



What Is My Character as a Leader?

8 questions to answer.

1 Timothy 3

In 1 Timothy 3, the apostle Paul gives us the irreducible minimums, the must-have character qualifications for church leadership. But there are other, often-overlooked characteristics that effective church leaders share. Here are eight by which to evaluate your service in the church:

1. **Can I handle information correctly?** Information is power; someone fit for leadership will handle information as if he or she were driving a van of explosives. Jack Hayford, pastor of Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California, writes, “Controlling information is a process fraught with dangers, but it is vitally important to a ministry characterized by wisdom and integrity.” Can you be trusted with inside information?
2. **Can I defer judgment?** People who make hair-trigger judgments do not make effective church leaders. Can you stifle your first reactions and make decisions based on solid argument and evidence?
3. **Am I willing to be directed by God?** Leaders need to listen to each other, but more important, they need to be able to hear God’s voice. What is God saying through the board’s discussion? Are you willing to obey it?
4. **Can I confront appropriately?** Nobody likes conflict. But to lead with integrity, board members must be willing to confront—even one of their own. Unbridled anger, blatant deception, hurtful words—some things demand a loving challenge. The two extremes are either to avoid conflict or to act like the Terminator. Where on the continuum do you fall?
5. **Am I forward-looking?** Church tradition is life-giving; church traditionalism is life-threatening. The comfort of the familiar can also strangle church progress. Do you believe your church’s best days are behind it? Or are you bullish on your church’s future?
6. **Do I have a “can-do” temperament?** Some people seem to be “blessed” with pessimism. People with a can-do attitude are different. Instead of “Why should we?” as their first response, theirs is “Why not?” How do you respond to new ideas?
7. **Am I willing to own up?** Godly leaders take responsibility for their sins. They are human, and they know it. They’re not like the person who said, “The only time I’ve been wrong is when I once thought I was wrong.” When was the last time you said to a colleague, “I blew it; I was wrong”?
8. **Do I have the patience of Job?** In the church, getting things done always takes longer than you think. There’s always one more committee or congregational meeting to run your proposal by. Can you handle the “hurry-up-and-wait” process of church life?

—DAVE GOETZ

Discuss

1. In which of the above areas do I feel strongest?
2. In which would I like to improve?