

18 Church Planter Characteristics

Job Summary: A church planter is a person called and equipped by God to start and establish a new community of believers in a specific context. He must be strong in character, call and competency as well as appropriately fitted to function in the chosen context.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Prayer: Convinced that prayer is more than a devotional practice; prayer is *the* work of ministry.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Under-girds his ministry in prayer.
- Prays regularly for the salvation of lost friends.
- Practices extended communion with God in prayer.

Incompatible Behaviors

- When in a group has difficulty participating in prayer.
- Seldom pray together as husband and wife.
- Impatient in waiting for answers to specific prayer requests.

2. Spiritual Vitality: Exhibits a compelling walk with God demonstrated in a deep commitment to Christ and his Word..

Substantiating Behaviors

- People seek this person out for spiritual direction.
- Is growing in daily repentance and personal obedience.
- Uses Scripture as a source of spiritual nourishment.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Gives appearance in public that he has “arrived” in the Christian life.
- Seldom shares ups-and-downs in his spiritual journey.
- Bible meditation is focused on preparation for ministry, not his response to God.

3. Integrity: Demonstrates sound moral principle in daily interactions, both in private and in professional life; honors commitments and affirms the church, its mission and policies.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Holy in thought, attitude and action without “superiority”.
- Keeps own word--fulfills promises.
- Maintains personal convictions despite pressures to compromise.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Makes excuses when unprepared for a given task.
- Is not above reproach in all his financial matters.
- Gives partial account of events or decisions when a full account would put him in bad light.

4. God’s Call: Possesses and exhibits a willingness to give himself to the service of God and the church because of an inner constraint; expresses a devotion to Christ’s work rooted in a growing conviction that God would have him faithfully proclaim the Word of God in starting a new church.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Shows the mission of Christ to be first instead of concerns for prestige, money or ease.
- Confidently holds that in the midst of serious problems, God has placed him there.
- Senses a compulsion to be in church planting as a personal call from God.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Ministers half-heartedly when he sees no gain for himself.
- Brags about his own real or imagined accomplishments.
- Grumbles about sacrifices he makes as part of his life in the ministry.

5. Family Life: Husband and wife agree upon and share the ministry vision; they have an explicit agreement regarding each partner’s role and involvement in ministry.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Models a healthy family relationship.
- Spouse is involved in ministry according to her own gift and abilities.
- Has a stable and growing marriage relationship.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Has made no deliberate plans to protect family life.
- Couple has no clue as to the demands church planting puts on their children.
- Husband makes demeaning or cutting comments about his wife or children in public.

6. Conscientiousness: Is responsible in accomplishing tasks; a self-controlled person leading a disciplined life; uses time in a way that best serves God and the church.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Highly dependable in carrying out task obligations.
- Is well-disciplined in his approach to tasks.
- Allocates his time according to priorities.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Devotes excessive amount of time to personal hobbies and recreation.
- Gives evidence his work is driven by a need to satisfy own ego.
- Finds it difficult to say “no” to another responsibility when he knows his plate is full.

7. Humility: Leads with confidence in God and His activity with an absence of selfish assertion.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Gives credit to God and others for good things in his life.
- Acknowledges own need for continued growth in faith and practice.
- At ease with his position as spiritual leader.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Talks excessively about himself, his accomplishments and his abilities.
- Unable to listen to the wisdom of mature leaders.
- Repeated incidents of unresolved conflicts with others.

PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

8. Leadership: leads others in accomplishing the mission; respects the feelings, viewpoints, and abilities of others and matches the gifts of people with ministry needs and opportunities.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Is a visionary--inspires followers with what the church can become and do.
- Empowers followers by training and involving them in meaningful ministry.
- Keeps followers focused on priorities that will accomplish the mission.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Dominates group discussion.
- Intimidates others by conveying the impression that he has the last word.
- When the group is at an impasse, hesitates to provide leadership that leads to a resolution.

9. Evangelism: Cooperates with God in leading people to salvation; communicates the gospel in a style that is understood by the unchurched.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Makes a conscious effort to communicate the gospel in all facets of ministry.
- Is actively involved in leading people into a personal relationship with Christ.
- Demonstrates a deep passion for the unsaved.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Displays fear and unease in moving in the “personal space” of the unchurched
- Lacks understanding of the issues facing the unchurched.
- Has no unchurched friends.

10. Management: Organizes the tasks of ministry into an action plan easy to follow, evaluate, and revise; identifies required resources; accomplishes the ministry through others.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Is able to set realistic ministry goals.
- As the work progresses, demonstrates skill in adjusting strategies to accomplish the objective.
- Has a bias for the kinds of actions that bring results for God’s kingdom.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Is unable to talk simply about where he is going with the church plant.
- As the ministry grows he is unable to delegate ministry to new leaders.
- Enthusiastically initiates and promotes new programs, instead of building the church through training people.

11. Preaching: Proclaims God's word in a redemptive, convincing and winning manner.

Substantiating Behaviors

- When preaching, is confident and authoritative in presentation.
- In preaching combines careful exegesis with contemporary application.
- Preaches sermons that leave you sensing that Christ can meet your needs..

Incompatible Behaviors

- Preaches "how to" sermons instead of leading people to an encounter with Christ.
- Makes inappropriate use of confidential incidents as sermon illustrations.
- Scolds the congregation in his preaching.

12. Philosophy of Ministry: Designs church ministry that is rooted in Biblical principles taking into account specific giftedness of the leader and the uniqueness of the context.

Substantiating Behaviors

- His approach to ministry reflects his unique spiritual gifting.
- Is able to design ministry that fits the needs of the community.
- Implements a model of the church that is biblical.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Confuses what the community needs with what the church should offer.
- Over-rates (or under-rates) his own abilities and giftedness.
- Fails to understand the unique culture of the target audience he is trying to reach.

13. Training Leaders: Builds mature followers of Christ utilizing their giftedness in ministry.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Effectively enlists followers and matches them to appropriate ministries.
- Regularly brings disciples to maturity in Christ.
- Provides the church with a variety of approaches to ministry training.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Does everything himself, failing to delegate.
- Passes on ministry assignments before people are adequately trained.
- Places unwarranted restrictions on other's spiritual giftedness.

INTERPERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

14. Flexibility: Welcomes new possibilities coping effectively with ambiguity, change and stress.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Adapts well to new situations or circumstances.
- Responds to reversals and setbacks in a constructive manner.
- Is willing to experiment with the ideas of others.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Inability to encourage and accept new ideas for his ministry plans.
- Condemns every innovation as a detriment to faithful ministry.
- Unable to do "whatever" is necessary "whenever" necessary to advance the ministry.

15. Likeability: Is friendly, pleasant and attractive to others.

Substantiating Behaviors

- When meeting strangers communicates warmth and personal interest.
- Is tactful in dealing with difficult situations.
- Is consistently enjoyable to be with.

Incompatible Behaviors

- When someone disrupts his schedule demonstrates irritation and resentment.
- In relations with those who suffer, gives no expression of affirmation or understanding.
- When under pressure places heavy demands on his staff or volunteers.

16. Emotional stability: Maintains emotional balance; is patient and sincere, not moody but able to laugh at himself.

Substantiating Behaviors

- In leading others uses abilities confidently without being overly self-conscious.
- Copes with stress in a calm, relaxed manner.
- Tends to see opportunities before problems.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Handles problems with impatience and irritation.
- Is either confrontational or defensive in his relations with those who differ.
- Handles disappointments with a sense of injured ego.

17. Sensitivity: Is other-centered demonstrating love, patience and kindness in all his relationships; is sensitive to the hurts and struggles of others; values those who are not valued by society and denies himself for their sake.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Is consciously aware of the hurts and struggles of others.
- Provides support to those inside and outside the faith community.
- Is understanding toward difficult people.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Always refers those in need to others even when he is able to help immediately and directly.
- Responds judgmentally or prejudicially to new people.
- Only values and appreciates people like himself.

18. Dynamism: Has an inviting, energetic personality which calls people to follow him.

Substantiating Behaviors

- Exhibits high energy in initiating contacts with new people.
- His personal magnetism draws others to be involved in church.
- People naturally follow his leadership.

Incompatible Behaviors

- Fails to get to know people on a personal basis.
- Is insecure and uncertain in his dealings with people.
- Unable to make people feel secure and comfortable in his presence.