
CHAPTER 6: THE “TOWARD” RELATIONAL IDENTITIES OF EQUIPPING LEADERS

"To lead people, walk beside them ... As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence ... When the best leader's work is done the people say, 'We did it ourselves!'" — Lao-tsu

"Effective leadership is strategic. It moves beyond encouraging participation to actual empowerment of others" – J. R. Guy.

Introduction

Equipping leadership identities are “people-orientated” relational identities (Means 1990:62). Eddie Gibbs describes equipping others as a “connective” leadership paradigm that empowers (2005:28). Equipping leaders use the relationship between them and others as the basis for the equipping process (Maxwell 1995:91). Equipping itself “is a relational process” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:216; Means 1990:58). John Maxwell maintains that a leader’s relational skills are the most important abilities that a leader possesses in his or her role as an equipper (1995:199). Similarly Floyd McClung says that leaders must connect to people’s hearts in order to support and equip them (2008: 76). Hans Finzel also says that leaders influence people most by “*direct contact*” (2000:47, *italics added*).

The “Toward” Equipping identity in particular sees the leader as actively engaged in relationships with others in order to equip them for ministry. This is because when people have good personal relationships with those equipping them, they readily follow the equipper’s lead (Storey 1995:73). Good relationships increase people’s desire to learn from those equipping them (Maxwell 1995:92; Storey 1995:73) and grant the equipper “relational authority” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:266). Relational authority is earned as

leaders invest in the lives of others and care for them (Maxwell 1995:152; Davis 1995:14).

Ogne and Roehl consider the Greek word “Katartismos” used in Ephesians 4:12 to be “one of the best New Testament words to describe the essence of relational empowerment or coaching” (2008:60). Hans Finzel also regards Ephesians 4:11-12 as assigning leaders the responsibility to “empower” others for ministry (2000:85). Equippers are people developers (Maxwell 1995:112), and it is in the “Toward” relational identities that leaders focus on developing others most directly. As opposed to the “Out-Front” relational identities where equipping is largely “passive”, the “Toward” relational identities are dynamic and equipping is intentional (Ogden 2003:183). In these identities, the leader proactively engages in instruction and helping people to discern their call to ministry. It is also here that leaders assist others in honing the skills of ministry and with character development (Ogden 2003:183).

“Toward” paradigms assume that although those being equipped do not possess all the knowledge that they require to minister effectively, knowledge can be transferred. Similarly although a person’s aptitude for ministry may be inherent, ministry skills are not innate, but can be developed with the assistance of others. Even where people are gifted, the abilities that they possess are latent. They require coaching and mentoring to help them develop their potential. Moreover, people starting out in ministry require others with experience to help them discern God’s call upon their lives and to guide them as they journey into ministry. The Microsoft Office Encarta Dictionary defines the verb “equip” as “to prepare somebody with the necessary education, training, or experience to succeed at a task or role” (2007). This form of equipping is at the centre of the “Toward” Equipping identity.

The “Toward” Relational Equipping Identity focuses on four intentional Equipping identities - those of leaders as “Teachers”, “Coaches”, “Empowerers”, and as “Encouragers”. Summarily, the functions of these relational identities can be described as follows:

1. By using transformational, learner-centred instruction, *Teachers* impart knowledge and build capacity for further development.
2. *Coaches* help individuals to discern the call of God upon their life and help people cultivate the personal qualities and ministry skills required to successfully engage in ministry.
3. *Empowerers* provide platforms and opportunities whereby people can participate in ministry. They also facilitate the integration of people into the organizational life of corporate ministry environments in ways that allow people to meaningfully influence the policies and vision of the ministry.
4. *Encouragers* build the “heart and soul” of individuals as they engage in ministry. They also help develop ministry cultures that are affirming, inspirational, challenging and conducive to eliciting the best from every individual.

6.1. The Leader as Teacher

Leaders are always teachers of sorts (Means 1990:65). The New Testament in particular is replete with injunctions for leaders to teach. Jesus designated himself as “Teacher” (Matt. 23:10). He was often referred to as “Teacher” (Matt. 12:38; 19:16; 22:26, 24; Mark 4:38) or the Hebrew equivalent, “Rabbi” (Matt. 26:25; Mark 9:5; John 1:38), a designation he accepted (John 13:13). Teaching people was an integral part of the mandate to “make disciples” given in Matthew 28:20. Each of the gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 relate in some way to the ministry of teaching (Hoke 1992:no page numbers; Stott 1989:164). The ability to teach was one qualification that set elders apart from deacons (1 Tim. 3:2). The Pastoral Epistles lend a great deal of support to the idea that the New Testament pastoral office is largely conceived of in terms of teaching. Various forms of the “διδασκ” root occur 27 times in these three brief epistles (Schooley 2000:no page numbers). A study of them shows that the “primary mission of the pastor, as described in the Pastoral Epistles, is to teach” (Schooley 2000:no page numbers).

6.1.1. The Teaching Roles of Equipping Leaders

Teaching is an integral part of the equipping process. Leaders serve as teachers in a variety of roles, all of which augment the holistic approach necessary for equipping to be successful. Some functions include traditional approaches to teaching, while others are peculiar for the achievement of equipping outcomes.

6.1.1.1. The Teaching of Distinctive Biblical Focuses

All who wish to serve in ministry are “to be grounded in the content of the Word of God” (Wright 2003:19). There are distinctive areas in which the Bible teaches that those preparing for Christian ministry are to receive tuition:

(a) Spiritual Formation: Moral and Character Development

The Bible lays strong emphasis on the moral and character development of those who serve as ministers of the Gospel (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:44). Taken together, these areas address the “spiritual formation” of individuals (Gibbs 2005:34). It is Scripture that must be used to address issues of a person’s character (Ogne and Roehl 2008:253).

Once individuals respond to God’s offer of salvation, they embark on the journey of sanctification. It is teachers who instruct them in the new ethics of the Kingdom of God. Non-regenerate people are not fully consciousness of biblical norms of morality and ethics. They must therefore be systematically taught to individuals once they become regenerate (1 Peter 2:2). Biblical injunctions to this end are exhaustive: Acts 2:42, Acts 20:20-21, 27; 1Cor. 11:2, Eph. 4:20-32; Col. 1:28; 1Thess. 4:1-2; 2 Thess. 3:6-12; 1Tim. 6:1-4; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 2:10-19; 2 Pet. 1:5-11, 2 Pet. 3:2; 1 John 2:3-4, 1 John 3:19-24. Ethical teaching also corresponds directly to character development (Schooley 2000: no page numbers). Again there are numerous

scriptural passages pertaining to the character of ministers of the gospel (Matt. 23:11-12; Mark 10:42-45; 1 Cor. 9:26-27; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Tim. 4:12-16; Titus 2:7-8). There are also warnings against those whose character betray the fact that they are not true ministers, but rather impersonators and imposters (Matt. 7:15-23; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 2 Peter 2:10-18; Jude 10-19). Leaders must ensure that all believers are conversant with Scriptural injunctions regarding the ethics of the Kingdom of God and the norms for character development of those who minister in it.

(b) Sound Doctrine

Biblical teaching also includes instruction regarding correct doctrine, and opposition to false teachers and false doctrines (Schooley 2000: no page numbers). As communicators of God's word, teachers help others remain grounded in Biblical truth (Hirsch 2008:30). This in turn helps people to better discern God's will. It also guides them toward wisdom, helps faith communities remain faithful to Christ's word, and helps with the transference of sound doctrine (Hirsch 2008:30).

(c) Nurture, Nourishment and Care

In order to minister effectively, the souls and spirits of individuals need nourishment and care. Greg Ogden therefore says that pastor-teachers “function with a sense of protective care for the long-term spiritual welfare of the flock and teach the Word of God as the primary means to feed, nurture and shepherd” (2003:206). Leaders must also teach individuals how to meditate and study the word of God for themselves and how to teach each other in order to foster personal growth. All this should serve to facilitate independence of the leader and dependence upon God (Damazio 1988: 249).

(d) Biblical Approaches to Ministry

Leaders must teach those who are being equipped for ministry the peculiar operations of Christian ministry based upon the word of God

(Fernando 2002: 97). It is not uncommon for the Church to be viewed in the same light as secular organizations, and then for attempts to be made to administer the Church using secular management and organizational principles (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:9; Means 1990:39). Fernando says that leaders must instruct others in the following: biblical approaches of leading churches and ministries; what the purposes and qualifications of ministry are; how to co-operate with each other and with God to serve His purposes; and the skills with which God endows the Church to minister (2002:98). He says that without being trained in the Scriptures, leaders lose “freshness” in the ministry and will not yield fruit in ministry (Fernando 2002:98). Scripture contains numerous timeless and trans-cultural principles to guide leaders in any venture (Cf. 2 Tim. 3:14-17). It also allows for a wide variety of creative approaches to ministry, several of which can be applied regardless of the social context, era, ministry need or culture.

6.1.1.2. The Transfer of Knowledge and Processed Information

“Knowledge is power; information is power” (Wright 2003:18). Fundamental to teaching is the transfer of information, knowledge or data from teacher to learner (Webster 2009:no page numbers). This is especially necessary where learners have no prior experience with the material being taught, as is usually the case with technical or highly specialized fields of knowledge (Singham 2007: no page numbers). Teachers digest complex information and communicate it in simplified forms which learners can more readily assimilate (Hirsch 2008:30). Learners therefore rely on teachers to provide them with knowledge and to expose them to several alternative points of view regarding subject matters. Inexperienced students may not have encountered these alternatives. In addition to presenting learners with processed information, teachers must also teach learners how to access information for themselves and then guide them to sources where the information can be found.

6.1.2. Fundamental Equipping Approaches to Teaching

Leaders who operate from an Equipping paradigm will of necessity approach teaching in such a way as to facilitate the equipping of those whom they are mentoring. Equipping approaches to teaching reach beyond the transference of knowledge. Equipping approaches to teaching are learner-centred and focus on the personal growth of learners. They enlist the participation of learners in the learning process, and develop within them the capacity to develop themselves. The following are some characteristics of Equipping approaches to teaching:

6.1.2.1. Transformational, Learner-Centered Teaching

In their teaching functions, leaders must see themselves as transformational leaders, instead of transactional leaders (Wright 2003:42). Transactional leaders engage in traditional teaching roles such as knowledge transfer, classroom management and the implementation of learning incentives. The focus is on students understanding the study material. While transformational leadership approaches include knowledge transfer, they focus on the transformation of the student by providing support and direction for the learner's personal development (Byrd 2003: no page numbers). Transformational leaders focus on the learner's needs, their growth and maturity and not merely on knowledge acquisition (Maxwell 1995:21). Transformational leaders can do this in the following ways:

- Instead of only following a curriculum, teachers should remain sensitive to the learner's progress and make adjustments accordingly (Byrd 2003: no page numbers). Leaders must monitor learners' responses during the learning process and make adaptations to the process in keeping with the level of the learners' development and comprehension. Teaching should be more individualised (or "personalised") and the focus must move away from rote

assimilation of study material to the growth and development of the learner (Maxwell 1995:80).

- Leaders can provide praise for all the efforts of students, irrespective of their level of accomplishment. In this way they can avoid a strict reward/penalty dichotomy regarding the assimilation or non-assimilation of material (Byrd 2003: no page numbers). The benchmark for evaluating a learner's progress must not only be a standardised set of criteria in a "one-size-fits-all" system. Rather, learners can be assessed according to the progress they have made against their past achievements. Teachers must factor in the unique aptitudes and differing skills that learners have for different subject matters and tasks. Leaders can also provide opportunities for learners to attempt different tasks. This allows learners to assess their strengths and weaknesses in different areas, and provides a more comprehensive basis for learner progress-assessments than cognitive-based evaluations. This approach to learning is better preparation for ministry environments which focus on team-based ministry. In teams, members are not evaluated on the basis of individual competency, but the success of the team lies precisely in the synergy of each member contributing *different* talents in order to accomplish ministry objectives (Maxwell 1995:144).
- Leaders can create a culture of experimentation that is exempt from fear of failure (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:137). Teachers understand that the process of learning involves making mistakes along the way and that insights gained from mistakes are a valuable source of information (Finzel 2000:15). An environment of learning that is free of the fear of censure related to failure will stimulate divergent thinking and creativity. Such a learning environment encourages experimentation and will lead to the creation of innovative ideas. Eddie Gibbs says that "Freedom is a prerequisite of imaginative and creative thought" (2005:149). Leaders who give

people the freedom to fail, communicate faith in them, and this in turn builds tremendous self-confidence in people (Maxwell 1997:69).

Where Equipping leaders engage in teaching, it is important that they therefore move from a curriculum-based or teacher-centred approach to teaching to a learner-centred style that facilitates learner development. Means says:

“A good teacher facilitates the achievement of human potential, molds ideas and life principles, and shapes people’s lives” (1990:111).

6.1.2.2. Invite Active Learner Participation

“Learning” can be defined as “any relatively permanent change in behaviour which occurs as a result of practice or experience” (Morgan and King 1975:97). Western styles of teaching and learning often emphasise the imparting of facts without the related experience (DeValve 2008:25). Scripture can be used to teach generic principles in a way that divorces them from a learner’s everyday situations (Roxburgh and Romanuk 2006:34). To be effective, “learning requires active participation” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:218). Teachers should therefore foster a sense of community, by allowing the students to participate in the decisions regarding the contents and structure of a course. In this way students can take pride in knowing they had something to do with its success (Byrd 2003: no page numbers).

6.1.2.3. Building Learner Capacity

The role of teachers is to help someone develop (Webster 2009:no page numbers) and to help students to “learn how to learn” (Byrd 2003: no page numbers). Byrd says that the purpose of teaching is not for the teacher to teach, but for the student to learn (2003:no page numbers). Teachers must not only impart knowledge, but more importantly, increase a learner’s

understanding and capacity for subsequent independent learning of the subject at hand (Wright 2003:115). Without teaching in this way, leaders handicap the future competency and self-sufficiency of learners (Byrd 2003:no page numbers). David McClelland says:

“Teachers ... treat students neither coercively nor instrumentally but as joint seekers of truth and of mutual actualization. They help students define moral values not by imposing their own moralities on them but by positing situations that pose hard moral choices and then encouraging conflict and debate ... Throughout, teachers provide a social and intellectual environment in which students can learn” (David McClelland in Means 1990:65).

When teaching, leaders should therefore aim to enable learners to draw their own conclusions using the information presented to them. Intellectual stimulation promotes intelligence, independent thinking, rationality, and the development of problem solving skills. Forcing learners by coercion to adopt views contrary to their convictions only serves to reinforce the strength of their original views (Singham 2007:no page numbers).

6.2. The Leader as Coach

Elton Trueblood considers the image of the leader as a “coach” to be “the best modern equivalent of an equippier” (Ogden 2003:159). Wright also says that, “To be an effective leader, you must be an effective coach” (2010:1). The Christian leader as a “Coach” is a leadership identity that resonates well with contemporary society. References are increasingly being made to the Church as a group of people who serve together as a “team” in ministry (Barna 1993:156; Tidball 1999:108-9; Wagner et al 2000:32; Watson 1989:257). As equippers, coaches “help others achieve their potential as individuals and team members” (Means 1990:58).

Ogne and Roehl consider the mandate for coaching to come from the key text for this thesis, namely Ephesians 4:11-12:

“Kataartismos is one of the best New Testament words to describe the essence of relational empowerment or coaching. Coaching is a role that focuses on ‘bringing the saints to a condition of fitness’, which is a God-given function of the Body of Christ. Peer coaching is part mending, part restoration, and part inspiration, which all contribute to the body being built up” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:60).

Ogne and Roehl contend that “Coaching is the preferred approach for Equipping leaders in the emerging culture and transformissional church” because it is relational, incarnational, practical, holistic, contextual, missional, flexible and cross-cultural (2008:27-28). A coaching style of leadership is the most appropriate approach in contexts where leaders not only take the initiative, but also give people room to move (Wright 2003:172). Wright describes coaching as follows:

“Coaching is a participative approach to leadership rather than a directive approach. It sees the leader as a servant and friend, not a ruler or boss ... Coaching levels the hierarchical relationship of the organization and puts the leader among the people. Coaching moves people along the maturity development continuum by walking alongside them” (2003:47).

Moynagh argues that:

“The next generation of church leaders will need to include people with the gift of working with others ... they will need to be catalysts, collaborators, and coaches – not jealous of those around them, but affirming their gifts and eager to link with other people” (2003:188).

6.2.1. The Focuses of An Equipping Paradigm of Coaching

Traditionally many coaching paradigms have focussed on performance, productivity and effectiveness (Ogne and Roehl 2008:28). While an Equipping paradigm of coaching may include these facets, it focuses on the following:

6.2.2.1. Developing a Relational Equipping Ethos

“Equipping is essentially a relational, rather than a programmatic ministry” (Stevens and Collins 1993:128), and the *coaching* dimension of equipping is one that is relational and supportive (McClung 2008:75). It contrasts with one that is directive and delegating (McClung 2008:75). Ogne and Roehl describe coaching as follows:

“Coaching is an incarnational relationship between one leader and another that is intended to empower his or her life and ministry” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:26).

Coaching requires that leaders connect to people’s hearts and minds in order to support and coach them (McClung 2008: 76; Wright 2101:1). Equipping leaders must therefore develop a relational ethos in their ministry of developing others. It is the leader’s *relationship* to those whom they seek to equip that serves as the framework in which the various components of coaching will take place. A relational ethos is important since coaching for ministry will entail personal interaction between leaders and others on an individual basis. Among other things, coaching for ministry will deal with issues of personal character and relational competency. It will require that leaders correct and provide constructive criticism of individuals’ progress during the coaching process. All these aspects of the leader’s relationship to others requires that there to be strong basis of trust and affinity between the coach and “trainee”.

The Behavioral Coaching Institute underscores the importance of a leader's relationships:

“Too often in organizations leaders are hired or promoted for their technical expertise and fail because of their behavior competencies ... Behavior competencies control the leader's ... ability to perform, get along with others, adapt to changing situations, and other issues” (2008:no page numbers).

As leaders grow and expand their leadership roles, more of what they achieve is done through others, and they must rely increasingly upon their personal and interpersonal skills to get the results they desire (Wright 2101:1).

One characteristic of churches in the developing world is that their organizational structures are of a “networking nature” (Gibbs and Coffey 2001:83). “Leadership emerges in such structures on the basis of mutual recognition and by the building and maintaining of strong relationships” (Gibbs and Coffey 2001:83). Leaders must therefore cultivate a relational basis for their equipping ministry by taking the time to get to know those whom they envision equipping. They must also exhibit transparency by sharing about themselves with others and be willing for others to look into their personal journey in ministry. The sharing of common ideals between leaders and others is not enough to facilitate the depth of collaboration required in Christian ministry. Congenial relationships are a better long-term basis.

6.2.2.2. Help People Clarify Their Call to Ministry

The primary role of a Christian leader in an interdependency model that fosters every-member ministry, is to help other men and women discern and practice any ministry to which they are called (Finzel 2000:46; Ogden 2003:159). Leaders should therefore assist people with clarifying their own personal call to ministry (Adelaja 2008:125; Ogne and Roehl

2008:29). Blackaby and Blackaby mention that spiritual organizations reach their “maximum potential only when every member knows how to clearly hear from God and is willing to respond in obedience. It is not enough for leaders to hear from God and then relay the message” (2001:128-129).

The foundation of a call by God to ministry is the call of God to a relationship with Him (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:127). “People’s call to be in a right relationship with God takes precedence over their occupation. Calling comes *before* vocation” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:127, italics in the original). Christian leaders must develop a healthy personal relationship with God, and then model this relationship for others. Once the foundation of a healthy relationship with God is in place in the life of individuals, leaders can then help people discern God’s call to ministry more accurately (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:128).

In doing so, leaders must be careful to not attempt to determine the will of God for others. Instead, they assist others in identifying the call of God on their lives (Means 1990:58). They should consciously attempt to identify the abilities of others and help them relate those abilities to ministry activity (Kanagaraj 1997:328). Leaders must also avoid becoming so obsessed with their own call to the ministry that they marginalize those around them or simply use them to serve their own ends (Gibbs 2005:117). Good leaders help others define themselves and their own ministries, instead of requiring that others simply assist them in their ministry (Stevens and Collins 1993:129).

Leaders must help individuals discern both their personal calling and also their place in their community’s corporate calling. The New Testament pattern of discipleship is that no individual is called in isolation from others, but always “as part of the community of the called” (Gibbs 2005:117). Leaders therefore facilitate the integration of individuals into the larger scheme of their faith community’s redemptive purpose. This is discussed later on in this chapter.

6.2.2.3. Helping People Cultivate Their Personal Character

It is integrity of character that forms the basis of ministry, and leaders must help people with the development of their character (Ogne and Roehl 2008:29). This is particularly necessary since many individuals who begin to serve in some area of ministry may have led lives before coming to know Christ, the character of which would undermine the integrity of ministry. Although a measure of competence is required of those who minister, often competence can be undermined by character failure (Gibbs 2005: 115). Leaders must therefore first disciple people to address the matter of their characters before entrusting them with ministry.

Spiritual formation is an essential prerequisite for ministry (Segler 1987:11). By leading people through basic discipleship courses, leaders can help individuals identify specific attitudes, patterns of thinking, behaviours, habits and approaches to relationships that are in opposition to a Christian world view. Leaders can ensure that individuals receive ministry which helps them break any addictions or strongholds of sin in their lives. They can also help people deal with any trauma in their past with which they have not yet come to terms.

People can also be helped to develop their new identity in Christ, since preparation for ministry “requires honest self-understanding” (Segler 1987:11). As these foundations are laid, leaders will want to make sure that individuals then develop ambitions that motivate them to participate in the ministry to which God has called them. When people reach a certain level of development, leaders can then mentor them by preparing them to face the challenges that come from ministering to others. This is so that people can develop resilience and maturity in their ministry.

As coaches, leaders can also help people with the development of issues in their characters that influence their ability to relate to, and interact with others, i.e. their “behavioral competencies”. Despite being trained in technical competencies, or “hard skills”, inevitably an individual’s behavioral patterns

and social competencies impacts upon the effectiveness of the “hard skills” they have acquired (Behavioral Coaching Institute 2008:no page numbers). This is especially true in Christian ministry where people are typically required to serve on collaborative ventures with others. Leaders can help people identify their respective interpersonal strengths and weakness. They can teach people how to serve alongside others in co-operative ministry and also teach conflict resolution skills.

6.2.2.4. Help People Develop Ministry Skills

People will require training if they are to minister effectively (Cladis 1999:151). Training is part of the equipping process whereby people are taught the skills required for a specific task and shown how to use those skills for ministry (Maxwell 1996:83). DeValve says the term “‘Coach’ carries with it the idea of showing someone how to do something, giving advice, spurring on to higher pursuits or helping someone understand how to navigate the real world” (2008:25). Coaches recognise the “future potential” of others and commit themselves to develop that future potential (Gibbs 2005:100; Ogne and Roehl 2008:26; Wright 2003:44). They “watch for underdeveloped powers, to draw them out, [in order] to bring potency to actuality in human lives” (Ogden 2003:159). When leaders invest in those they lead, they increase people’s abilities to contribute (Wright 2003:115).

Leaders should firstly help people identify their skills and then assist them to use what they have learned (Ogne and Roehl 2008:218). They can help hone latent skills that already exist. Initially leaders may direct and supervise the accomplishment of tasks and support people as they make progress. As time progresses, leaders should then explain the reasons for the decisions they have taken and solicit suggestions for further improvement (Miller 1995:48). This will elicit greater participation of trainees in the learning process and foster independency of the leader. Leaders who involve others in ministry communicate trust in them (Miller 1995:48).

Furthermore, people must not only be equipped to competently carry out their initial (or current) ministry responsibilities. They should also be equipped with a view of them assuming greater ministry responsibility and developing their *leadership* potential (Wright 2003:179). In order to facilitate this, they will need to be given ongoing training since new skills are required if people are to assume ever-increasing levels of responsibility (Kanagaraj 1997:331).

6.2.2.5. Help Integrate People into Ministry Participation

Once people have identified their gifts and been trained in the skills necessary to use them, they must then be assisted with finding their places in ministry (Cladis 1999:126). Leaders can help people work together as part of a team by assisting people to integrate themselves and their contributions into the matrix of the existing ministry. A good coach is one who “both empowers and provides cohesion” for teams (Gibbs 2005:99; also Barna 1993:156). Coaches “work to achieve relational harmonies” and help individuals understand their contributions in relation to the skills of others who serve alongside them (Gibbs 2005:99). They ensure “that everyone feels valued and that their membership on the team is growth-enhancing rather than inhibiting” (Gibbs 2005:100).

A vision for team ministry does not happen automatically, but must be instilled into all members by leaders (Barna 1993:157). Leaders can solicit ideas and encourage participation (Means 1990:67). In this way, leaders act to facilitate the “the process of making a group’s work easier by structuring and guiding the participation of group members so that everyone is involved and contributes” (F. Rees in Ebersöhn et al 2007:261). “Participation produces ownership of results” and is also one of the best forms of motivation (Wright 2003:135).

Before motivating people to engage in ministry, leaders can therefore help them to develop relationships by “maintaining fellowship, harmony and cohesiveness within the body” (Means 1990:13). They can help others identify and avoid behaviours and attitudes that undermine group cohesion. These may be overt behaviours and attitudes such as competitiveness for recognition; pride; independency; unwillingness to participate in accountability forums or to submit to authority and factionalism. They also include counterproductive “passive” attitudes and behaviours such as timidity; dependency; lack of self-esteem; fear of failure, and the like. Leaders will seek to develop appreciation for the diversity of talents and their correspondent contributions within groups. They can help foster appreciation for the participation of each person and the celebration of collective accomplishments.

6.2.2.6. Help People Live in Authentic Community

It is Christian fellowship that not only cements the relationship in the community of believers, but also activates it for ministry (Gibbs 2005:101). Believers are called to build relationships with each other, and it is this relational unity which serves as the basis for their participation in ministry together. Segler says:

“The New Testament presents the church first as a *fellowship of persons* in Christ (*koinonia*), and, secondly as a *functioning institution (ecclesia)*...” (Segler 1987:12).

By living in community, people will discover their call and ministry function. “No one discovers their true worth outside of community” (Gibbs 2005:102). The church is a living organism in which people discover their significance in the context of their relationship to others (Gibbs 2005:28). Spiritual gifts emerge and ministry is discovered when the ‘joints’ or ‘ligaments’ mentioned in Ephesians 4:16 are connected (Stevens and Collins 1993:135).

Being joined to others helps people avoid “the two ends of the relational spectrum: independence and dependence (or co-dependence)” (Stevens and Collins 1993:128). Leaders must therefore facilitate the unity of the body by developing interdependence (Stevens and Collins 1993:126). They help people define their personal function within the body, while at the same time helping them understand what Stevens and Collins term “the lost art of joining” (1993:128). In this way, they help people minister as a corporate body, and not as isolated individuals. Ministering alongside others increases individual productivity. Furthermore, living in community ensures that people are cared for and that they themselves receive ministry while they minister to others.

One way to ensure that individuals are cared for while caring for others is for them to participate in small groups. Traditionally small groups consist of approximately ten people and serve the purpose of studying the Bible and praying together (Cladis 1999:127). However, small groups can also function as ministry teams and provide community, accountability, emotional support, spiritual growth, and mission outreach that will be needed to sustain long-term ministry effectiveness (Cladis 1999:127). Small groups have proven to be effective platforms through which all believers at different stages of maturity and development can minister successfully. They are also ideal environments in which to groom people for leadership (Young 1988:53).

6.2.2.7. Helping People Connect With the Secular Culture for the Purpose of Witness and Service

Despite the emphasis on every-member ministry that emerged between 1970 and 2000, the spiritual gifts which were needed for the Church’s ministry to the world were largely ignored (Gibbs 2005:117-118). Emphasis continued to be placed on the gifts which assisted Christian leaders in their ministry, and those needed for the internal welfare and functioning of the local church (Gibbs 2005:118). Furthermore, the ministry of church leaders were often limited, even confined, to the

domestic life of congregations (Smit 1995:40). Steven and Collins lay the blame for this with our current “preoccupation with ecclesia which defines ministry as what is done in the gathered life of the church (or in its expansion through evangelism), rather than the totality of life under the rule of God. Ministry is viewed as advancing the church rather than the kingdom.” (Stevens and Collins 1993:140-141).

However, since ministry is intended to relate to all of life, Stevens and Collins say that it is becoming more evident that leaders should “Equip the church to be an open system interacting with systems outside of the congregation” (1993:126, 131). The church is called to serve its own members *and* its wider community (Gibbs 2005:101). One reason for this is that “The members of the congregation are ... scattered daily over a vast area and a variety of settings” (Smit 1995:40). By virtue of the time spent in “secular” areas, congregation members are ideally positioned to relate their faith to those same workplaces, homes and neighbourhoods (Cladis 1999:133). Leaders should therefore help people understand the significance of their ministry in other-than-ecclesial environments, and help to equip them accordingly.

The church’s mission includes dealing with the social, political and spiritual structures of the world (Stevens and Collins 1993:144). Sunday Adelaja lists seven spheres of influence in society, all of which he says Christians should infiltrate and influence (2008:143-144):

1. Spiritual/social
2. Government/politics
3. Business/economy
4. Education
5. Media
6. Culture/entertainment
7. Sports

Having penetrated these arenas, believers should then seek to “disciple” these areas by introducing a Christian ethos and bring a Christian worldview to bear on them, thereby redeeming them (Stevens and Collins 1993:145). Leaders also need to anticipate the changes that are required when ministering in non-ecclesial arenas. New ministries will inevitably be formed which may not benefit anyone in their congregations directly, since the base of the ministry may be located in secular institutions such as hospitals, or even communal places such as people’s homes (Ogden 2003:162). Leaders will no longer be able to manage or monitor the complexity and diversity of these ministries and will need to develop creative approaches to ministry to ensure that there is sufficient cohesion between all the ministries. People will need to be equipped for new areas, and it may very well be mature believers who are more conversant with secular life who will do the equipping for new ministries, rather than Christian leaders alone (Adelaja 2008:144). Existing leader will need to solicit their help and train them to train others.

6.3. The Leader as Empowerer

Equippers are “empowerers” (Maxwell 1995:84; Means 1990:58). They move people from dependency to empowerment (Wright 2003:42). It is the role of leaders to empower others for ministry (Storey 1995:73). Through their influence, leaders “enable others to achieve what otherwise would never be achieved” (Means 1990:58). Their function in the Church is to “facilitate the ministry of the whole body” (Means 1990:47). Empowering leaders see the potential in others and “invest in a relationship with them that gives them the space to become everything God intended them to be”, more particularly, “the space to use and develop the gifts that God has given them” (Wright 2003:42).

6.3.1. The Importance of the Leader's Influence in the Empowerment Process

People find their place in ministry in relation to the projected role model of their leaders (Ogden 2003:184). Most people will be reluctant to assume ministry roles until they are empowered by leaders to do so (Maxwell 1995:202). Leer describes this as follows:

“It is the nature of the congregation's leadership that more than anything influences how a congregation will function. At the centre of the leadership is one who can facilitate or block the enabling process in the congregation's life, namely, the pastor. For good or for ill, he or she is the focal point of the life of the congregation” (1989:97).

Enablement is synonymous with empowerment, and one way to interpret Ephesians 4:11 is to see ministers as “enablers” whose job it is to equip God's people (Martin 1991:52). However, Storey says that “Empowerment will not come within the church unless the clergy ... discover that their task is to equip and empower the laity” (1995:73). Empowerment is not about the abdication of responsibility on the leader's part. It is about “inviting others to share in the task of reshaping the world. If our people are not invited, they will either withdraw from involvement or grasp what power they can. Neither of these responses is conducive to furthering the Kingdom” (Storey 1995:74; also Smit 1995:39).

6.3.2. How People are Disempowered

Equipping leadership styles invert the traditional pyramid of authority and assist believers to attain the spiritual potential God has for them by equipping, supporting, motivating, and mentoring them (Schwarz 1996:22). Equipping leadership styles focus on the development and empowering of individuals.

For this reason they also diverge from other leadership styles which overtly or inadvertently disempower people by laying emphasis elsewhere. By way of illustration, Equipping leadership styles are opposed to administrative leadership styles which focus on the efficient functioning or growth of the organisation. In order to achieve this efficiency, people may be used as instruments. Efficiency is the end, and the people the means to the end (Gibbs 2005:139). Empowering leaders do not “utilise” others to accomplish goals or visions (Adelaja 2008:125). Instead they realise that the empowerment of people should be a central focus of a ministry. Equipping leaders understand efficiency to be a by-product of an empowered people. It is not an end in itself.

Equipping leadership styles also stand diametrically opposed to leadership styles that are hierarchical and controlling because these approaches disempower people (Gibbs 2005:29). Hierarchical approaches to leadership control power by any combination of the following:

- Vesting power in select positions and job titles (Gibbs 2005:30).
- Requiring formal (theological) training to be completed before allowing people to minister (Cladis 1999:123).
- Preserving “closed” ordination whereby individuals are required to comply with certain perquisites before their ministry is recognised and endorsed.
- Maintaining closed leadership “inner” circles through the self-perpetuation of governing boards (Finzel 2000:105). In this scenario new board members are selected with the understanding that they assent to perpetuate the status quo (Smit 1995:41).

Disempowerment is also entrenched through institutionalism, i.e. through excessive governmental structures, bureaucratic policies and procedures, complex systems of control, centralised authority, and “top-down”

management systems (Adelaja 2008:124; Gibbs and Bolger 2006:194, 197). Ogne and Roehl maintain that Equipping leadership paradigms do not view leaders as dictators or directors of others. Instead they view leaders as implementers of the collective vision, to facilitators of resources, the most of valuable of which are human “resources” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:14). Equipping leaders take care to ensure that they do not inadvertently disempower people either through their styles of leadership, or through organisational structures.

6.3.3. Ways in Which Equippers Can Empower Others:

Equipping involves releasing the potential, ministry and leadership of people (Davis 1995:14; Stevens and Collins 1993:89; Smit 1995:39). There are several things that Equipping leaders may do to achieve this:

6.3.3.1. Commit to Sharing Power

“Leadership is the process of giving power away, not collecting it” (Wright 2003:135). “Leadership emerges as power is shared rather than as authority is exerted” (Gibbs 2005:31). “Empowering others inevitably means yielding one’s own power” (Gibbs 2005:88), and relinquishing control (Mallory 2001:30). Shawchuck and Hueser mention that leaders must learn to submit their own ego and agenda to God’s intended future (1993:240). It is required of leaders that they be secure in their own calling and walk with God if they are to share “power” (Ogne and Roehl 2008:262; Wright 2003:15).

Wright contends that power is never actually in the hands of leaders, but in the hands of followers (Wright 2003:17). The power granted to leaders only ever exists when someone decides to follow and decides to accept the leader’s influence (Wright 2003:17). Furthermore, people already have power and are empowered by God for their calling. Empowerment is not the granting of power, but the freeing of people to use the power and skills they already have (Gibbs 2005:89). Equipping leaders recognise

this and remove the constraints that prevent people from engaging in their ministry (Gibbs 2005:89). They commit themselves to processes which incorporate the sharing of power in all of its forms.

6.3.3.2. Help People Discern Their Spiritual Gifting

Scripture make it clear that each person has been endowed with spiritual gifts which are to be used for ministry (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; 1 Peter 4:10-11). Leaders must both discern the gifting of those they lead, and also help people discover their gifts themselves (Storey 1995:73; Ogne and Roehl 2008:61). Leaders “exegete the community” by helping people recognize the gifts of those in the community (Stevens and Collins 1993:1286). They “evoke” gifts (Means 1990:130). Gift-evoking is the process whereby leaders “motivate and fan the flames of desire for people to discover their gifts and be deployed accordingly” (Ogden 2003:180; also Maxwell 1995:84). By doing this, leaders “facilitate the functioning of the body under Christ’s headship, as described in Ephesians 4:11-12” (Gibbs and Bolger 2006:192). There are several ways in which leaders can help others discover their ministry gifts:

- Teach and preach about spiritual gifts to create an awareness of the nature of spiritual gifts and their function in ministry. This can be done through regular preaching and teaching or through special seminars and workshops (Maxwell 1995:105; Ogden 2003:181).
- Hold “ministry fairs” in their churches and ministries at which different departments of the church or ministry can “publicize” areas of service which might be hidden to the congregation (Ogden 2003:181). These may be likened to secular career exhibitions (Ogden 2003:181).
- Expose people to ministry situations and allow them to experiment (Ogden 2003:182). One such environment in which people can be exposed to ministry opportunities and experiment in ministering is in

small groups (Ogden 2003:177). Small groups provide excellent platforms in which believers can minister to each other and work together to minister to those outside of the faith community (Mitchell 1995:160).

6.3.3.3. Provide Opportunities for Service

Empowerment is permission-giving (Ogden 2003:175). People become empowered when they are granted opportunity, freedom and security (Maxwell 1995:187). “Empowerment includes valuing others ... and granting opportunities” for service (Gibbs 2005:89; Wright 2003:42). Leaders must deploy the potential of others (Ogne and Roehl 2008:62) and empower people to make individual contributions towards the organization’s mission (Wright 2003:16). In missional leadership paradigms “Ordained clergy equip and release the multiple ministries of the people of God throughout the church” (Roxburgh and Romanuk 2006:12).

The “leader’s service may prove to be a major liability if he seeks to perform every task himself” (Tidball 1999:109). Leaders should therefore resist the temptation to take upon themselves the responsibility to meet all the demands of ministry required of the congregations and organisations that they lead. When they do this, they create opportunities for others to minister and new roles emerge for others to involve themselves in (Ogden 2003:184). Wise leaders “make space” for others to minister alongside them (Ogden 2003:184).

Avenues should be provided through which people may serve in formal positions or informally through the natural processes of social interaction (Ogden 2003:182). This means that congregations must recognise and validate all ministry, whether it is in the midst of the congregation or in the “secular” arena. Computer databases can be developed which link people’s ministry profiles to areas of service or people can be allowed to

take the initiative for areas of service as they are led by the Lord (Ogden 2003:182).

(a) Basic Guidelines for Helping People Find Areas to Serve In

- i. People should be trained and developed primarily in their areas of strength and spiritual gifting (Maxwell 1995:91). Attempts should then be made to guide people to serve in areas for which they have been gifted (Maxwell 1995:91).
- ii. Leaders should adapt their approach to equipping to suit the personality and gifting of the individuals whom they are equipping, instead of using a simplistic, generic approach (Ogne and Roehl 2008:197; Maxwell 1995:84; Wright 2003:36). Leaders must also adapt their approach to training to suit the level of maturity of those whom they are leading (Wright 2003:39).

6.3.3.4. Give People Responsibility and Authority and Hold Them Accountable

John Maxwell maintains that empowering people is only achieved when people are given responsibility, authority and accountability (1995:101):

(a) Responsibility

Those who are equipped must be entrusted with the responsibility of their ministry (Means 1990:24). Empowering people includes delegating specific responsibilities to them (Davis 1995:15). Once duties have been delegated, leaders should avoid interfering in the work unnecessarily (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:139). Each individual to whom responsibilities are delegated should be informed of what will be required of them. A clear outline of responsibilities helps avoid misunderstandings and conflict. In order to motivate them, people should also be made to understand the contribution that

their individual role plays towards the overall success of the ministry or church.

(b) Authority

“Responsibility without authority disables, rather than empowers followers” (Wilkes 1998:181). It is only when people are given authority along with responsibility that they become genuinely empowered (Gibbs 2005:31; Maxwell 1995:102; Ogne and Roehl 2008:64). Since an Equipping leadership style is a “decentralized, permission-giving” style, all to whom responsibilities are given, must also be given a measure of authority that corresponds to their responsibilities (Ogden 2003:175). However, it is to be remembered that the heart of spiritual ministry is service (Means 1990:45). All ministry roles must therefore be thought of as opportunities to serve, and not as opportunities to assume positions of authority (Means 1990:46).

(c) Accountability

“True responsibility ... includes a willingness to be held accountable” (Maxwell 1995:104; Ogne and Roehl 2008:63). Although authority can be derived from a person’s position, competence, personality, integrity or level of spirituality, true authority cannot actually be given or delegated (Maxwell 1995:102-3). It must be earned as people prove themselves worthy of it (Gibbs 2005:31; Maxwell 1995:102). This implies that true authority is inseparable from accountability.

It is when people are held accountable, that they take ownership of their ministry (Maxwell 1995:122). Ogne and Roehl mention that young leaders in particular may need to be held accountable and helped to follow through on agreed-upon commitments (2008:227). This is because they may struggle to stay focussed and remain

motivated (Ogne and Roehl 2008:227). Holding people accountable requires that they be given honest and direct communication regarding their commitments to their responsibilities (Ogne and Roehl 2008:227). Both constructive criticism for areas in which they have not fulfilled responsibilities properly and praise for work done well should be communicated on a regular basis. Constructive criticism helps people maintain a proper work ethic, while affirmation for work done well ensures that people remain sufficiently motivated.

6.3.4. Invite Participation in Decision-Making

The Blackabys mention that, “Leaders are, by nature, decision-makers. However it is not wise for leaders to make all the decisions” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:136). “Group members should participate in major decisions that affect themselves ... Involved people do not feel disenfranchised; they are more committed to the decision after it is made when consensus is achieved” (Means 1990:144). “When people are involved in the planning and decision process ... they feel like part of a team [and] take ownership of the action” (Wright 2003:35). Authority must therefore be decentralised in such a way that those who are given responsibilities must along with it have the power to make decisions without having to refer the decisions for approval (Ogden 2003:174). Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger say:

“The Church needs to operate as a consensual process in which all have a say in influencing outcomes” (2006:192).

Not only must leaders invite people to share in decision-making processes, they must also show them how to do so. Leaders who help others to develop their own initiative strengthen them in their exercise of judgment and enable them to grow and become better contributors (Means 1990:161). Freedom must be given for others to express their ideas without fear of ridicule. Means says that leaders must help people clarify the possibilities and choices that lay before them, explain reasons behind

actions, emphasize points of agreement, explore areas of differences, and help move discussions toward integration of facts and opinions (1990:180).

Decision-making should become a shared responsibility because groups are more likely to make better decisions than individuals since they can see issues from several different perspectives (Means 1990:44, 144; Miller 1995:48; Wright 2003:50). Consequently, leaders must be committed to due process when decisions need to be taken and must understand that divergent opinions regarding matters improve upon decisions. Leaders can allow others to help shape a ministry's vision and determine a ministry's direction, instead of feeling that the onus is upon them to do so. An empowering leadership style is an approach of "co-leadership" and is participative in matters of decision-making (Odom 2001:26; Gibbs and Coffey 2006:87). Empowering leader invite others to make meaningful contributions to shaping the future and culture of the organisation and see this process as integral to the organisation's success.

6.3.5. Give Public Recognition to All Ministries

Collins asserts that during the latter half of the twentieth century there was a shift away from an understanding of ministry as endowed upon a select few by special ordination (or commissioning). This was replaced by an understanding that ministry is the responsibility of every believer, and that the commissioning of every believer originates at their baptism (Collins 2006:30). "As such, ministry has come to be recognized as a gift that is universal among the baptized or churchwide" (Collins 2006:30). Empowering approaches to ministry therefore dispense with any semblance of a "two-class system of priest and people, clergy and laity, professional and amateur" (Watson 1989:250). Instead, the unique contribution of each individual is affirmed as vital to the success of the entire ministry's enterprise (1 Cor. 12:14-27).

Jesus recognised people's contributions publicly (Matt. 26:10-13; Mark 12:41-44). The writings of the apostle Paul in particular, contain numerous examples in which the contributions of others were acknowledged with appreciation (Romans 16:1-23; Col. 4:7-15; Phil. 1:5; 4:3; 4:14-18; Philemon 1:10-13). Publicly recognising the service and contribution of each participant in ministry serves to build unity and organisational community (Wright 2003:134). An appreciation for the diversity of ministry helps overcome the egocentricity that sometimes accompanies leaders, and fosters a spirit of partnership rather than one of competitiveness. When people celebrate their successes together, relationships are built and respect is increased (Ogne and Roehl 2008:252).

Leaders can acknowledge the contributions of others in public and in private (Finzel 2000:62; Ogne and Roehl 2008:63; Stevens and Collins 1993:137). Leaders could use any communal gathering times to express appreciation for those who minister in some way. One common practice is for those who engage in short-term ministry events to report back to their home congregations on the event. Several ministries and churches also set aside a special "Consecration" service at the beginning of the year in which all who have committed themselves to serve in that year are prayed for. Churches could also hold volunteer banquets once or twice a year to which all who serve are invited (Warren 1995:347). All these are ideas which could serve to publicly endorse the ministry of the whole church.

Empowering leaders highlight the accomplishments of others, something that insecure leaders find difficult to do (Ogden 2003:170). "Personal security may be the most important quality of an empowering leader" (Ogden 2003:170). Leaders should therefore give credit where it is due.

6.4. The Leader as Encourager

John Maxwell mentions that “People in our society are underencouraged” (1995:184). Yet the Church is to be an “affirming community” (Ogden 2003:182). Encouragement in its various forms is a vital component of the equipping process. Greg Ogden says:

“An affirming environment allows God’s people to develop and refine their gifts” (2003:182).

Leaders can intentionally encourage both their peers and their “subordinates” (Davis 1995:15). Encouragement builds a bridge between equippers and those being equipped. It also builds self-confidence and a sense of self-worth in trainees (Maxwell 1997:7). By encouraging them, equippers instil in people the desire and ability to do the work required of them (Maxwell 1995:84). Encouraging people builds their self-confidence and motivates them to achieve even more (Maxwell 1995:185).

The Microsoft Encarta Dictionary defines “Encourage” as a transitive verb which means:

1. To give somebody hope, confidence or courage
2. To urge somebody to do something: to motivate somebody to take a course of action or continue doing something
3. To foster something: to assist something to occur or increase

These aspects of encouragement complement the role of equipping others for ministry. All who minister will benefit from somebody who can instil a sense of confidence in them; who can motivate them; and who can help cultivate within them a desire to increase in their participation in ministry.

Encouragement was a prominent ministry of leaders in the early church (Means 1990:176). The following citations illustrate this::

- “Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers” - Acts 15:32, NIV.
- “I am sending him [Tychicus] to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you” – Ephesians 6:22, NIV.
- “¹¹For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory” – 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12, NIV.

As a leader, “Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus” was nicknamed “Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement)” (Acts 4:36, NIV).

6.4.1 New Testament Word for the Ministry of Encouragement

Several New Testament words that are used to communicate a “ministry of encouragement” also help shed light on the importance of this leadership function:

6.4.1.1 Παράκλησις

This noun means “a calling to one’s aid”, and stems from the verb “parakaleo”, itself derived from “para” (with; by the side) and “kaleo” (to call). Hence it means “an exhortation, encouragement” (Vine 1985:198). Παράκλησις means “calling to one’s side (parakaleo) either for advice or for consolation (Robertson’s Word Pictures on Acts 9:31). Thayer lists the various interpretations of Παράκλησις as (2009:no page numbers):

- a calling near, summons, (especially for help)
- importation, supplication, entreaty

- exhortation, admonition, encouragement
- consolation, comfort, solace; that which affords comfort or refreshment
- persuasive discourse, stirring address
- instructive, admonitory, conciliatory, powerful hortatory discourse

In Acts 11:23, Barnabas is seen to have been sent to Antioch to encourage (Παράκλησις) the newly formed church there.

6.4.1.2. Προτρεπο

This verb means “to urge forward, persuade” (Vine 1985:198); “push on” (Robertson 2009: no page numbers); or “impel” (Vincent 2009:no page numbers). It is used of Appollos who according to Acts 18:27 did much to “encourage” believers in Achaia (NIV).

6.4.1.3. Παραμυτηρομαι

This compound verb is derived from “para” (with; by the side) and “muthos” (counsel, advice), and is variously translated as “encourage” (1 Thess. 2:12) or “comfort” (John 11:19, 31). In 1 Thess. 5:14 it is translated as “encourage” (NIV), “signifying to stimulate to the discharge of the ordinary duties of life” (Vine 1985:198).

In 1 Thess. 2:11-12, it refers to Paul, Silas and Timothy as leaders who “comforted” the church in their trials and urged them to live a life worthy of the Lord. John Wesley comments on 1 Thess. 5:11-12 and says: “By exhorting, we are moved to do a thing willingly; by comforting, to do it joyfully; by charging, to do it carefully” (2009: no page numbers).

6.4.2. How Leaders Can Encourage Others

The work of a leader in encouraging others as part of the equipping process can take several forms:

6.4.2.1. Affirm Self-Worth and Competence

“True spiritual leaders assume the best of their volunteers” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:139). They show people “unconditional positive regard”. “Unconditional positive regard” was a term coined by Carl Rogers to teach that every social interaction must be approached from an appreciation of others (Wright 2010:3). Leaders therefore communicate to each person their “intrinsic worth” (Finzel 2000:85). This is especially necessary in ministry where people sometimes associate their self-worth with their ministry performance. Leaders help people understand that they have inherent worth by virtue of their being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7). Wright says that each person must be valued as a human being, having being created in the image of God (2010:1).

Leaders can also affirm the giftedness and contribution of each individual (Stevens and Collins 1993:129). They can communicate to each person that “they fervently believe in their God-given potential” (Ogden 2003:209) and that there are no “little people” or “little places” to serve in within ministries (Finzel 2000:129). Ogden says that leaders must provide “an atmosphere of acceptance in which someone can learn to be safe” and appreciate all the other people who serve in some area (2003:209).

The “need for affirmation and a show of gratitude is especially acute in voluntary organizations” since those who serve there usually do not receive financial remuneration or other material incentives for their efforts (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:138). Hans Finzel says that research shows that affirmation motivates people more than financial incentives do

(2000:54). People want to know that their sacrifices and contributions are making a difference (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:139). Leaders should publicly recognize and thank volunteers who work alongside them (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:139). They could also write short notes or cards or any other communiqué in which they thank individuals for their contributions or congratulate them for any work done well (Finzel 2000:58).

Affirmation is also necessary when people start out in ministry. It is at this time that people may lack self-confidence and need encouragement and reassurance until they develop competence, and along with it, self-assurance (Finzel 2000:56; Moynagh 2003:188). Words of encouragement and compliments for any small achievements expressed by leaders communicate to people a belief in them. This motivates them to press through their initial mistakes and failings and inspires them to continue on their journey of developing their ministry skills (Finzel 2000:56).

6.4.2.2. Give Praise for Work Well Done

The New Testament shows that it is in the nature of God to affirm those who have worked hard (Matthew 25:21, 23; Luke 19:17). Several passages reveal that those who ministered in some way were acknowledge publicly for their contributions (Romans 16:1-23; 2 Cor. 9:1-14; Philippians 4:3; Colossian 4:7, 9, 12-14). John and Henry Blackaby mention that in a similar fashion:

“Leaders recognize the success of others ... giving credit when it is deserved. One of the greatest rewards a leader can give, even more than remuneration, is recognition. Leaders ought to be constantly praising their people for their accomplishments and acknowledging their contributions to the organization” (2001:138; also Byrd 2003:no page numbers; Finzel 2000:90).

Conversely, leaders must not be jealous of those around them or compete with them for recognition (Moynagh 2003:188). Self-effacing leaders endear themselves to others (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:139). Leaders should publicly recognise and thank all who minister in ministry together. In doing so, they alert people to the valuable contribution that volunteers make (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:139). This public recognition also helps to promote unity and a culture of service among people.

6.4.2.3. Challenge Complacency

All people need others who will “guide and inspire, *challenge* and support” them (Wright 2003:27; *italics added*). Leaders should *constructively* challenge those whom they’re equipping to be and do their best (Ogne and Roehl 2008:108). In doing so, however, “Leaders must constantly avoid non-scriptural motivational techniques; such as guilt, manipulation, intimidation, and superficial hype” (Davis 1995:15).

Although people will regularly require some form of motivation, challenging people is particularly necessary when they have reached a state of complacency or settled into certain “comfort zones”. People grow when they are challenged to go beyond their current level of achievement (Maxwell 1995:96). In order to elicit continuous development, leaders must therefore support, challenge and motivate people to reach greater goals (Maxwell 1995:96). Leaders can start by setting small, easily-achieved goals. As people develop competency to minister at the initial level, leaders can then increase the complexity or difficulty of the goals (Maxwell 1995:96).

Leaders should at all times invite discussion regarding the goals set from those for whom the goals are set. Ideally goals should be manageable, measurable, easily communicated, written down, and then regularly reviewed (Maxwell 1995:96). This can be done by the leader sitting down and discussing the goals with the individual(s) concerned (Wright 2010:2).

This form of challenge is constantly needed even when people have done well, so that they are inspired to do even better.

6.4.2.4. The Correct Use of Reproof: Constructive Criticism and Discipline

From time to time people may need to be reprimanded, either by giving them constructive criticism or even by applying disciplinary measures. Leaders have the responsibility of confronting matters that may need addressing in people's lives or ministry (Ogne and Roehl 2008:253). If people are not doing their jobs well, this must be communicated to them as soon as possible (Finzel 2000:131). Confrontation is also necessary when people's behaviour is damaging to the morale of the group amongst whom they minister (Ogne and Roehl 2008:253).

Wright says that constructive criticism is a form of reproof and can be thought of as "caring confrontation" (2003:128). Leaders ought to give honest, constructive criticism since receiving such evaluation is part of the learning process (Maxwell 1995:104; Wright 2003:128). Leaders can hold regular work ethic appraisals and evaluations of how well individuals participate in communal ministry endeavours. In doing this, leaders help others identify areas of weaknesses and those areas in which they need further development. Appraisals also help identify areas in which development is taking place counterproductively. This helps stem the development and entrenchment of negative patterns of behaviour. Ogden says that confronting behaviour in this way is actually a means of exhortation (2003:210). Individuals should participate in the assessment process through conducting self-appraisals and inviting others to give confidential, constructive input. This develops "ownership and community accountability" (Wright 2003:129).

Discipline is another form of reproof. There may be times when a person's behaviour necessitates discipline and this may take the form of some penal measure (Cf. Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 6; 1 Tim. 5:20). Although

this form of reproof may sometimes be applied incorrectly or be construed to be a counterproductive form of motivation, its purpose is not to inflict punishment, but to correct behaviour. It is positive in its intention, since it seeks to correct mistakes, check damaging behaviour and help identify problems which, if left unattended, may precipitate the need for censure or stronger penal procedures. Discipline is always remedial in its intention. It is never meant to be punitive.

(a) Principles Which Leaders Could Use When Giving Reproof:

- i. *Ensure that there is healthy relational correspondence between the leader and the person(s) in question.*

Love for individuals and a desire for their personal welfare and development must be the motivation behind every reproof (Hebrews 12:5-11).

- ii. *Fully disclose all details and all factors which occasion disciplinary events in a spirit of love (Eph. 4:15; 29).*

Hans Finzel uses the acronym H.O.T. to describe the nature of such communication: Honest, Open, and Transparent (2000:131). Leaders do others a disservice when they withhold any particulars from people which have contributed to the situation. This is because people may not be aware of their shortcomings or the way in which inadvertent behaviour has been dysfunctional or detrimental.

- iii. *Focus on the problem of the person's functioning, unless it has to do with issues of character or is related to the individuals' ethical behaviour.*

Reproof or discipline can hurt people when their mistakes or failings (what they have done - their actions and behaviours) are

not distinguished from their personhood (who they are - their self-worth).

- iv. *Maintain confidentiality and preserve an individual's dignity at all times* (Finzel 2000:89).

Means says that a “rebuke must be encouraging, not merely censuring or scolding. Sometimes ... leaders vent their own frustration and reveal their own hostility rather than cheer the church on to greater achievement” (1990:177).

- v. *Discuss manageable, practical and tangible improvements to be worked towards to ensure that the matter is not repeated in the future.*

- vi. *Discuss alternative solutions which may need to be implemented should the solutions proposed initially, not work.*

Leaders can also discuss any further actions which may be taken if the person fails to apply themselves diligently to correct their behaviour. Where even the first mistake or offence is of such a nature that immediate disciplinary action is necessary, leaders should leave room for repentance and for the person to be restored to their ministry.

- vii. *End each encounter by highlighting the positive contributions the person has made and with an affirmation of their potential.*

6.4.2.5. Facilitate Supportive Relationships

Another thing a leader can do to encourage people is to help people build “encouraging relationships” with each other (Wright 2003:27). Because of the nature of their influence, leaders are always in the best position to help build relationships between those they are leading.

Jesus often facilitated relationship-building. He helped the twelve apostles work through relational conflict (Mark 9:33-37). His influence served to maintain the unity in the group while their behaviour threatened to break the fragile relationships in their formative years together. He entrusted his mother and the apostle John into the care of each other (John 19:26-27). Paul likewise served as a “bridge-builder” between those who ministered alongside him. He sent Tychicus to accompany and encourage the newly-converted Onesimus as he reported back to the church at Colosse (Col. 4:7-9). He also mediated between Onesimus and Philemon as Onesimus returned home (Philemon 1).

Wright says that wise leaders are aware that those whom they lead need friends who will hold them accountable, listen, encourage, care for, and love them (2003:27). They recognise that they are unable to personally provide that level of care for everyone whom they are equipping, and so they help people forge encouraging relationships with each other (2003:27).

6.4.2.6. Instil Passionate Enthusiasm for Ministry

Leaders set the tone for others in the ministry. Shawchuck and Hueser argue that the “spirit” of a congregation is often a reflection of the persona or “spirit” of the pastor since the leader’s spirit is often “projected upon the congregation” (1996:125). The spirit of the leader and congregation can be energizing and “inspire enthusiasm, devotion, high commitment to the group’s purpose, and strong regard for relationships within the group” (Shawchuck and Hueser 1996:121). Alternatively, the leader’s spirit can be “darksome” and their influence can provoke apathy, “lethargy and indifference for relationships in the group” (Shawchuck and Hueser 1996:121, 133).

Leaders must therefore give careful attention to the personal attitudes that they cultivate. James A. Richter says:

“One of the basic functions of leadership is to stimulate and focus the organization’s spirit ... in the sense of [its] vitality or esprit de corps (James A. Richter in Shawchuck and Hueser 1996:120).

This “esprit de corps” influences a ministry’s mission, structure and relationships because while “mission and ministry consume energy; a healthy esprit de corps generates energy” (Shawchuck and Hueser 1996:121). A leader who has a healthy attitude has a direct positive effect on people’s motivation and work ethic (Maxwell 1993:28). During difficult times in an organization, a leader’s disposition becomes even more important (Edmondson 2009: no page numbers). During such times, one responsibility of a successful leader “is to encourage those who look to him or her for leadership, to ‘rally the troops’ so to speak” (Edmondson 2009: no page numbers).

Through their example, leaders also inspire people on to personal growth. By displaying a positive attitude and encouraging others, Equipping leaders become “the cheerleaders of the body” (Ogden 2003:209). Ogden says the following of a leader’s influence:

“They are able to stir up joy and enthusiasm for the Lord’s work. They could be called spark plugs, inciters and promoters. Like a coach at halftime igniting his team for action for the second half through a rousing pep talk, exhorters call people to be their best” (2003:209).

Through such motivation leaders inspire others to go places they would not go on their own, and attempt to do things they would never try on their own (Finzel 2000:14).

When leaders are seen to embrace the vision of their organization or ministry wholeheartedly, others will be inspired to do the same. Enthusiasm is contagious. It is only when a leader has this “attitudinal

commitment” to a ministry’s purpose that he or she can call others to participate in the ministry’s vision. Leaders should communicate the vision of their ministry with clarity and with passion (Agee 2001:15; Finzel 2000:125). Edmondson says:

“Great leaders ... [must] ...have a contagious enthusiasm about moving the vision of the organization forward. A team will rally around a leader with conviction” (2009: no page numbers).

In addition to the above, leaders can play an influential role in ensuring that the environment and ethos of their organization is one which is enjoyable and fulfilling to minister in. A positive, joyful, affirming atmosphere is conducive to good relationships and morale. Good relationships and morale are, in turn, essential for productive participation in ministry. Leaders should therefore ensure that people celebrate successes (Maxwell 1997:167) and that they choose positive, proactive responses to challenges. This is because it is these types of responses which will ultimately ensure that solutions are created (Covey 1989:70, 79). This is all the more important considering that people become reinforced in the paradigms in which they choose to respond to situations, whether positive or negative (Covey 1989:79). Leaders must therefore look for opportunities to instil joy in adversity (Matt. 5:12; Rom. 5:3, 11; Phil. 4:4-7); faith during daunting ventures (Matt. 17:20; 21:22), courage in affliction (Acts 14:22; 27:13-27; Rom. 12:12); hopeful endurance (2 Tim. 2:3; 4:5; Rev. 3:10), and zeal for ministry (Rom. 12:11; 1 Cor. 9:18-27) in others and in the culture of their organizations through their personal examples.