

Reflections on a Ministry Coach

Having already read “Those who accompany us on our spiritual journey, “ (*click on “others” in the sentence before “ministry coach”*), you understand the dynamic interplay between you, your ministry coach, growth partner and other mentors. Below you will find additional discussions that expand and illustrate the role of a ministry coach.

The ministry coach/team player relationship is fundamental to teamwork. We grow toward reaching our full potential both in life and ministry with the help of a ministry coach (sometimes referred to as a ministry supervisor or sponsor).

This is a person who:

- ***“has a passionate interest in seeing young people grow.”***
- ***“imparts skills.”***
- ***“boosts their confidence.”***
- ***“helps mentorees tap into networks.”***
- ***“champions the cause of their workers.”***
- ***“commits to the development and proper placement of those who are accountable to them.”***

It is critical to identify skill and attitudes necessary to function as a ministry coach. As you read, ask yourself the questions, “Am I under the supervision of a ministry coach like this? or “Am I the kind of person who is/would make a good ministry coach?” The following list, adapted from Stanley and Clinton, suggests those characteristics without which the coach/player relationship cannot exist:

1. Credibility (a function of integrity and competence) is crucial. You should model it consistently and with a view toward establishing a godly testimony.

2. Influence has been given to you so that it can be used. You have special responsibility to use your influence well. Mentoring is just one of those ways to use it responsibly.

3. Develop networks; they are important.

Networks will give you and those you are mentoring access to resources that you do not have.

4. Have your mentoree’s best interests I mind; the best career track may be outside the organization. Help him/her discern the will of the Lord. Seek to give her/him a jump start.

5. Among those we supervise there ought to be people with potential for leadership who especially need our help. We need to seek them out. First, we pray to God to give us leaders. Then we watch. Leadership selection and development are major functions of effective leaders.

6. Often a number of potential mentorees in an organization are leaders who have plateaued. You should be on the lookout for these needy people. Sponsors can infuse new enthusiasm for leadership by coming alongside and encouraging, giving need-oriented training that will upgrade those who have plateaued, and opening up new job opportunities. This latter opportunity, a new, challenging kind of job, frequently will renew a plateaued leader. A ministry coach is someone who has the resources to revitalize plateaued leaders.

7. Avoid the pitfalls of nepotism. Nepotism is when you show privilege to someone because of a special relationship and not because they deserve it based on merit. Sponsoring is a process that confers special privilege on those whom we believe God wants to develop, not on those whom we like or with whom we get along.

8. Utilize the Barnabas leader-switch principle. Those you mentor may have potential to develop well beyond you. Be prepared to elevate them above yourself if that is the next step needed to expand their potential.

“It is because one antelope will blow the dust from the other’s eyes, that two antelopes walk together.”