

## Encourage Feedback

Written by Steve Marr  
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Sometimes, as business leaders, we don't like a lot of feedback, especially when it is contrary to our decision. David, the king of Israel, didn't want to listen to negative feedback from Joab about a census. Here's how it went.

So the king said to Joab and the commanders of the army, "Take a census of all the tribes of Israel—from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south—so I may know how many people there are." But Joab replied to the king, "May the Lord your God let you live to see a hundred times as many people as there are now! But why, my lord the king, do you want to do this?" But the king insisted that they take the census, so Joab and the commanders of the army went out to count the people of Israel. (2 Samuel 24:2-4, NLT)

Later David regretted his decision.

And he said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly by taking this census. Please forgive my guilt, Lord, for doing this foolish thing." (2 Samuel 24:10, NLT)

Just like David, we all make mistakes and have ignored good counsel at times.

In business, we need to create a culture where work associates can discuss anything and encourage appropriate and respectful feedback. The result of David's failure to listen was a plague that affected his people for three days.

When faced with a different idea from colleagues, I like to ask these questions:

*Why do you think that?*

*What evidence do you have to support your perspective?*

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*Why do you believe your idea is different or better than the one we are currently considering?*

Had King David listened to his advisors, he could have avoided a major calamity. While I'm not suggesting we always submit to the idea of others, group decisions are consistently more effective than single leaders deciding on their own.

Develop the habit of soliciting effective feedback to strengthen your organization.

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