

Leaders and Assessment

By Tom Yeakley



Is assessment a Kingdom principle? Does God want His leadership to assess others? What's the difference between assessment and judgment? How can we give assessment to those we lead in a positive, developmental way?

Jesus sent out the Twelve and then upon their return they reported what they had done (Mark 6:30-31). The parables of the Talents (Matthew 25) and the 10 Minas (Luke 19) teach that we will give an account to God for our stewardship. Hebrews 13:17 reminds us that leaders will give an account for their leadership. Paul gave feedback to the churches through his letters. [Assessment](#) is a Kingdom principle.

But we must not cross over from assessment to judgment. Jesus commands us not to judge others (Matthew 7) and Paul reminds us of the same (1 Corinthians 4). Judgment is passing a final, negative opinion on another. It focuses on final results and motives. It often involves assessing someone's motives or matters of the heart that we cannot know for certain. It implies making personal standards normative for others. Only God can judge!

But as leaders who must give an account to God for our leadership, we are told to know well the condition of our flock. We must evaluate our flock to know if they are doing well or not. Assessment of those we lead focuses on their faithfulness to labor, not the results which are determined by God. Assessment is given to encourage growth and help measure progress and development. It has a desired positive impact on another with a willingness to be involved in helping to correct any shortcomings.

Assessment is more formal than feedback. It relates to mutually agreed upon standards or desired outcomes, deals with a process, involves a commitment to help, and provides accountability. Feedback is informal, does not need mutual goals, deals with an event, does not necessarily involve a commitment to help, and provides perspective. Leaders assess; facilitators give feedback.

For assessment to be positive, we must begin with agreed upon measuring marks. The one being assessed must know from the outset what will be evaluated at the end of the process. The leader bringing the assessment should seek to point out the positive outcomes initially. Negative assessment should be limited to one or two items at the most, focusing on those areas that are most important. As a leader you should offer to help them correct these in the future. Ask how you as a leader can help them succeed in their efforts. Get involved! Bring resources to help them become a success.

Remember to assess, not judge. Seek to apply the [Golden Rule](#) of Leadership in your assessment of others, “Lead others the way you want to be led” (Luke 6:31).

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