

# Way of Discipleship Small Groups

## Leading: Investing in people



### Touching base (5 minutes)

Open in prayer as is helpful for your group.

If this is your first session take time to introduce yourselves and set any ground rules you want to for your time together.

If you met previously take the opportunity either as a group or in pairs to check in with each other about how your response from last time has gone.



### Opening question(s) (5 minutes)

Why are people more important than task?



### Understanding the information (40 minutes)

Share these thoughts in your own words or read them together:

Whereas 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 ministry.



The fruit of effective leadership is seen in how we can plan for the health of our churches or organisations beyond the span of our own time. As Baroness Lydia Dunn says, “A good leader is one who leaves behind them women and men who possess the conviction and the will to carry on without them.”

Things can stop us from putting developing others at the centre of our leadership. We can put the immediate tasks over long-term growth. Developing others is demanding. Developing others necessarily means giving away some of our power. Yet as Emerson said, “There is no limit to what a person can achieve if they do not mind who gets the credit.” We can be looking for the finished article, or those who are like us, rather than the potential in people.

In order to create a culture in which the development of people is seen as normal and expected a few things can help. Having a plan or pathway for leadership development in your organization or church which is communicated clearly. Thinking outside the box about people - looking for people that we might not expect. A question to ask in looking for potential in people is, “Is this person willing to be taught?” Praying for wisdom. Before selecting His disciples Jesus spend the night in prayer. When forming teams, or seeking to invest in others, praying for wisdom is essential.

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

When developing others in their own leadership, there are different stages to development which will need different approaches from us and different skills. Recognising where people are in taking on new responsibilities and offering them helpful and appropriate leadership is at the centre of developing others well.

We could talk about the way that leadership develops in four stages.

**Stage one: I don't know what I don't know.**

The beginning of a journey, or learning any skill like riding a bike, The person we are developing may start out very unclear about what is needed. A technical term for this could be to be **unconsciously incompetent**- they don't yet have the skills or character to do something, but they I don't yet fully aware of it.

It would be like a child starting to ride a bike without stabilisers I'm thinking they can do it straight away. Emotionally the person might be in a place of enthusiastic inexperience.

**Stage two: I know what I don't know.**

This can be the hardest stage, after we have begun something with enthusiasm, but suddenly found that it is harder than we expected- the equivalent of the child falling off the bike and grazing their knees. Or in a church context we might be beginning to lead a group and find that sometimes they don't respond well to us, or don't turn up, or things go wrong that we didn't expect.

The technical term for this would be to be **consciously incompetent**- emotionally it can be a time of disillusionment. We can wonder if we have the ability to carry on.

**Stage three: I know what I know.**

Having hopefully worked through some of the disillusionment which we encounter when we discover the difficulty of leading something, we can begin to move into a time of growing confidence. It is like the child getting back on the bike and concentrating very hard in order to stay upright.

We begin to find we can do something, but we have to think very clearly and hard about what we are doing. We can call this **conscious competence**. For example, we can have a better sense of how to teach a lesson, but provide ourselves with detailed notes about each stage to make sure we stay on track.

**Stage four: I don't know what I know.**

We have reached the stage when leading something has become natural to us and we are able to lead others. We get on the bike and ride it without thinking about how we're doing it. This is a time of **unconscious competence** and a time of being able to invest in others. When someone is at stage four we know that we have developed them effectively.

We can trace these four stages in the story of how Jesus walked with his disciples in Matthew. In Matthew 4 they are full of enthusiastic inexperience- as soon as Jesus calls them they leave their nets and follow him.

Yet in Matthew 8 the disciples are overwhelmed with fear and disillusionment, even though Jesus is with them in the boat, when they think they are going to drown.

In Matthew 14 Jesus entrusts the disciples with the task of thinking about how to feed the five thousand, asking them to find something to eat. They are at a stage of growing confidence -when they are being able to participate in His ministry.

Finally, in Matthew 28, through the Great Commission Jesus is able to pass on His work to them, having developed them to a stage where they are able to step into the fullness of His work.

When we are thinking about developing others we will need to be aware of the kind of leadership that is needed for the stage they are at. Of course, there may well be a sense of overlap between some of these stages, or even of them repeating. Nevertheless, in general terms we can be helped by thinking about the particular kind of support that is needed for a particular time.

Stage one (enthusiastic inexperience) is likely to require an approach from us in which we are providing clarity and setting an example about what is needed to be done. Before we ask others to do something, we may need to show them how to do it and give all the information that they need. We could call this stage “I do, you watch”. The style of our servant-leadership will be more directive.

Stage two (disillusionment) is likely to require an approach from us in which we are helping people through the difficulties of facing up to the challenges of the leadership they are growing into. In this situation we will need to emphasise two things: the original vision or purpose underlying the task or role 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.

This is the most intensive period. We will be offering the commitment of our time and accessibility to others and be willing to share responsibility with them. We could call this stage, “I do, you help”. The style of our servant-leadership will have the character of regular coaching.

Stage three (growing confidence) is likely to require an approach from us in which we are modelling collaboration and allowing the person to take risks. We will be letting go of power and the need for things to be always done in our way. They will be doing far more on their own, with consultation and support from us when asked for. We could call this stage “You do, I help”. The style of our servant-leadership will be more about consensus-building.

Stage four (becoming a leader of others) is likely to require an approach from us in which we are offering good accountability but in a way in which sense of control is low. We could call this stage “You do, I watch”. The style of our servant-leadership will be more about delegation and partnership.

Although as we develop others we will increasingly be able to delegate and entrust responsibility to them, nevertheless the extent to which we are able to walk with them will be shaped how much we are able to share ourselves with them – whether that is in giving of our time to reflect together, modelling life, sharing in tasks together, or enabling others to have a go.

Our ongoing commitment and relationship are the most important factors. Bishop Steven Croft points out that the way most churches work is exactly the opposite of Jesus's model. We tend to give high initial input and low ongoing support. Whereas Jesus gives low initial input and high ongoing support.

Discuss: Choose one of the questions to ask yourself on the handout. What is your response?

## Reading the Bible (15 minutes)

Read 1 Timothy 4: 6-16 in which Paul invests in Timothy.

Discuss the Discovery Bible Study questions:  
What does this passage teach me about God?  
What does this passage teach me about people?  
How does this passage call me to obey God?  
What might I do in response to this this week?

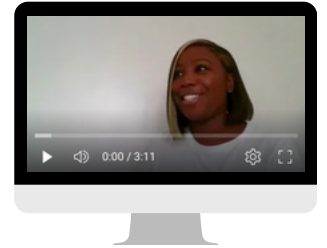


## Seeing how it looks in real lives (10 minutes)

Watch the video at:

<https://youtu.be/a2oGSDKv9xM>

What struck you as important in the video?



## Responding to God's leading (5 minutes)

Give people an opportunity to think about, "What might God be showing me and how might I respond?" They may like to write this down and/or share it with the group and/or share it with one other person. A friendly question is to ask each other, "Is there anything that would be helpful to ask you next time?"



## Group prayer (5 minutes)

A Celtic blessing to pray for each other:

May God the Father  
prepare your journey,  
Jesus the Son  
guide your footsteps,  
The Spirit of Life  
strengthen your body,  
The Three in One  
watch over you,  
on every road  
that you may follow.  
Amen.



From:

[https://www.faithandworship.com/blessings\\_and\\_benedictions.html#gs.c.tab=0](https://www.faithandworship.com/blessings_and_benedictions.html#gs.c.tab=0)

# 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.

**"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.

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.**