

Calculate before confronting

By Jeff “Chief” Urbaniak
COLUMNIST (www.AdviceChief.com)

I’ve seen it many times over: people, leaders, and managers confronting others and ending up looking like a total and complete fool. And the sad part is, despite the enlightenment lights flashing all around them, they continue the confrontation to a self-destructive level. These kinds of people often end up face-planted because they either had too much pride or they lacked proper calculations of the situation. Too much pride is something we can discuss on another day, but for now, let’s shine a light on the task of calculating.

Before considering a confrontation--for whatever purpose--it is essential to calculate a complete analysis of the situation. The strengths and weaknesses of one’s position, the relationship between one’s goals and the goals of society at large, the intensity of one’s courage and determination, and the worthiness and integrity of one’s objective must all be carefully evaluated.

I highly recommend using a tactical paradox as a winning strategy, one that is often employed by thousands of skillful leaders to gain a significant advantage over an adversary. Tactical paradox is the ability to project to the opponent a contradictory view of one’s position or plan. This is fundamental to a clever strategy. When able, appear unable. When close, appear distant. Attack when your opponent is unprepared and appear where least expected. This is the strategist’s way of triumph.

When an organization finds itself in conflict with another organization, it is the strategic skill of the leader that will determine the outcome of events. Organizational conflicts can and do occur in business, in the community, and in the political arena, but only unskilled leaders work out their conflicts in courtrooms and on battlefields. Brilliant strategists rarely go to battle or to court; they generally achieve their objectives through tactical positioning well in advance of any confrontation.

Leaders whose organization is in conflict with a rival organization may initiate a challenge if the essentials of triumph are in place--they must be certain that their objective is worthwhile; that it is aligned with the larger organization; and that it can be achieved without compromising the basic principles of the organization. Furthermore, skilled leaders rely on the power of surprise--they are certain to mislead their adversaries about their position and their plans. It’s a sight indeed to see a desperate opponent scurrying around in vain.

When you make a decision to challenge another person or organization, spend your time and effort beforehand, calculating, estimating, analyzing, and positioning. Sun Tzu said: “Much computation brings triumph. Little computation brings defeat.” And I add to it: “No computation brings disaster.” Be a leader who calculates before confronting.

~ The End ~