[](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e2/Portrait_of_Niccol%C3%B2_Machiavelli_by_Santi_di_Tito.jpg)

Florence Daily Item May 8, 1522

Florence’s Favorite Advice ColumN



“Ask Niccolo”

Dear Niccolo,

I have created over 200 laws for my citizens to follow. Many of these have punishments that end in death. While I believe that these laws make for a well-ordered society, I suspect my people fear me more then the love me. Should I start easing up on them in order to be well-liked?

-Hammurabi, Babylon

Dear, Hammurabi,

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Dear Niccolo,

I’m a mayor of a big city and I’m faced with a very tough decision. My city is faced with a major energy crisis and the only way to solve it will be to build a hydro-electric dam. The dam would solve the crisis but it would also flood the valley, hurt the environment and destroy dozens of houses in the neighboring town. While I want to be a hero to my city, I also don’t want to be seen as a bad guy to the few people I’d hurt. What should I do?

-Waffling in Washington

Dear, Waffling,

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Dear Niccolo,

I’m a college football coach that demands maximum effort from my players. I make them practice for hours a day and make them run sprints until they collapse. Personally, I hate exercise and I haven’t even jogged in years. I want to be a role model to my players, but I sure don’t want to start doing push-ups. What should I do to continue motivating my players without seeming like a hypocrite?

-Lazy in Louisville

Dear Lazy,

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Dear Niccolo,

I’m a high school principal and I’m thinking about changing my school’s policy on discipline. I believe that all my students are mature and honest and deserve my respect. Do you think I can govern my school simply by having my students sign an honor code? This code would make students promise to never cheat, vandalize, or cut class ever again. Should I take this chance on my wonderful students?

-Faithful in Fairfax

Dear Faithful,

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