

# Motivating Leaders



<b>Contents</b>	PAGE
<b>Leader's Guide</b> .....	2
<b>Interview:</b>	
THE POTENTIAL AROUND YOU	
<i>interview with John Maxwell</i> .....	3-4
<b>Assessments:</b>	
FINDING YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE	
<i>by Bill Hybels</i> .....	5
3 KEY POSITIONS ON A WINNING TEAM	
<i>by Randy Frazee</i> .....	6
HOLDING PEOPLE BACK?	
<i>by Fred Smith, Sr.</i> .....	7
<b>Case Studies:</b>	
FROM SETBACK TO SOLUTION	
<i>by Robert J. Morgan</i> .....	8
UNITY AMID CHANGE	
<i>by Robert J. Morgan</i> .....	9
<b>Devotionals:</b>	
MINISTRY'S FUEL	
<i>by Craig Brian Larson</i> .....	10
STRENGTH FOR DIFFICULT DAYS	
<i>by Craig Brian Larson</i> .....	11
STARING DOWN THE LIONS	
<i>by Steven D. Mathewson</i> .....	12
<b>How To Articles:</b>	
KEEPING LEADERS AFLAME	
<i>by Robert J. Morgan</i> .....	13
SPARKS THAT IGNITE INTO FLAME	
<i>by Roger Thompson</i> .....	14
MOTIVATION OR MANIPULATION?	
<i>by Fred Smith, Sr.</i> .....	15

## MOTIVATING LEADERS



### Leader's Guide

*How to use "Motivating Leaders" by BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS in your regularly scheduled meetings.*

*BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS is not another program. You don't have to build a program from scratch or take another night to be out. BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS works when you want it to, where you want it to, the way you want it to. It's completely flexible and designed to be easy to use.*

*You probably already have regularly scheduled meetings with board members or with other committees or groups of leaders. BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS fits easily into what you're already doing. Here's how to use BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS at the beginning of a board meeting or committee meeting:*

**1. Select a learning tool.** In this theme of "Motivating Leaders," you'll find multiple types of handouts from which to choose:

- ◆ an interview
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ how-to articles
- ◆ assessment tools
- ◆ devotionals

**2. Select a handout.** You could select one of the three assessments in this theme: "Finding Your Leadership Style" (p.5), "3 Key Positions on a Winning Team" (p. 6), or "Holding People Back?" (p. 7). From these options, select the one that best fits what you want to accomplish.

**3. Photocopy the handout.** Let's say you selected "Finding Your Leadership Style" Photocopy as many copies as you need—you do not need to ask for permission to photocopy any material from BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS (as long as you are using the material in a church or educational setting and are not charging for it).

**4. Prepare for the discussion.** We recommend you read the Scripture passages and identify key discussion questions. How will you apply the principles to specific decisions your church is making?

**5. Lead the discussion.** Most handouts can be read within 5 minutes. After you have allowed time for reading, begin the discussion by asking one of the provided questions. Be ready to move the discussion to specific issues your church is facing.

Most BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS handouts can be discussed in 15 or 20 minutes. Your board, committee, or team will still have plenty of time to discuss its agenda.

Need more material, or something on a specific topic? See our website at [www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com](http://www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com).

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## MOTIVATING LEADERS



### The Potential Around You

*How to add value to those you serve.*

2 Timothy 2:20–21; Romans 12:8

*Author and veteran pastor John Maxwell, founder and president of INJOY, helps churches to identify and equip leaders.*

#### What makes developing leaders so hard?

*John Maxwell:* It's tough from the start, because people willing to be developed are pretty scarce. When you do find them, they're usually already over committed in other areas of life.

On top of that, it's tough to build a team with leaders. You can't herd cats, and you can't herd leaders. They are strong-willed and usually have their own agendas.

Then, if all this weren't enough, strong leaders are hard to keep. They will be continually enticed with other opportunities that appear to be more exciting and meaningful.

#### How do you approach a potential leader?

I've always asked them to become my prayer partner for at least a year. That gives us time to get to know each other's hearts.

In addition, our board members at Skyline were asked to mentor a potential leader, their replacement, during the last of their three years in office.

On the front end of these relationships, we ask, "Are you willing to reproduce other leaders if I invest in developing you?" This perpetuates the culture of leadership development and weeds out people who probably wouldn't have developed anyway.

#### How do you develop a person who has a heart for God but no leadership skills?

Provide on-the-job training. If people have the character qualifications, they just need to learn how to maximize their efforts. We worry too much about positions and titles. I teach: "Wherever you're working, whatever organization you serve, start adding value to people and begin to gain their respect. They will champion you."

When you understand that leadership is influence instead of position, that changes everything. You don't strive to be a leader; you strive to add value to people, and they'll let you be the leader.

#### What do you do with the person who has great influence but little spiritual depth?

Most churches have some wonderful leaders who are nominal spiritually because they've never been challenged. Yet it's easier to bring people around spiritually than it is to raise them up in leadership.

People like that, though, must be developed on the side. They can't be put immediately into leadership in the church; you never compromise the spiritual integrity of the congregation.

#### At what point would you ask that person to serve on a board or committee?

With many leaders, I never got them on boards and committees. They can't operate within the confines of that kind of structure. That's not their world.

#### How, specifically, do you add value to someone's life?

Part of it comes from asking people to be part of a great vision. That is enhanced when you treat people as your greatest asset. We all believe that when we meet people; it's a little tougher to believe after we've worked with them a while and seen their weaknesses. ➤



**JOHN MAXWELL**

*"When you understand that leadership is influence instead of position, that changes everything."*



## The Potential Around You *continued*

Adding value comes from listening to people. If I know their heart, then I know exactly where to add value. I develop the part of themselves they want to see developed, not what I happen to need at the time. This prevents me from using people.

Or I ask, “What is their unique contribution?” Then I equip people according to their gifts and desires.

### **How do you know how much power to give to various leaders?**

The real question is: Am I ready to give up power? The only people who can empower others are people who can easily give up power. I can give up power easily only when I realize there is an unlimited supply available to me.

If this is the only paper clip I think I’m ever going to have, I’m not going to give it to you; I need it. But if I know we’ve got 10,000 paper clips in the supply closet, I’m going to say, “Want a paper clip? Have a whole box.”

### **Are most strong leaders driven?**

I don’t think so. There was a time when I was driven. I was too impatient, too goal-oriented. Today I would say I’m a passionate leader. I think there’s a world of difference.

Driven-ness focuses on the goal; passion savors the journey. Driven-ness usually depends on the attention of others; passion has a spiritual nature to it.

### **What is the role of prayer in developing leaders?**

Everywhere I’ve served, I’ve prayed for God to send me leaders to build the church.

If you pray for leaders, if you have a heart to develop, lead, and empower people, God will give according to your heart’s desires.

### **To Discuss**

1. Are we actively looking for people with leadership potential? If we’re not recruiting new leaders, how can we break out of that cycle?
2. Do we have any systems in place for training leaders?
3. How, on our leadership teams, can we try to avoid the “herd of cats” syndrome?
4. Do we pray that God will raise up leaders in our church? How can we incorporate that prayer into our future planning?
5. What does 2 Timothy 2 say to us about leadership development?

## MOTIVATING LEADERS



### Finding Your Leadership Style

*10 ways to lead God's people.*

Romans 12:8; Psalm 78:72

*I notice at least 10 major ways gifted leaders lead their teams:*

- 1. Visionary leader.** These leaders have a crystal-clear picture of what they want to happen. They cast visions powerfully. They are future-oriented, usually idealistic, and full of faith.
- 2. Directional leader.** At the critical intersections of an organization, this leader is able to assess the values, mission, strengths, weaknesses, resources, personnel, and openness to change of an organization—then, with remarkable wisdom, point that organization in the right direction.
- 3. Strategic leader.** This person can break an exciting vision into achievable steps, forming a game plan everyone can understand and participate in.
- 4. Managing leader.** Certain leaders possess the unique ability to establish mile-markers on the road to the destination, then organize and monitor people, processes, and resources for mission achievement.
- 5. Motivational leader.** These leaders possess insight into who needs a fresh challenge or additional training. They can sense who needs public recognition, an encouraging word, or a day off.
- 6. Shepherding leader.** This man or woman loves team members so deeply, supports them so consistently, and prays for them so diligently that the mission of the team gets achieved.
- 7. Team-building leader.** These leaders find or develop leaders with the right abilities, character, and chemistry with other team members. They place people in the right positions for the right reasons who will then produce the right results.
- 8. Entrepreneurial leader.** These leaders possess vision, boundless energy, and a risk-taking spirit. They function best in a start-up operation.
- 9. Re-engineering leader.** Some leaders thrive in a situation that has lost vision or focus. They find out what the mission was and what it needs to be now. They decide how progress will be measured.
- 10. Bridge-building leader.** This leader brings a wide variety of constituencies together under a single umbrella so that a complex organization can achieve its mission. This feat requires enormous flexibility in a leader—the ability to compromise and negotiate, to listen, understand, and think outside of the box.

—BILL HYBELS

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### To Discuss

1. What are my dominant leadership styles?
2. How well does my leadership style fit the roles in which I serve this church?
3. What leadership styles are lacking on our team?



### 3 Key Positions on a Winning Team

*Putting the right people in the right place.*

Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27

*For a ministry to achieve its mission, it needs to fill three roles:*

**1. Influencers.** Influencers are people who have an ability to get others excited about an idea. They are quick to share the 10 reasons everyone needs to buy into a new idea.

Consummate salespersons, influencers not only get people excited but help a group of doubters believe they can, if they work together, accomplish a mission bigger than their collective selves.

Influencers are inspiring, opinion leaders within an organization.

**2. Contributors.** Contributors are the people who get the work done. They are the individuals, if properly positioned, who have the particular skills to deliver ministry so lives are touched and transformed. Without these front-line people, there is no ministry.

Contributors include:

- ◆ the person who makes great coffee,
- ◆ the one who teaches the Bible in such a way that its truth comes alive,
- ◆ the usher who makes someone feel welcomed,
- ◆ the caregiver who comforts a mom and dad in the loss of their child,
- ◆ the computer specialist who designs the church's web site, and
- ◆ the drummer who beats an electronic drum set each Sunday morning.

**3. Managers.** The missing persons in most ministries, managers have been designed by God to provide what contributors need for success.

Managers know the needs and desires of contributors. Managers coordinate, plan, and troubleshoot—with the goal of seeing a mission achieved through a team of highly valued contributors.

A manager does not do the work of the ministry but upholds those who do. Day in and day out, he or she patiently keeps the troops encouraged and resourced. Maybe the real cause behind the 80/20 rule of church labor—that 20 percent of people do 80 percent of the work—is less about commitment and more about a lack of strategically positioned managers.

—RANDY FRAZEE

#### To Discuss

1. Who are the influencers in our church? Are they in positions that allow them to influence ministry?
2. Who are the managers? How can we identify and train more managers?
3. Who are the contributors? Are there any managers among the contributors?
4. What would happen if we formed ministry teams that included all these types of people?

## MOTIVATING LEADERS



## Holding People Back?

*10 unintentional approaches that keep leaders from emerging.*

2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:5

*Almost every leader says, "People are our greatest resource." But it's not uncommon to find leaders who don't allow others to develop. I have seen leaders, perhaps unintentionally, do one or more of the following:*

- 1. Magnify the risk.** "I know you want this job, but remember: if you fail, you're out."
- 2. Minimize the reward.** Instead of talking about the sheer joy of accomplishment, they emphasize the drudgery. "How does your spouse feel about your not coming home for dinner? A lot of nights you'll be working."
- 3. Create a threat.** "You really don't like people criticizing you, do you? As a boss, you're going to have to get over that. Everybody in this place receives criticism."
- 4. Show a lack of confidence.** "I doubt you're the right person, but we haven't got anybody else. Somebody has to fill the job." Since every person beginning a job has never done it before, it's easy to tell others they're unqualified.
- 5. Expect results too soon.** "In a couple of weeks, you ought to be on top of this job." The person knows he or she can't get on top of the project in two weeks; the boss knows it too.
- 6. Deny support.** "I'm not going to be able to give you much help. You're going to be out there by yourself."
- 7. Create an atmosphere of criticism.** "You can't do anything right." Nobody wants to work for a boss who takes all the credit and transfers all the blame.
- 8. Overstate the effort required.** "You probably won't have any leisure time anytime soon. You'll go home with a headache, and your back will ache. That's the price we pay."
- 9. Suggest peer rejection.** "You're not really a people person, and this is a people job. But I'm willing to give you a shot at it."
- 10. Emphasize the pressure.** "The last person in this job couldn't take the heat." Leaders who don't want others to grow assure them that failures will be fired.

—FRED SMITH, SR.

### To Discuss

1. What motivates a person to say these things?
2. How would these sentiments be expressed in a church setting?
3. What is the balance between holding people accountable and allowing them to fail?
4. What signals we are holding people back instead of developing them?





## From Setback to Solution

*Discouragement does not have to be terminal.*

Nehemiah 4:1–6; Philippians 3:13

**The Case** “He was a negative thinker anyway,” said a board member. “We may be better off without him.”

A few board members stood around after the meeting, shell-shocked. Tim, a board member and long-time church attender, had just announced his resignation, saying his family was leaving the church. Our youth program was inadequate for the needs of his 13-year-old son, Tim said; his family would be joining a larger church nearby.

A few board members sympathized; the church needed a paid youth minister. But most of the deacons and members, slow to spend for staff, seemed more offended by Tim’s departure than about his reasons for leaving.

**What Would You Do?**

- ◆ If you had been among those who sympathized with Tim’s frustrations, how would you have responded?
- ◆ How could this incident spur growth in the life of the church?

**What Happened** Tim’s resignation was announced to the congregation without many specifics. Then the pastor, among those commiserating with Tim’s concerns, met one-on-one with a handful of key leaders. Tim’s leaving was a blow, he told them, and he feared that if the youth ministry wasn’t strengthened, others might follow.

The chairman of the board listened and agreed; the two began planting seeds for hiring a minister of youth. The pastor invited volunteer youth workers to breakfast, reassuring them that the groundwork was being laid for future growth. Several were invited to serve on a short-term task force to discuss the next steps.

At the next board meeting, the task force was appointed, headed by the board chairman. Meanwhile, the finance committee was asked to prepare a chart showing how many new or retained families would be necessary to cover the salary of a part-time youth minister. When objections were raised, the standard answer became “I know, but I’m afraid if we don’t beef up our teen ministry, we’ll lose more families like Tim’s.”

Within six months, the church voted overwhelmingly to hire a part-time minister of youth. A year later, the position became full-time.

—ROBERT J. MORGAN

**To Discuss**

1. What is our attitude as a team: Are setbacks demoralizing? Or do they energize us to find new solutions?
2. How did the above action plan serve to build consensus?
3. What current situations demand that we renew our efforts to find solutions? What does Nehemiah’s situation teach us?





## Unity Amid Change

*Introducing new ideas that motivate everyone.*

Proverbs 25:15; 1 Peter 5:1–7

**The Case** A handful of people became convinced the cumbersome denominational title on the church sign hindered the unchurched from visiting its services. The pastor agreed, but the congregation was located in the same city as the denominational headquarters. Many in the church (including the pastor) had strong denominational ties. Omitting the denominational designation in the church name would be controversial.

Still, several church leaders felt that to motivate members to reach the lost, changing the sign was critical.

**What Would You Do?**

- ◆ If faced with this issue, which would be more important? Reaching the lost or church unity? Is that a false choice?
- ◆ How would you introduce such a sensitive change so that both groups keep motivated for ministry?

**What Happened** The change agents realized their biggest ally was time. The pastor was committed to a long-term ministry, so the leaders phased in changes at a pace the church could accept.

They began by strengthening their denominational connections, offering a class to newcomers on denominational history and increasing financial support for the denomination. Then they began using a nickname, a shortened version of the church name. Gradually the nickname caught on and was included on church publications.

When denominational loyalists raised questions, they were assured that no one intended to change the “official” name. The church record spoke for itself, as did the pastor’s involvement in denominational concerns. He also started to speak more about the strategy of reducing barriers to the unsaved.

The final test came several years later, when the sign needed replacing. One of the deacons (who also happened to be a denominational employee) suggested it be changed to reflect the shortened version of the church name. The other deacons agreed unanimously, and no one in the church objected.

—ROBERT J. MORGAN

**To Discuss**

1. What is the relationship between time and motivation? What situations motivate people quickly? When must you rely on building momentum gradually?
2. Is it fair to steer a congregation toward a particular goal without revealing the whole strategy at once?
3. How does one go about introducing a change that may threaten the unity of the church?



## Ministry's Fuel

*Love must be our primary motivation.*

Mark 12:30–31

**Read** *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength . . . ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30–31).*

**Comprehend** A teacher of the Law, who saw Jesus easily answer tough questions by Pharisees and Sadducees decided to ask him a question: What was the most important of the 613 commands in the Scriptures? Could Jesus bring everything in the Law and the Prophets under one tent?

Jesus explained that love for both God and people, not one or the other, was the attitude and lifestyle that pleased God above all.

What motivates you to give limited time and energy to lead God's people, even though ministry often involves sacrifice, problems, and unpredictable results?

The Lord's two great commands show that what should drive everything in our life is the engine of love, which includes our work for the Lord. Since love is God's overarching command, if we try to minister from some other motive—from guilt, for example, or ego—we will probably sputter out.

Jesus calls us to love God in a way that sweeps up every dimension of our being—heart, soul, mind, strength. Nothing is left out. Every facet of who we are is called forth to love the One who is love itself. Not only is our every part to be engaged in the love of God, but every part is to be wholly engaged. Serving the Lord is the inevitable overflow of such all-consuming delight in God, and motivation the natural byproduct.

Love for people is likewise an indomitable motivation. All around us we see people who, without Christ, will die in their sins; we cannot live merely for our own convenience. We see people hurting, hungry, and with hearts of concern we long to help.

Most motivation problems are love problems. If we feel out of gas, we should ask ourselves whether we are out of love for God and people—as hard as that is to admit!

Scientists are trying to engineer a fusion engine, for it would use a nearly limitless fuel: hydrogen and oxygen (water!). God has already designed a fusion engine for the leader's soul, and its fuel is the Christian's most readily available resource: love.

—CRAIG BRIAN LARSON

- Discuss**
1. To what extent is love toward God a feeling? What else might love for God include? How do these facets of love motivate us to work for him?
  2. To what extent is love toward people a feeling? As we compassionately seek the good of others, what feelings might we have toward people that we would not usually associate with love?
  3. What signals our love for God is waning? How do we rekindle our love for God?



## Strength for Difficult Days

*Setting our affections on things above.*

2 Corinthians 4:16–18

**Read** *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal (2 Cor. 4:16–18).”*

**Comprehend** In chapter 4 of 2 Corinthians, Paul describes his apostolic ministry, its purpose, its paradoxes. It’s a shocking picture, full of God’s glory but equally full of human struggle. In fact, the picture would be almost bleak (“death is at work in us,” Paul says in verse 12), but he then turns to the reason why he is willing to endure such hardship.

For one thing, he says, Jesus is going to raise him from the dead someday and bring him to eternal glory. For that reason alone, Paul does not lose heart. Then in the verses above he compares the incredible future that awaits him to the pain he is currently experiencing.

What can cause us today to lose motivation in ministry? Time and schedule pressures, perhaps. Difficulties or conflict with people. A certain level of disorganization that often characterizes volunteer groups like churches. Few results. A lack of training or a sense of incompetence.

Paul shows demotivators of whatever degree need not cause a flame-out if our perspective is right. Consider his “light and momentary troubles”: In 2 Corinthians 11, he says for the sake of serving Christ he had been confined in prison, had the skin of his back ripped to pieces by 39 strokes with whips on five separate occasions, was beaten and bruised with rods three times, and, among other hardships, was once stoned to the point of unconsciousness and left for dead.

Paul’s simple secret was he set his heart on invisible spiritual realities rather than on what is seen, on what is permanent rather than on what is temporary. Such a life focus may not come naturally for us. Leading this ministry is really getting to be a drag, we may think, I could better spend my time fixing up my house.

But when we live for the eternal things that truly matter, the hardships become trivial.

—CRAIG BRIAN LARSON

- Discuss**
1. God calls us to live in this world, of course, and to manage people, property, and responsibilities for him. How do we do this in a way that maintains our eternal, spiritual focus?
  2. Roughly what percentage of your time do you spend focused on the unseen and permanent?
  3. What turns your focus to temporary things that have nothing to do with the things of God? What turns it back to God?



## Staring Down the Lions

*To motivate great leaders, give them a challenging task.*

2 Samuel 23:20

**Read** *“Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant fighter from Kabzeel, who performed great exploits. He struck down two of Moab’s best men. He also went down into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion (2 Sam. 23:20).”*

**Comprehend** It occurred to me one day that my strategy for motivating leaders was all wrong. I was trying to make it too easy. *These men and women have family obligations and demanding work schedules, I reasoned. If I relax the demands, they’ll be more inclined to serve in the church.*

But less demanding means less fulfilling. Challenging tasks actually ignite people who have a passion for God.

Take King David’s mighty men listed in 2 Samuel 23:8–23. The enormous danger of the task stirred their juices. They excelled when they were outnumbered, fatigued, abandoned, and out-weaponed. One of these mighty men, Benaiah, even killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day.

What was a lion doing in a pit on a snowy day? Even more pressing, why bother to get it out? This pit was a cistern—an excavated hole in the ground, lined with mortar.

When the snow started melting, water trickled down its smooth, sloping sides. Villagers relied on this tank for their daily water supply. A lion had fallen into the pit, and somebody needed to get it out before it contaminated the water supply.

But the pit was a small, confined area. The footing was slippery, and an agitated lion was at the bottom. The job was critical. But also dangerous. The risk of the task motivated Benaiah to action. He killed the lion and saved the day for his village.

It’s unfair to overload volunteers. But it’s also unfair to sell them short. Big opportunities may frighten away some volunteers. But challenging tasks pique the interest of the leaders you really want. People with a passion for God are more inclined to rise than to shrink to the occasion.

—STEVEN D. MATHEWSON

- Discuss**
1. Do we ask too much or too little of our leaders?
  2. In our ministry setting, what are some enormous tasks we assume will scare people away?
  3. How can we present these tasks in a way that will motivate the leaders among us?
  4. What kind of challenges might motivate the pool of potential leaders in our church?

## MOTIVATING LEADERS



## Keeping Leaders Aflame

*How to prevent volunteer burnout.*

Nehemiah 3; Romans 16:1–16

*To keep volunteers from stagnation, frustration, and burnout, I'm learning from several pages in God's Operations Manual:*

**1. Ezekiel: think empathetically.** God carried Ezekiel away to the place where he would have to sit with those to whom he was to speak (Ezek. 3:15). When we can empathize with others, we gain respect for their schedules and guard workers against over involvement.

As far as I'm concerned, the unwritten motto of lay ministry should be "One Person, One Ministry."

**2. Nehemiah: create systems.** Nehemiah divided work on the city walls into manageable sections with clearly defined tasks. Some people were stationed as watchmen, others as soldiers. Others provided food. Everyone understood his or her part, and the wall went up.

Local churches are difficult places to create efficient systems, for they are volunteer organizations of people with varying levels of ability, maturity, and dedication. It takes longer to solve problems on a systems level. But somewhere near or at the top of a productive, motivated organization is a Nehemiah.

**3. Syzygus: reduce friction.** During an intense capital stewardship campaign, two workers argued over decorations for the celebration supper. Both families eventually left the church.

Because interpersonal conflict is a primary cause of burnout, we must take on the role of the loyal yokefellow in Philippians 4:2–3: "I urge Euodia and Syntyche to iron out their differences and make up. Syzygus, since you're right there to help them work things out, do your best with them" (The Message).

So we strive to mediate or prevent conflict.

**4. Paul: give recognition.** Paul's example in Romans 16 of recognizing fellow workers prompted us to create opportunities like these:

- ◆ showing slides during the prelude or offertory on selected Sundays, highlighting workers in various areas of church life,
- ◆ an annual Lay Ministry Sunday for recognizing faithful workers,
- ◆ profiles in our church newsletter,
- ◆ notes, calls, words of love, and lots of hugs from staff and members, and
- ◆ an annual Lay Minister of the Year.

—ROBERT J. MORGAN

### To Discuss

1. Do you think "one person, one ministry" is possible? If our church worked on that basis, what would have to change?
2. How can we have a realistic expectation for a volunteer organization yet at the same time challenge people to do God's work with excellence?
3. How do formal and informal recognition complement one another?



## Sparks That Ignite into Flame

*Motivation for the tough tasks.*

Philippians 3:12–14; Proverbs 27:17

*The fastest way to burn out is to tackle a tough task alone. Though you may survive the experience, your creativity and vibrancy will suffer. Here are suggestions to stay motivated and energized:*

- 1. Invest in an affirmative outlook.** Like love, motivation needs to be given away before it can be received. Practice giving confidence and support to those around you. Invest in an affirmative outlook, and the greatest educational force known to humanity—imitation—will be unleashed.
- 2. Fuel the fire with like-minded people.** “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Prov. 27:17). Are you part of a small group or a periodic meeting of colleagues? Have you participated in a timely seminar or attended a retreat? Busyness alone can’t keep ministry going. You need the strength of like-minded friends.
- 3. Clear up conflicts quickly.** Nothing is more draining than to be embroiled in an ongoing conflict. Unresolved personal problems demotivate us. Deal with personal conflicts quickly and in a Christ-like spirit, so freedom can return to your life.
- 4. Be alert to “deficit motivators.”** Guilt, for instance, is a deficit motivator. It may give you a burst of energy but it won’t sustain you for the long haul. The same is true of anger.
- 5. Get involved in front-line issues.** Involvement in corporate and private prayer is front-line spiritual warfare. So is personally sharing our faith with a non-believing friend. Nothing sparks our lives like direct involvement in the basic spiritual issues—evangelism, disciple making, prayer.

—ROGER THOMPSON

### To Discuss

1. What are some ways to keep a healthy desire to serve from crossing the line into unwise over commitment? How can we help each other in those areas?
2. In addition to guilt and anger, what might some other deficit motivators be?
3. After their term is up, do most of our leaders vow, “Never again,” or does their commitment to ministry stay strong? Why?



## Motivation or Manipulation?

*Bringing out the best in people.*

Hebrews 13:17–18; 2 Timothy 2:15

*It has been said the difference between motivation and manipulation is the quenching of thirst. If so, the key for leaders is to look for thirsty people and identify their thirst. Effective motivators ask themselves, What kind of water do I have to satisfy that kind of thirst?*

*How can we bring out the best in people?*

- 1. Establish a friendly atmosphere.** When we've genuinely motivated someone, we can look that person in the eye and know we have an honest, friendly relationship between us.
- 2. Enjoy people's uniqueness.** Being friends is beneficial, but having the same tastes is not necessary. We need to share in our workers' excitement and appreciate their work for the beauty in it. Workers will sense our appreciation and be motivated by it.
- 3. Know a person's capabilities.** We should objectively evaluate a volunteer's skills, potential capacities, level of commitment, ability to be motivated, discipline, and intensity. This is necessary if we are to nurture volunteers in their natural abilities without pushing them beyond their real limitations.
- 4. Know how much responsibility a person can take.** Good leaders know if their people work best when given assignments that detail what is to be done or when given responsibility that leaves the initiative up to them.
- 5. Look for mutual benefits.** We should look for individuals who want to develop skills from which the church can also benefit. If a person has potential, a good question to ask is: "You have a lot more talent than you've been able to put to use. How much effort are you willing to exert if we give you the opportunity to develop that talent?"
- 6. Give a person a reputation to uphold.** Public recognition as well as knowledgeable compliments motivate volunteers, when done with integrity. For example, I know of a boss who had a way of saying nice—and true—things about his workers that eventually got back to them. The workers appreciated it and worked hard to uphold their good reputation.
- 7. Enjoy working, and let it show.** When people see we are truly grateful for the work we are privileged to do, they intuit that they can enjoy their work as well.  
As we honestly and openly offer water to parched people, we are not manipulating but motivating.

—FRED SMITH, SR.

### To Discuss

1. Do our volunteers enjoy their work? How would we know if they do?
2. Are our volunteers challenged to grow in their skills? Why or why not? How could this be done without creating a harsh environment?
3. Who are the key volunteers who could take on more responsibility?
4. How do we reward the enthusiasm volunteers have for their work?