

## Wanting Advice

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When a prospective client asks for my opinion, usually they simply want me to affirm what they've already decided to do. They really don't want an independent perspective. We see an example in scripture where a prophet of the Lord was pressured. "Meanwhile, the messenger who went to get Micaiah said to him, 'Look, all the prophets are promising victory for the king. Be sure that you agree with them and promise success.' But Micaiah replied, 'As surely as the Lord lives, I will say only what the Lord tells me to say.'" (1 Kings 22:13-14, NIV)

Clearly, the messengers only wanted Micaiah to affirm what the other advisors had already determined was the correct action. Unfortunately, the king ignored the prophet's advice which was the opposite from the other prophets and the king was killed.

When I work with clients and their businesses, I try to point out different options with the pluses and minuses of each choice. For example, one client wanted to hire a family member. I asked the question, "If you needed to fire that person, how would it impact family relationships?" The client admitted it would be serious and make for a very difficult Thanksgiving dinner. My advice was not to hire the person because the consequences of the arrangement not working out would far exceed the temporary pleasure of hiring a family member. Despite my advice, the client hired the family member. Six months later, my client had to terminate the relative. It took several years to heal the relationship.

When I encounter clients who only want me to confirm their own plan and won't listen to concerns or other options, I back away. I have learned that if the person won't listen to my best advice at the beginning, the work relationship won't end well. The client may feel I'm somehow responsible even when they failed to follow what I recommend. I save a lot of pain and unhappy clients when I know when to step away.

In your business, welcome counsel and only ignore advice after significant thought and prayer.