



A Taste of Torah

Heading a Delegation

By Rabbi Dovid Schwartzberg

Have you ever taken charge of a team, corporation, or better yet, a family, and have not felt like you were heading a team, corporation or family? Does this sound familiar: “Chaim, you know the waste basket hasn’t been emptied for a couple of days, how about it?” You watch as Chaim mouths your words, as if lost in outer space, and then, finally landing on Earth, responds, “Oh! Could it wait? ...all right, I’ll do it.” You look their way for help and input, and they end up chipping in, but without eagerness or an upbeat attitude. You wonder, “Why don’t they take ownership over projects? Why am I the only one who cares?”

Have you ever felt that you had important, pressing matters to attend to, and instead, most of your time was spent on trivial activities?

Have you ever had way too much to do, felt buried in work, and it seemed like there was no way out from under it all?

The solution for this entire catastrophe is called delegation. Ideally, you should be able to delegate some form of work to everyone on your team, corporation or family. If you push work as far down the hierarchy as possible, you will free up time and help all your staff members grow. Not only will you finally be able to attend to all the work that needs your expertise, but you will also be imbuing in your team members, workers or children a sense of confidence and responsibility. This will in turn create motivated team-players.

This critical skill of delegating has been taught to us many years ago, through a conversation that ensued between our greatest leader and his father-in-law. “And he (Yisro) said (to Moshe), ‘What is this thing that you are

doing to the people? Why do you sit by yourself?’” (Exodus 18:14)

The simple interpretation of this dialogue between Yisro and Moshe is that Yisro was concerned that Moshe not overexert himself by attempting to be the sole adjudicator for the entire nation. After all, Moshe was still a human being, and he would not be able to maintain the physical stamina required to continue functioning in this capacity. Rabbi Mordechai Yosef Leiner of Izbitz (1801-1854), commonly known as the Izhbitzer, suggests that Yisro’s concern was not so much for Moshe’s physical well being as much as it was for Klal Yisroel’s educational development. When Yisro came to Moshe, he did not ask, “What are you doing to yourself?” rather, “What are you doing to the people?” Yisro was concerned that by making himself the sole authority to whom all Jews would present their halachic issues, Moshe was preventing other gifted Jews from developing halachic proficiency. He was thereby inadvertently precluding the spiritual development of others.

Essentially Yisro was saying, “If you keep on like this, everyone will think that you are the only person capable of being a judge, since you’re the only one who learned directly from Hashem. No one else will ever bother to try, since everyone knows he can never achieve your level of greatness. You’re not being fair. Even though no one can be just like you, you shouldn’t discourage them from trying to attain at least some part of your achievements.”

In this way we can also understand another statement Yisro makes, “You will surely wither away, you, and also this people.” (Exodus 18:18) In this

Stories For The Soul

Follow Your Leader

Rabbi Yechezkel Landau, who would eventually become world famous as the Nodeh B’Yehuda, had a challenging beginning to his Rabbinic career. After he was appointed Rabbi of Prague, there were some people who felt he was too young and kept looking for ways to undermine him.

They once sent a woman to ask him a question about the kashrus of a chicken. Rabbi Landau ruled that it was kosher. There was, however, a very obscure commentary that ruled that such a chicken was rendered unkosher by this particular blemish. Since in those days printed *sefarim* were very expensive and rare, Rabbi Landau was unaware of that particular ruling. His detractors did have a copy.

The men confronted the Rabbi with the printed ruling in a most condescending manner, intimating that the venerable Prague community would be better served with a more experienced Rabbi.

“When a Rabbi, who is a competent Torah authority, issues a ruling on an inquiry,” replied Rabbi Landau, “Hashem gives him Divine assistance in the merit of the Jewish community which he serves, so that even if he errs in his reasoning, his ruling will wind up being correct. This did not happen here. The only logical conclusion is that the inquiry was not a real one, but rather an invented case made up in an attempt to simply vex me. That is why I had no special Divine assistance.”

The schemers were stunned that the Rabbi had seen right through them, and they shamefacedly admitted

Kollel Happenings

KOLLEL'S 15TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION FEB. 26TH

The Kollel will be celebrating fifteen years of bringing Torah to Denver Jewry on Tuesday, February 26th, at 6:30 pm, at the newly-renovated McNichols Building, 144 W. Colfax Ave. (corner of Colfax & Bannock). Tribute journal in honor of Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, who will be present at the event to receive an award. Ad deadline: Feb. 8th. Ads for Rabbi Amsel, as well as other Kollel personnel, can be emailed to journal@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855. To reserve, visit www.denverkollel.org or contact 303-820-2855.



TORAH 4 TYCOONS FEBRUARY 6TH PROTECTION PLAN: SAFEGUARDING SOCIETY WHILE UPHOLDING THE RIGHT SO THE MENTALLY ILL

Join Dr. Neil Sorokin, Director of Psychology, Colorado Mental Health Institute at Fort Logan and Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab, Dean, Denver Community Kollel as they analyze this emotional issue.



A DEEPER LOOK

Join Rabbi Shachne Sommers as he discusses a number of difficulties encountered in the weekly Torah portion, and develops a comprehensive approach to resolve the issues, simultaneously conveying a deeper understanding of the material being discussed. Sunday nights 7:40-8:30 pm at the Kollel, 1516 Xavier, and Tuesday nights at Aish Denver 8-9 pm.

Interpersonal Issues

If the Item Isn't Claimed

If the item is one that cannot easily be replaced, such as a special piece of jewelry, a collector's item, a photo, etc., then one must put it away until the owner is determined and he may not

appraise the value of the item and then use it as he sees fit.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi Knock on the Door

From: Anonymous

Dear Rabbi,

What should one do if there is a knock on the door for tzedaka, and you have nothing at all or just a small coin on hand? Is it better to open the door and apologize for little or nothing, or just not answer the door?

Dear Anonymous,

Generally speaking, your problem is touched upon in Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 249:4), where we learn: "If a poor man asks for money and one does not have anything to give him, he should not reprimand him nor raise his voice to him, but should rather speak kindly to him and show his kindness to indicate that he would like to give but cannot do so."

In addition to these words of the Beis Yosef, the Rama writes, "It is forbidden to turn away the poor man with nothing, even if all he has to give him is a simple dried fig."

Applying these rulings to your situation, we must assume that the poor man knocking on your door is equivalent to one asking for money.

It is then proper to answer the door and offer the little you have, or nothing at all, along with the explanation spelled out in the Shulchan Aruch.

It is also a good idea to express empathy for a person reduced to knocking on doors for help and to offer a blessing for an improvement in his situation. *Reprinted with permission of Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem, www.ohr.edu*

Follow Your Leader

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to their ploy. Rabbi Landau's public esteem rose as a result of this plot.

The generation that stood at Har Sinai was the greatest generation of all time. Their leader was the greatest leader

of all time. This was no coincidence. Each generation has leaders befitting them, and they must listen to their leaders.

Adapted with permission from Shul-Week, by Rabbi Baruch Lederman.

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warning, Yisro tell Moshe that if he doesn't prepare qualified subordinates and encourage others to learn Torah on their own, there will be no one left to transmit the Torah to future generations once Moshe is gone.

This is a valuable skill, whether you're the Jewish leader or a manager

for a corporation. But for a parent it is crucial, for, like adults, children need to feel important, they need to feel needed. Responsibility gives them that sense of importance. This will not only be beneficial for you, but it will be the ultimate tool your kids will ever need to tackle anything life throws their way

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Denver Community Kollel: 1516 Xavier Street, Denver, CO 80204 Tel: 303-820-2855 Fax: 303-820-2806

Email: info@denverkollel.org Web: www.denverkollel.org

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