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For the good of the order

Ed Hayden

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In a meeting the other day, I heard a participant say, "I am not in total agreement with this proposal, but for the good of the order, I will support it." It reminded me of times throughout history when individuals banded together to promote common interests without insisting that the adopted plan be 100 percent to their liking.

I can't even begin to recount the numerous meetings I have attended in recent years where progress was stalled because of individuals who insisted on having every detail of an issue or plan exactly the way he or she wanted it. It appears the concept of give-and-take is a thing of the past. "If you want my support, you must do it my way," appears to have taken its place as today's mantra. Of course, several people with this attitude in one group halts progress toward any goal -- no matter how worthy a goal may be.

Even sadder is that after a plan is adapted to suit individual preferences, the commitment by those who insisted on shaping the plan is often lukewarm at best. Often, individuals who have good ideas at the outset give up before implementation due to roadblocks thrown in the way.

We have become a nation of individuals who ask "why" rather than "why not." Negatives occur to us first, so they lead our discussion, fill our thoughts and obscure the positives. Instead of looking for ways to get things done, we focus on the negatives. This is not the attitude that made America a world leader.

No perfect plan

Let's face it, there is no such thing as a perfect plan, in business or otherwise. What makes a plan succeed is not its perfection but rather the energy and commitment put into the success of that plan by those involved; energy and effort carry the day. If we want to move forward and keep America the leader, we all have to say, "It isn't exactly what I wanted, but for the good of the order, I will actively support it."

If we focus on cooperation and less on insistence on having our own way, we may be surprised at how much each group can accomplish. But if we continue this latest trend of agreeing only when an issue is resolved precisely the way we want it done, our effectiveness as employees, business owners and ultimately a society will continue to diminish.

We owe it to each other to work together, for the good of the order.

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