

## Temptation is a part of leadership

By Jeff “Chief” Urbaniak  
COLUMNIST ([www.AdviceChief.com](http://www.AdviceChief.com))

Are you a leader and faced with all kinds of temptations throughout the week? If so, don't feel bad or guilty about it. It is natural that people who move up the leadership ladder are faced with numerous temptations. It's what you do during that temptation that determines how long you will be an effective leader.

The greater the ability to lead, the more powerful the temptations will be and it often starts from within. Many leaders are tempted to abuse their leadership in scenarios and relationships that are inappropriate. Some leaders influence others to act out for personal gratifications that have nothing to do with the cause for which the leader is entrusted. Other leaders confuse self-proclaimed liberties with leadership benefits and take advantage of or exploit things not authorized for their entitlement.

I agree with many religious leaders and philosophers who claim temptation is a test on behalf of faith or karma--that leaders face potentially sinful situations that may be difficult for them to resist precisely so that they may develop the character necessary for success. Now this doesn't mean you should seek out

temptation in order to develop your character. If you're doing your job as a leader, temptation will find you.

To successfully overcome temptation, you must abide by your faith or you must force yourself to stay disciplined enough to not succumb to temptations. If you don't understand the awesome power of temptation, you're risking a destiny laced with bad judgment.

The most powerful temptations are associated with lust, wealth, power, and pride. Many leaders have fallen prey to sexual temptations. They and others involved with them were destroyed by this, not to mention the damage done to their personal relationships. People in the media mocked our vice president for living and abiding by the personal rule that he never puts himself in a situation where he is alone with a woman unless it is his wife. Some said he's overcautious and silly, but I'd say if that's what it takes for him to control any possible temptations, then all the power to him.

Greater access to wealth almost always accompanies positions of greater leadership. Some leaders are not able to handle this and have fallen as a result, either succumbing to the temptation to take more than was legally theirs or letting the pursuit of wealth dominate their lives.

For many leaders, pride--a close relative of power--is the greatest of all leadership temptations. This is when “looking good” becomes more important than “doing good.” Leadership image becomes the focus of the leader rather than the welfare of the organization and its people. How many politicians do you know who care more about how they will be perceived in Peoria rather than doing what's best for the country? In more moderate settings, leaders should be more concerned about how their decisions and actions impact the organization rather than how they will make them look.

Accountability is the best antidote for pride. It is a good idea to keep a close circle of friends to whom you are accountable. It can be work associates, friends, or family members, but whoever they are, they must be able and capable of telling you when you're out of line or “too big for your britches.”

Leadership is never really easy. You must understand the nature of temptations and prepare for them. Have a game plan so your response is automatic and right. Otherwise, if the devil on your shoulder convinces the angel on your other shoulder, you could be heading for big-time trouble.

~ The End ~