

The Compass

a tool for disciplers



Equipping Believers for Ministry

Relationships of a Leader

Conversation On the Journey

As believers seek to take the Gospel to every tribe, tongue, and nation, one of the greatest needs we have is for leaders - men and women with a vision for the future, and the ability to involve others in making that vision a reality.

The fact that you are reading this lesson indicates that you are currently discipling someone who wants to multiply her faith; that is, she wants to lead. Your goal in this lesson, and in the next two that immediately follow it, is to give her a grid so that she can evaluate and develop her own leadership abilities. We will be looking at three R's: the Relationships, Responsibilities, and Roles of a leader. This lesson is about the Relationships.

If you'll skip ahead to the end of this lesson you'll find two sketches. The first illustrates the three key relationships of a leader, which form the heart of the model. Cute, huh? Once you get to the present stage (you know, after having read, internalized, and prepared this lesson), it would be good for you to share the illustration with your disciple. Visual cues are often a great aid to learning. You can either print it out, and go over it as you explain the lesson, or just draw it yourself as you go.

The second illustration is more for you at this point so you can see where these relationships fit into the model as a whole. I don't recommend you share that with your disciple just yet, as it may produce more confusion than clarity. As a discipler, however, it may be helpful to you if you read all three lessons, and become familiar with the model as a whole, before you present the first one.

Anyway, here's the deal. All who seek to lead, and particularly those who would lead in the Kingdom of Christ, need to have healthy relationships. Specifically, they need healthy relationships with God, themselves, and others.

Relationship with God

Since we tend to talk often about our relationship with God, we could easily take this one for granted, but it is the foundation of all good leadership. Someone with great skill and charisma, but no relationship with God, does not make a good leader. Instead, she's got all the makings for a terrible despot. Help your disciple evaluate her walk with God.

Does she understand and experience the Spirit-filled life? Does she have an intimate relationship with Jesus? Does she apply and integrate truths of Scripture into her life? How is her prayer life? Is she experiencing God's forgiveness and grace? Is her spiritual life based on the completed work of Christ, or on her ability to perform?

This Week's Excursion

In this lesson you will teach your disciple about the three key relationships of a leader: Relationships with God, self, and others.



Help her think honestly about her relationship with God. Point out some specific places she could make improvements. Talk about why this is foundational.

Relationship with Self

When we speak about relationship with self, we are thinking of four characteristics that need to be present in the life of a believer. You can remember them with the acronym DICE.

Dynamic Determination. This is simply the will to press on through adversity. For this point, and all that follow, you want to accomplish two things. First, you want to illustrate what it means. Paint a picture of “Dynamic Determination” for your disciple by offering some examples she can relate to. Examples might come from your life, or someone else in your church, or perhaps a famous leader. The movie *Braveheart* is absolutely loaded with example after example of every point in the leadership model. Also, the book of Nehemiah is replete with lessons on leadership and examples of Nehemiah living out the relationships, roles, and responsibilities of a leader. Refer to these, or other vivid examples, liberally, to help your disciple see what leadership looks like.

Second, you want to help her evaluate her own life in light of it. But make sure to ask good questions that will surface her successes and failures. Does she possess the ability to get the job done, despite obstacles? Does she take initiative? When was there a specific time she was resourceful in pushing through issues and problems? Can she make decisions and act on them? What does she need to grow in?

Intellectual Flexibility. This is more than just being smart, although that helps, too. It concerns the ability to analyze the world around you, synthesize ideas, and come up with creative solutions. Think Sydney Bristow from *Alias*. The mission always goes awry, despite the toys that Marshall gives her. But she always comes up with a work-around. That’s intellectual flexibility. How’s your disciple doing here? Can he grasp the essence of a problem? See parts, in reference to the whole? Create solutions? Remember: illustrate the point. Then, help your disciple evaluate herself.

Character. A person with character has earned the right to be trusted, believed, and followed. George Bailey in *A Wonderful Life* exuded character. A lifetime of honesty, service, and sacrifice earned him the respect of everyone in Bedford Falls. Is your disciple honest? Trustworthy? Credible? What would she do if she got too much change back at a store? What is her reputation like?

Emotional Stability. A full range of emotions are part of every healthy life, but they should not dominate us. Lisa Beamer is a good example of a woman with strong emotional stability. When her husband died on Flight 93 in Somerset County, PA, she must have been stricken with grief. But in the days following the attacks of September 11th she became a model for Americans struggling with the terror of that day. She was able to experience a flood of emotions without being controlled by them. Does your disciple have an emotional life,

Next Steps

Based on your knowledge of the person you are discipling, suggest to them which relationship they might need to focus on. Could her relationship with God use some work? Help her with the discipline of regular quiet time. Do you notice some element of DICE that she needs to grow in? Maybe point that out and give a specific assignment related to that area.



with appropriate emotional connections to other people? Does she maintain a sense of hope even in difficult circumstances? Does she respond appropriately to stress?

Relationship with Others

If a leader can't get along with others, and is not liked and respected, then no one is going to follow. And if no one is following, then the leader ain't leading. Almost seventy years ago, Dale Carnegie wrote a famous book entitled, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. It has been reprinted countless times since. It is ostensibly a business book, but in reality, it is a practical manual on how to love. If you have a chance, I strongly recommend it for you and your disciple. But in the meantime, how is she doing? Does she treat people with respect? Listen well? Build trust? Does she actively involve others in discussions and decisions? Leaders must be able to connect with others.

We will stop here for now. Let your disciple know that if she wants to lead, there are roles and responsibilities that she will need to fulfill. But first, there are relationships to maintain. Relationships with God, herself, and others. Go illustrate those for her, and help her evaluate themselves, so she will know where she is succeeding and what she needs to work on. With that foundation laid, next week you can show her the Roles of a Leader.

End

Side Trails

Transforming Leadership. Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values, and Empowering Change. Leighton Ford. IV Press.

Principles of Leadership: What We Can Learn from the Life and Ministry of Bill Bright. Martin and Cozzens. New Life Publications.

How to Win Friends and Influence People. Dale Carnegie. Pocket Books.

Order at amazon.com

The Illustrations "Relationships of a Leader" and "Three R's of a Leader" can be found in the Additional Resources section of Multiply Your Faith.

Available at
centerfieldproductions.com

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The Relationships of a Leader

God

Self

Dynamic Determination

Intellectual Flexibility

Character

Emotional Stability

Others

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The Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities of a Leader

