

13 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH PLANTER¹

Scoring: 1 = rarely | 2 = sometimes | 3= most of the time | 4 = almost always

1. Visioning capacity.

- a. Being a person who projects into the future beyond the present.
- b. Developing a theme which highlights the vision and philosophy of ministry.
- c. Persuasively selling the vision to the people.
- d. Approaching challenges as opportunities rather than obstacles.
- e. Coping effectively with non-visioning elements.
- f. Not erecting artificial walls or limits either overtly or subconsciously.
- g. Establishing a clear church identity related to the theme and vision.
- h. Believing in God's capacity to do great things.

2. Intrinsically motivated.

- a. Having a desire to do well and a commitment to excellence.
- b. Stick-to-itiveness and persistence.
- c. Having initiative and aggressiveness without the negative connotations.
- d. Having a willingness to work long and hard.
- e. Being a self-starter with a willingness to build from nothing.
- f. Having a high energy and vitality level; physical stamina.

3. Creates ownership of ministry.

- a. Helping people to "buy in" and feel responsible for the growth and success of the church.
- b. Gaining commitment of the people to the vision.
- c. Establishing a congregational identity.
- d. Avoiding stereotyping of congregation by imposing unrealistic goals for which it cannot claim ownership.

4. Relates to the unchurched.

- a. Communicating in style that is understood by the unchurched.
- b. Understanding the "psychology" or mentality of the unchurched.
- c. Moving and functioning in the "personal space" of the unchurched without fear.
- d. Quickly getting to know the unchurched on a personal level.
- e. Breaking through the barriers erected by the unchurched.
- f. Handling crises faced by the unchurched.

5. Spousal cooperation.

- a. Having an explicit agreement regarding each partner's respective role and involvement in ministry.
- b. Having explicit rules regarding the use of home as an office.
- c. Evaluating the consequences of ministry demands upon the children.
- d. Functioning as a team through individual and collective action.

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- e. Having a strategy for dealing with strangers.
- f. Modeling wholesome family life before church and community.
- g. Agreeing upon and sharing the ministry vision.
- h. Deliberately planning and protecting private family life.

6. Effectively builds relationships.

- a. Responding with urgency to expressed needs and concerns of people.
- b. Displaying Godly love and compassion to people.
- c. Getting to know people on a personal basis.
- d. Making others feel secure and comfortable in one's presence.
- e. Not responding judgmentally or prejudicially to new people.
- f. Appreciating and accepting a variety of persons.
- g. Spending quality time with present parishioners without overstepping them for new people.

7. Committed to church growth.

- a. Believing in church growth as a theological principle.
- b. Appreciating steady and consistent growth without preoccupation with the quick success factor.
- c. Committing to numerical growth within the context of spiritual and relational growth.
- d. Recognizing that non-growth is threatening and self-defeating.
- e. Establishing the goal of becoming a financially self-supporting church within a specific period of time.
- f. Not prematurely falling into a ministry of maintenance.
- g. Seeing the church project within the larger context of God's kingdom.

8. Responsive to community.

- a. Understanding the culture of the community.
- b. Identifying and assessing community needs.
- c. Responding to community needs on a priority basis such that resources are most efficiently used.
- d. Determining successes and failures of other organized religious attempts to respond to community needs.
- e. Not confusing what the community needs with what the church wants to offer.
- f. Acquiring and understanding of the character and "pulse" of the community.
- g. Adapting the philosophy of ministry to the character of the community.

9. Utilizes giftedness of others.

- a. Releasing and equipping people to do the task of ministry.
- b. Discerning of spiritual gifts in others.
- c. Matching the gifts of people with ministry needs and opportunities.
- d. Delegating effectively in areas of personal limitation.
- e. Avoiding personal overload by delegating effectively.
- f. Not prematurely assigning ministry assignments before people are adequately equipped.
- g. Not placing unwarranted restrictions on other's spiritual giftedness.

10. Flexible and adaptable.

- a. Coping effectively with ambiguity.
- b. Coping effectively with constant and abrupt change.
- c. Adapting oneself and one's methods to the uniqueness of the particular project.
- d. Shifting priorities and emphasis during various stages of church growth.
- e. Doing "whatever" is necessary "whenever" necessary.

11. Builds group cohesiveness.

- a. Developing a nucleus group or groups as a foundation.
- b. Quickly incorporating newcomers into a network of relationships.
- c. Engaging others in meaningful church activity.
- d. Monitoring the morale of people.
- e. Utilizing groups effectively.
- f. Dealing with conflict assertively, constructively and tactfully.

12. Resilience.

- a. Experiencing setbacks without defeat.
- b. Riding the ups and downs (i.e. attendance).
- c. Expecting the unexpected.
- d. Rebounding from loss, disappointments and failure.

13. Exercises faith.

- a. Possessing a conviction regarding one's call to church planting ministry
- b. Believing in God's action
- c. Having expectation and hope
- d. Having a willingness to wait for answers to specific prayer requests

Readiness to Plant

Gather the scores from the four sources and add them up.

Self-Analysis: _____
Friend: _____
Supervisor: _____
Ministry Recipient: _____

Total: _____

Score above 180 = Ready to plant

Score between 180 and 161 = Can be ready to plant after working on weak areas

Score above 160 and 141 = Proceed with caution and after examination of weak areas

Score 140 and below = Not ready to plant