, Sipe says. Some people with great hearts don’t have the competence to lead. “We must continually strengthen our minds, build our skills and develop our competence to lead,” he says. Some of the components of a sharp mind include leadership skills such as critical thinking, analysis, planning, communicating, delegating, hiring, firing, promoting and demoting. For Sipe, sharpening the mind also means desiring and seeking the revelation of the plans, purposes and perspectives of God.

**Strengthen your hands.** A leader needs to act as well as talk. “A softhearted person who’s unwilling to act is not a leader,” Sipe says. “A smart guy who’s unwilling to act is simply a hypocritical blow-hard, not a leader. To lead effectively in challenging times, we must build the habit of effective action. We must act out of good motives. We must act wisely. And we must act courageously, promptly and decisively.”

“Clearly, we are living and leading in hard times,” Sipe says. “That makes it a time for exceptional leaders. Leaders who guard their hearts and temper tough decisions with love and compassion. Leaders who sharpen their minds and grow in competence. Leaders who go to work with strong hands and an indomitable will to serve others, and to help all we serve come out the other side of this challenging season better in every way.” {eoa}

**Michael Sipe**, *author of the Amazon No. 1 bestselling book* The AVADA Principle, *is the founder of 10x Catalyst Groups (), which helps entrepreneurs grow profitable and thriving businesses organized on a foundation of biblical principles. Sipe has also enjoyed a successful 30-plus year career in mergers, acquisitions and business development as the founder of CrossPointe Capital, a middle market investment-banking firm. In that capacity, he has consulted with and evaluated over 5,000 companies and has provided advisory services for approximately a half-billion dollars in business sales involving hundreds of companies. He remains active in transactional work and has been a key adviser in mergers and acquisitions projects covering a multitude of industry sectors.*