

Developing other people well

Developing others matters because:

It is at the heart of the Bible's vision:

It reflects how God gives Himself to us. It is how Jesus went about his ministry. It reflects the way God's Spirit works – empowering the community. It reflects what the church is called to be. It is a vision in which no one is passive.

The myth of the solo leader:

Rarely can one person be skilled in all areas. It is essential that leaders find others who can offset their limitations and complement their strengths.

The spiritual health of the leader:

"...the great problem with single leadership is its threefold tendency to pride of place, love of authority, and lack of accountability." Gordon Fee.

Multiplying and future planning:

While it can be counter-intuitive for us to invest a lot of our energy in a few, it is striking how both Jesus and Paul prioritised a high-level of attention to a relatively small number.

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“A good leader is one who leaves behind them women and men who possess the conviction and the will to carry on without them.” Baroness Lydia Dunn

While much of the structural work we do might not outlast our time in an organisation or a church, the development of people will remain far longer, and have the potential to multiply beyond our own work.



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Obstacles to developing others:

Putting the immediate over the long-term:

the "tyranny of the urgent". "I find myself thinking, "I haven't got time to do all this. There's a job to be done." But what is the job? For Jesus, the job isn't simply to achieve a task, but also to develop people." James Lawrence.

Developing others is demanding.

It is more time and energy consuming, and its benefits are rarely immediate in the short term.

Facing up to our own temptation to be needed.

Looking for the finished article, or those who are like us, rather than the potential in people.

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How do I become the kind of servant-leader who prioritises developing others?

Creating a culture in which the development of people is seen as normal and expected.

Having a plan or pathway for leadership development in my organization or church which is communicated clearly.

Seeing leadership as relating to the whole of life.

Thinking outside the box about people.

Praying for wisdom.

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Questions to ask myself about the way I see developing others:

How easy do I find it to give power away?

Can I challenge myself about how easily I see potential in others?

Where are the gaps in my gifting at the moment which need to be filled by others?

What is my plan for developing other people?

How do I pray for others when thinking about their development or choosing who to invest in?



What are the different styles of leadership needed when developing other people?

We could talk about the way that someone's leadership or equipping grows in four stages.

1

I don't know what I don't know.

Unconsciously incompetent – a place of *enthusiastic inexperience*.
Matthew 4 – the disciples leave their nets immediately.

In developing others at this stage, the priorities are to be **providing clarity** and **setting an example** about what is needed to be done. *"I do, you watch"*.
The style will be more **directive**.

2

I know what I don't know.

Consciously incompetent – emotionally it can be a time of *disillusionment*.
The hardest stage. Matthew 8 – the disciples think they are going to drown.

In developing others at this stage, the priority is to be **helping people through the difficulties of facing up to the challenges of the leadership they are growing into** and to emphasise two things: **the original vision or purpose** and the gift of **God's grace** which reminds them God's work is far more important than their effort and that they are not defined by their performance.

"I do, you help." The style will be **coaching** – offering the commitment of our time and **accessibility to others** and be willing to **share responsibility** with them.

3

I know what I know.

Consciously competent – A time of *growing confidence*. Matthew 14 – Jesus says to the disciples, "You give them something to eat."

In developing others at this stage, the priorities are to be **modelling collaboration** and allowing the person to **take risks**. We will be **letting go of power**. *"You do, I help"*. The style will be more about **consensus-building** – they will be doing far more on their own, with **consultation and support** from us when asked for.

4

I don't know what I know.

Unconsciously competent – Growth has led to *the ability to lead others*.
Matthew 28 – Jesus passes on His work in the Great Commission.

In developing others at this stage, the priorities are to be **offering good accountability** but in a way in which sense of **control is low**. *"You do, I watch"*.
The style will be more about **delegation and partnership**.

Questions to ask myself about how I develop individuals:

- Which style (directive, coaching, consensus-building, delegating) am I best at?**
- Which am I least confident in?**
- Reflecting on a current situation/relationship, what style am I in?**
- Where do I need to go next?**



Our ongoing commitment and relationship are the most important factors. We tend to give high initial input and low ongoing support. Whereas Jesus gives low initial input and high ongoing support.