

# Seven (7) Critical Success Factors for a Support Team

## (Especially for Pastors Involved in Leading a Support Team)

Adapted from (<http://images.rca.org/docs/multiply/criticalfactors.ppt>)

### 1. Spiritual Foundation and Prayer Intercessors

- Sensitive to God's timing
- Obedience and surrender to the Holy Spirit
- Establish prayer teams
- Prayer must be the foundation of the church plant
- Church Planter Selection Process
- Goal: Selecting a planter who is well prepared to succeed
- Assess the planter to determine fit to the target community

### 2. Suggested best practices for the selection process:

Note: Denominational and regional staff can be helpful in the process

- Use an experienced assessment center for an independent opinion
  - Online Assessments for pre-analysis
  - Far West Regional Assessment Center is highly recommended (sponsored by City Church, San Francisco)
- Design a thorough multi-step selection process with multiple participants (senior pastor, selection team, evangelism task force, consistory, etc.)
- Understand the key predictors of effective church planters:
  - Leadership gifts
  - Entrepreneurial experiences
  - Supportive spouse
  - Passion for reaching people
- Church Planter Selection Process

- Avoid lowering the bar during the process
- Pay attention to red flags and warning signs—process information separately with the planter and with the selection team
- Avoid the tendency to approve a planter who has the right heart but not the temperament, skills, or fit to the target community
  - it may seem to be the more comfortable decision at the time, but the planter, the parent, and, most importantly, the people in the church plant will suffer in the long term

### 3. Defined Philosophy of Ministry (Vision & Values)

- Support Team & Parent Church's Vision
  - They must have a clear vision of what it is trying to accomplish
  - Heart for the lost must be part of the DNA
  - Cast the vision 100 different times, 100 different ways throughout the parenting churches and any other regional churches involved in the project
- The planter's Vision
  - The leader and his or her team need to develop vision, mission, and philosophy
  - Alignment between the parent church and planter should confirm the selection process
  - This should be a clearly defined Philosophy of Ministry (Vision and Values)
- Hold the church planter accountable for defining a clear ministry vision
  - What would the church look like if the mission is fulfilled?
  - How would people behave and believe?
  - Who would be reached?
  - How would the community perceive the church?
  - What ministries would be functioning?
- Critical vision issues include:
  - There must be a single vision
  - Vision is rooted in reality—it is realistic
  - Vision is the responsibility of the planter—as leadership is identified and emerges, it needs to “own” the vision
  - Vision must be communicated/shared repeatedly
  - Vision is made real by experiences

- Vision is tested and refined early in the plant (the planter must guard the vision through the testing process)
- Identify the target community
  - Basic community profile
  - Demographics (age, income, marital status, years in community)
    - Community growth potential
    - Source for demographics—Percept Demographics, 800-442-6277
    - Community religious profile
    - Proximity to parenting church(es)
  - Be a student of the local culture
  - Psychographics (interests, activities, mindset)
  - Newspapers, TV, community activities, focus groups
  - Build a mental construct of the culture, write a description, and test it

#### 4. Identify Resources

- Funding—typically a three-year step down structure
- Experienced coaching—planter needs to be connected to mentor(s)
- Exposure and relationship with a healthy parent church
  - Ideally the planter functions as a member of the parent church staff for six to nine months
  - Accountability during the development phase—planning and recruitment

#### 5. Develop Core Leadership Team

- Begins with recruiting
  - Public presentations of mission and vision— introduce planter
  - One-on-one meetings—building relationships and trust
- Core group development is hard work
  - It cannot be delegated

- Planter must “sell” vision
- Sources of core group members—concentric circles of influence
  - Key leaders from a healthy parent
  - Interested people from target community
  - Early core group members or members of parent church identify additional members from community
- Core group meetings
  - Organize prayer effort (2 Thessalonians 1:11–12)
  - Identify and recruit ministry leaders
  - Train leaders in ministry philosophy and equip them for ministry
  - Identify and appoint a launch leadership team
  - Help the core group understand the financial needs of a plant

## 6. Commitment to Give Up Some of Best People

- Empower planter to recruit high quality people
- Use a name clearing process to protect planter from unhealthy people
- Look specifically at:
  - Entrepreneurial types
  - Young couples
  - Recent newcomers to the target community.
  - Kingdom-minded people looking for a place to make a difference
  - Younger families in transition

## 7. High Birth Weight

- Churches that start with a large critical mass are more likely to:
  - Survive
  - Grow into larger churches
  - Have resources necessary to reach the expectations of our culture