

The Man with the Plan; The Key Man Plan

“And there accompanied him...”
(Acts 20:4).

It has often been said, “If you fail to plan; then you plan to fail.” It is impossible to accomplish the Great Commission of taking the “Whole Gospel to the Whole World” without mobilizing the Whole Church to do the work. This international task force includes every member of the church at every level and not just the five-fold ministry of the church (Ephesians 4:11-12). Everyone plays their part in fulfilling the Great Plan Jesus had for the church. We are all part of the one body. The Bible tells us the “body is not one member, but many” (1 Corinthians 12:14). Every believer is related to the rest of the body and performs an important function. We must be willing to complement each other. This is called the “Body Ministry.”

Management and leadership are about getting things done through people.

As the church begins to grow, the pastor will be looking for potential leaders. First, know the person you are going to give a responsibility to. It is easier to give a position in the church than it is to take one away. The potential leaders must be faithful, having obeyed the plan of salvation, be tithe payers, and living a victorious Christian life in holiness.

It would not be wise to promote someone to a position who is not faithful in paying tithes. Those failing to pay tithes should be removed from positions in the church. How can one rob God and be a blessing to the local church leadership at the same time? It is impossible!

When looking for a person to fill a responsibility in your department or church, choose carefully and prayerfully. If you were to put the wrong person into a position, you will spend a lot of time trying to correct the mistake you made. It would have been easier to do the job yourself.

Like David in the Old Testament, your potential leader should be found doing something. David was working as a shepherd in the field when God anointed him to be the second king of Israel. The Bible makes it clear we must be faithful over small things before we are made leaders over bigger responsibilities (Matthew 25:23).

If you have someone with the talents you need, that is great. However, if you cannot find someone with the talents you need, then you can train them. In this case you would be looking for someone with potential talents in the area needed. This can be called talent-searching.

In the Scripture highlighted at the beginning of this lesson, Paul had several people moving along with him. Paul was a man with a plan. He had the “key man” plan. This is known as the “key man strategy” and is a concept adapted from the Navigators. In this Scripture each man was stated along with their geographical area (where they were from).

Timothy is the only exception. This was because Paul took him as his son, and was training him to take his place. This is called the Timothy principle. Every good leader is training an under study to take his place.

Moses trained Joshua. Elijah trained Elisha. Paul trained Timothy. One leadership principle states, "there is no success without a successor."

Success without a successor is failure.

Your Timothy trainee should be someone to take over your ministry when you move on to something else.

Dr. John Maxwell, on one of his "Injoy Life" cassettes tells his staff, "If you do this job well, then I will give you another better job. But if you fail to do this job well, then I will take this job away from you!"

In the Key Man plan, Paul took men from different areas and gave them further training as they traveled with him. This was like a Portable Bible School. Jesus used the Key Man plan with His disciples giving them on-the-job training. Many people in our society use this same method when they have apprentices whom they are training (electricians, carpenters, tailors, etc.).

People learn by watching and then doing. After Paul had trained these people, they would go back to their cities. Not everyone God uses will leave their jobs and enter into full-time ministry. In Mark 5:19, the man of Gadara stayed where he was and witnessed for the Lord. Your key people will have access to particular groups, schools, offices, neighborhoods, or cultures. As needs for various ministries arise in the local church then you seek someone with a burden to fill the need. That is ministry, "filling a need."

The Key Man plan is effective in starting preaching points, and planting churches. Perhaps a member is from a certain village. He/she could open their home to begin the preaching point. Since they are familiar with the village, this will be a blessing.

The Key Man should be able to take things learned and adapt them to the particular group or environment they are involved with.

Make sure every person you place in a key position is accountable and reports to you. When you effectively begin using men and women to fulfill the various functions of the church you have mastered the concept of delegation.

Study Questions

1. What is management and leadership about? _____

2. What type of potential leaders will you look for in your church or department? _____

3. Who has a part in fulfilling the Great Commission? _____

4. If a leader is not paying tithes, what should happen? _____

5. If you can't find someone with the talents you need, then what should you do? _____

6. What is the "Key Man Strategy"? _____

7. What is the "Timothy Principle"? _____

8. How can the "Key Man" plan be effective in starting a preaching point? _____

9. When can you say you are truly successful? _____

10. What is delegation? _____

11. What is meant by the "Body Ministry"? _____