

Security Briefs Episode 14

Stay or Go? Part 3 – Leadership Decisions

Resources and Links

Here are some resources and links to resources on staying and going:

- [Facing Danger \(Second Edition\): A Guide through Risk: Anna Hampton](#)
- [Faithful Calling: Stay-Go Decisions and the Challenge of Duty-of-Care \(Concilium\)](#)
- [Individual Stay-Go Assessment \(Concilium\)](#)
- [Choosing to Stay \(Concilium\)](#)

Introduction

A couple of episodes ago, we talked about how devastating making even the right decision in the wrong way can be when it comes to staying or going.

Wide Latitude

First, let me note that, as a matter of policy, our organization gives wide latitude to families and teams on staying and going. Every one of our global workers has the right to self-evacuate at any time – even if it goes against a decision which a team or field leader made. This is not easy to do, but it speaks to the trust and care that the organization places in the workers on the field.

But this latitude can be a blade that cuts both ways. While it is a gracious thing to allow people to make their own choices, there are times when field personnel are not in a good emotional position to make these types of decisions. In that case, it is sometimes the most grace-filled thing that leadership can do to take the decision out of the hands of those most impacted by it.

Leadership and Followership Decisions

It goes without saying, but ideally, any evacuation decision should be made with as much consultation and input on the field as possible. When field personnel feel that they are part of a decision, even one they disagree with, it does tend to reduce feelings of bitterness or anger which could otherwise arise if they feel they are being “forced” into a decision.

With that said, there are times when leadership may make decisions to evacuate which field members disagree with. It is important during those moments that those on the field extend trust to the authority under which they have placed themselves. Remember that missions leadership cares as deeply about the lost as field members do. Leadership has a heavy load to carry and does not generally make decisions like these lightly.

There may also be times when leadership has no choice but to evacuate or relocate personnel. It is our policy, for instance, that if a spouse is arrested or kidnapped, that the rest of the family *must* be relocated so that the family cannot be used as leverage.

So in making decisions about staying and going, leadership bears responsibility for not making hasty decisions which can negatively impact a family, ministry, or church. But also bear the weight of their legal, moral, and spiritual responsibilities towards these same people and the organization.

It is not a popular stance, but generally, field workers should give deference to those in authority over them. Even if they make a decision about staying or going which we may see as “wrong”, God can redeem it. There is a reason that God entrusted leadership to some and we must trust God in those times. Most missions leaders that I know will listen to their field personnel, especially on important matters like staying or going.

Now you know.

Next episode, we will talk more about practical things to consider should you decide to stay or go in a moment of risk.