

10 Principles for Discipling Key Donors

Recently I had several pastors step into the ranks of being committed to **providing ongoing discipleship to key donors**. It began during the planning phase of a capital campaign which laid the foundation for a long term fruitful ministry. Each pastor put in place a unique structure that reflected his personality, church culture, and relational network. Though each took a distinct approach the results were the same, exponential. Here is a list of common principles these pastors employed.

1. **Be bold.** Provide high challenge at the beginning of the process. Explain the need, role, and expectation of a generosity ministry.
2. **Be open.** Don't hide anything, share what you know even the hard stuff. High capacity leaders will see through it if you don't. They will also be able to discern how to become a part of the solution.
3. **Be a family.** Involve both the husband and wife. They are typically accustomed to serving together in philanthropic ventures. They know their roles and can become a powerful team.
4. **Be visionary.** The purpose is to go further faster toward the vision. Don't make the conversation as small as a project or need. Hint, just because the dollar amount is large doesn't mean the vision is clear.
5. **Be a discipler.** Every conversation is a discipleship conversation. High capacity leaders tend to be isolated or primarily investing in others. Rarely does a pastor talk their language or does someone speak into their lives. It is your calling to respond to their need. Make it about vision, their particular passion, and the spiritual journey involved.
6. **Be a sojourner.** Don't have a short-term-fund-a-crisis or project mindset. Be committed to a long term discipleship relationship.
7. **Be personal.** Ask for specific prayer request, have them into your home, call, and write hand-written notes. Invest yourself into their lives.
8. **Be a community.** You do not hold all the relationships and high capacity leaders need to feel a strong connection to the body as a whole. Let leaders engage new leaders in the process. Ask them to share about their journey publicly. It will both challenge and strengthen the church.
9. **Be clear.** Key leaders want to know the specific need. They desire perspective to process how to respond. If you do not provide this clarity another non-profit will.
10. **Be inspiring.** Share personal stories of dramatic life change or behind the scenes success in ministry. Show the impact value of the gift and how the future holds promise.

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