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# *Partnership Development Refresher Training*

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*“You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus,”* Philippians 4:19, The Message.

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# *Unit One: The Importance of Maintaining 100% of Your Budget*

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*Jesus said that the laborer is worthy of his hire. You are worthy of the full salary that was agreed between you and your supervisor. If God can supply part of it, He can supply all of it. It is on that biblical premise that ISI has established the principle of 100% for all staff.*

### ***Why does ISI require that I maintain 100% of my Budget?***

- ISI has a *moral* obligation to our staff, and their families, to ensure that they have enough to live on and conduct their ministries.
- ISI has a *moral* obligation to financial partners, who expect us to be responsible in overseeing staff support and in caring for staff members' needs.
- ISI has a *strategic* obligation. Staff members need adequate resources to conduct ministry.
- ISI has an *administrative* obligation. Corporate resources are needed to give leadership and support services to local ministry.
- ISI believes that God will provide all of our needs.

### ***Why Has My Support Declined?***

There are at least two reasons support erodes over time. We may look at donors as mere providers who are obligated to be faithful to write checks to keep us going, but who are not otherwise involved. One staffer said, *"I'm doing the work. They should keep sending the money!"* That will inevitably lead to neglect and a failure to communicate frequently enough to let them know of the problems as well as the fruit of the ministry. Neglect reaps a harvest of neglect, a loss of interest in you and what you are doing, and gradual failure to send the checks.

Secondly, there is a tendency to think of Partnership Development as secondary to our 'real' ministry instead of part of our total ministry. We spend time with the students, the volunteers, or administration of the city or region and neglect our donors. When regular maintenance of support is neglected, support *will erode*. As you lose donors through normal attrition, new donors must replace them immediately. This process requires attention to your donor base *every month*. Building up a group of friends to work alongside us *is* ministry.

When we reach 100%, we think that raising support is finished. It isn't. Support maintenance typically takes 12 to 16 hours every month, time that should be scheduled on your calendar every month during *prime* ISI time, not after you've put in a full week doing your other tasks.

When our support erodes, it begins a domino effect for everything else in your life. Your month-end balance is less than your budget. Ministry expenses were covered, but there wasn't enough left for a full paycheck. You can't pay the amount due on your credit card(s), leaving an interest-bearing balance. The kids need jeans, your daughter's tuition is due, and the van needs new tires. All this creates bigger credit card balances, more interest, and a sense that you are losing control of your finances. You dread receiving your monthly Income and Spending Report.

We make the mistake of taking for granted our financial partners who make it possible for us to do all we do.

## **Denial**

*“You cannot solve a problem until you acknowledge that you have one and accept responsibility for solving it.” Zig Ziglar*

A common reaction to lowered support is denial. *“Things will get better. I’ll pray for a great December. I can ignore it a while longer.”* Denial means you aren’t doing anything about the situation except dreaming up creative ways to continue to survive with the problem. Anxiety that accompanies low support can be deadly to families and singles in ministry. Low support affects your faith, your morale, and your emotional, spiritual and physical health. It can lead you to doubt God, your calling, and your effectiveness. Some will spiritualize the problem. *“God has always supplied all that I need. I am happy to live on what He supplies. I don’t need as much as the budget ISI gives me.”*

### **Comments from ISI staff members who succeeded in consistently bringing their income to 100% of their budget:**

*“I have been reviewing Scripture references and have been challenged again by 1 Kings 17. It’s an example of the Lord using unconventional means to provide for His servant. He used a raven to bring food for Elijah and then sent him to a widow and her son in poverty. God used this latter situation to provide for Elijah’s needs and to meet the desperate needs of the widow. The act of giving benefits the receiver and allows God to bless the giver.”*

*“I understand now that I should be ministering to those who support me. I need to do more than ask for money. I want to be involved in their lives. I can be used to meet others’ needs as well. After all, my financial partners make it possible for me to do this. I’ve been taking them for granted. My next letter to donors is going to ask for their forgiveness.”*

*“I was reminded that I should not just be asking for money but look to develop friendships. This is difficult because there are so many, and it will take time I have not delegated thus far to spend on donors. As I make follow-up calls and meet in face-to-face presentations, I will develop the relationships. I will send more regular thank you notes and communicate more personally with my prayer and financial supporters.”*

*“I need to be more faithful with my own giving and have let circumstances affect my generosity. I expect my donors to be generous, but sadly, I am not yet a tither myself. That is going to change.”*

### **Commitment to Pursue Support**

We are not always honest with ourselves as we make commitments. Sometimes we make a commitment we don’t plan to keep, especially if we feel forced to commit to something we are reluctant to do, feel inadequate to do, or feel it is too difficult to do.

Those who maintain 100% support are committed to the goal of 100% and are therefore committed to their donors. Their monthly calendar reflects that commitment. There is time set aside to spend communicating with donors and pursuing new support. They have transitioned from thinking of it as ‘support’ to thinking of relating to friends. That transition in thinking can add an element of delight to what may otherwise be seen as a duty.

The word “pursue” has a surprising number of definitions:

- To follow in order to overtake
- To strive to gain
- To seek to attain or accomplish
- To proceed in accordance with a plan or a method
- To carry on or continue a course of action.

Our commitment to achieving and maintaining 100% support must begin with prayer.

*John 15:5-7: “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!”*

God has more than enough to meet all of your needs. To God, there is little difference between your budget of \$6,300 per month and the \$3,500 you actually have coming in. Being confident in God’s ability to provide can help you make that step of commitment to pursuing 100% of your budget. Pray that God will fill you with a desire and a love for raising support. Ask God to give you delight and eagerness in the process. Ask the Lord to change your heart attitude and be willing to have it changed.

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## *Unit Two: Assessing Your Current Situation*

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## ***Change is Essential***

*“Forget what happened in the past, and do not dwell on events from long ago. I am going to do something new. It is already happening. Don’t you recognize it?” (Isaiah 43:18, 19, paraphrased).*

When you begin a new thrust to get to 100% of your budget, you will need to release your hold on what you’ve done in the past. The truth is, whatever you have been doing hasn’t worked. It is expensive to maintain a routine if it has been non-productive.

Most of us are more comfortable with old problems than with new solutions. Many scriptures challenge us to change, to turn from our old ways, be transformed, renewed, or start doing things differently. Change requires not only wisdom, but courage. Change involves risk. We must be willing to acknowledge the need to change in order to make something new happen. Change is valid if it achieves the desired results.

Before you pull on your boots and move out on the road to change, you must identify the real problem with your support. There is no quick fix. Your first instinct may be to crank out another generic and frantic appeal letter and hope that will fix it. Instead, make a decision to attack the problem, rather than trying to fix a symptom.

The question to ask is:

### **“What’s the real problem with my support?”**

The assignments in this manual are designed to help you determine your specific problem areas with partnership development and to begin to attack those problems with solutions. The first assignment is the Partnership Development bible study found in the PD Resources section of the ISI Training website ([www.isi4training.com](http://www.isi4training.com)). Working through this very brief study now, will bring to light some of your issues and provoke thoughtful consideration of what you will be doing and why. You will find this study in the Partnership Development Refresher Training (PDRT) Resources. The good news is that there are many, many ISI staff who maintain a balance in their account of several months’ budget. That is God’s ‘over and above’ provision, and it is not reserved for special people. It happens because of good partnership habits.

### ***Where Am I Now?***

In Unit One, we considered the affects that being under budget can have on you, your family, marriage, and ministry. We looked at the reasons for ISI’s requirement to reach and stay at full support. We stressed the importance of having a willingness to change and to commit to spending the time to relate to donors on a consistent basis. The *Perspectives of the Bible on Partnership Development* study you just completed reaffirmed the biblical basis for asking for support. Now let’s look at where your support is right now, how you got there, and what can be done to eliminate your shortfall.

The monthly Field Staff Income Report has many columns of information about your account. Everything is there; your percent of annual budget achieved year to date (YTD) and your balance. The report shows giving peaks and fluctuations month to month. You can determine where your support level is at any point in the calendar year *or* the fiscal year.

**The Bottom Line** is your fund balance. If you always have your monthly budget as a balance—better to build for 45 days or more—your income is keeping up with your budget. You are at 100%.

Negative attitudes, some of mythical origin, but of crippling proportions hinder us. Some common obstacles are listed below.

### ***My Obstacles to Raising 100% Support***

Use a check mark (√) to indicate the extent to which these issues are a problem for you.

1. I don't know many people and am out of names to contact.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

2. I have a fear of asking.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

3. I've lost heart because it takes so long.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

4. Ministry opportunities distract me.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

5. I think people just don't want to give.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

6. My budget amount seems overwhelming.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

7. As our team grows, it limits my possible support base.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

8. My family and/or cultural beliefs (baggage from growing up) make it difficult.

**Minor Issue**     **Major Issue**

Of these factors, 'fear of asking' ranks at the top for most people. Fear can lead you to self-defeating behavior when it comes to talking with people about your need for support. The fear is probably rooted in past ego-defeats or embarrassment at being turned down.

Fear may tempt you to withdraw from situations where a confident approach would have gained you a new donor. You are not begging for money, but giving friends an opportunity, as Paul did so many times, to invest in Kingdom work with you.

*"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline"*  
(2 Timothy 1:7).

The opposite of timidity is *boldness*. The early church had some very bold apostles. Can we be bold, empowered by the spirit as they were, and propelled by God?

### ***Assessing Your Present Support Base***

Do a quick “Investor’s Report Review” using your most recent 13-Month Report. (ISI provides us with this complete record of annual giving of every donor.)

- **Count the number of donors** in each category: monthly, quarterly, sporadic, one-time, and annual.
- **In the left margin, total the annual giving** of each donor or church.
- **Thank God** for these individuals and churches already committed to you.

This will give you an accurate picture of where you are now. When your shortfall is established, you will see how to increase income from present donors and what you need to do to add to your donor base. Look realistically at the challenge ahead of you.

We have prepared some questions to help you assess your present and potential base of support. Don’t forget: God uses people you know and who **know you**.

Your current monthly budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Committed monthly support from individuals: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Committed monthly support from churches: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

One-time gifts divided by 12: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage of support achieved for the last four months: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Latest fund balance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly shortfall estimate: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of names on Personal Contact List (PCL) both donors and non-donors: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of donors: monthly \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ annually \_\_\_\_\_ sporadic \_\_\_\_\_

Number of supporting churches: \_\_\_\_\_

List lapsed donors you could ask to rejoin your team: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List donors who have not increased support for the past three years: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List friends from university or seminary, the old neighborhood, people with whom you have lost touch and could renew contact to begin building a relationship (via Facebook? Twitter?). \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List acquaintances from your church or other churches you could begin to build a relationship with now: \_\_\_\_\_

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List businessmen, professionals, college students, adult children of your friends, or any others whom you have never asked for support: \_\_\_\_\_

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List Christian international students in the U.S. and returnees that you have never spoken to about your support: \_\_\_\_\_

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## *Unit Three: Expanding Your Support Base*

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## ***Principle of Philanthropy***

Everyone in the field of philanthropy is aware of an undying principle:

*People give to people or organizations they **know, trust, and care about.***

This is particularly true for people raising **personal** support (that's us). The knowing, trusting, and caring comes from a mutual relationship. It is not one-sided. Our donors need to know that we care about them too. Spending the time to demonstrate that we care is essential if we hope to build a lifetime of stable support for ministry. It is not uncommon for our older staff members to have donors who have supported them for thirty or forty years.

It takes *time* to do the work that brings people closer to you, to turn acquaintances into friends; people that you could ask to become a financial partner. It is important at the start of this new thrust in developing a more stable base of long-term financial support, that you understand the necessity of **allowing the time** to do it.

### ***Intentional Relating: Turning Acquaintances into Friends***

As you seek financial partners, consider the depth of the relationship you have with people. You may have hundreds of "friends" on Facebook and Twitter. Are they really friends or merely *acquaintances*? Do they have any reason to care about you or your support? Think of what your response would be to them if they asked *you* to support *them* in a ministry? Do you know them well enough to even care about what they are doing?

If you have already tapped out your list of good friends as potential donors, it is time to begin taking deliberate steps toward building depth into some of your more casual relationships. As you concentrate on support development in the next few weeks and months, you will need to schedule some serious time to do this.

Friends are won by nurturing the relationship until there is a mutuality of **trust, respect, and commonality**. This can be done even if the person is all the way across the country, by using the phone, email, social media sites, and the occasional visit. It takes little imagination to draw people out by asking simple questions. "*How has the Lord been encouraging you these days? How are you challenged right now?*"

Abraham Lincoln said: "*If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend.*"

Is it mercenary to develop a relationship with someone just so you can eventually solicit support? To maintain your integrity, you need to answer that question. If you have no interest in the person and all you want is their money, then yes, it is mercenary. Don't do it.

Not everyone who will support you needs to be your best friend. Most people support us because they are sold on the vision and want to invest in it. Look at your own donor list and you will find that the majority of them know you, respect your ministry, and have a relationship with you. If that relationship is maintained through letters, calls, visits, and other demonstrations of caring, they will stick with you for many years, even when you are not in the same geographical area and do not see each other often.

One good contact with a person will generally not be enough. Plan the second contact while you are still together. The conversation should focus on *them*, not on you. We respond to people who demonstrate a genuine interest in us. Within three days of hosting someone in your home or a restaurant, call or send a note. Comment on something that came up in the conversation. This communicates that you enjoyed being with them. How long does that take? Three minutes?

### ***Use the Telephone—Letters Can't Talk Back***

Letters, emails, blogs, and Facebook postings cannot do all the work in establishing relationships. The voice communicates warmth and passion that can be lost in the written word. [NOTE: All that is said here referring to the **call** can also be applied to a personal visit, or a meal in your home or in a restaurant, if that works best.]

### ***Begin with a Hard Copy of Your PCL (Personal Contact List)***

Start with the people who have never supported you but have been receiving your information for a while. Decide who could be reached during the day and who will need an evening call.

It can take several calls to get through to people. If you begin the process thinking that you will reach everyone on the first try, you will be frustrated. Plan to keep dialing and try different times of the day. Go at the task with determination.

Think of these calls as making friends, not raising support. That will make the call more natural and comfortable, because the focus of the conversation will be on *them*, not you. What will you ask them about themselves? How will they know that you are calling because you care about *them*? Trust them to get around to you in the conversation. When they do, don't feel that you have to launch into the ISI vision. Be prepared to share something the Lord is teaching you. There will be time for talking about ISI as the friendship progresses.

Think about how to *bless* people by what you share. Ask them for prayer requests. Have your own prayer requests ready. One should be obvious; you are raising support. If you can share that without embarrassment, it won't embarrass them either, nor put them on the spot. If you feel awkward at that point—*don't mention support at all*. This is a ministry call or visit. Don't manipulate it into asking for support.

### ***Call People Who are Out of Your Area***

*Don't leave messages on machines.* Most phones are set to answer after the third or the fourth ring. Hang up before it gets there. Keep trying until you can speak personally.

### ***Ask Local People to Meet***

When you call someone who is local, see if they would like to meet you for breakfast or lunch so this can be a face-to-face meeting. Dinner in your home is even better. This type of relating takes longer than a phone call, but will be more beneficial for the person, as well as for you.

### ***Before You Call, Think***

Someone has said that ‘People may forget what you said, they may forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.’ How do you want people to *feel* when the call or visit is over? You want them to know the call was prompted by your interest in them.

*“Honey, you’ll never guess who called today. We had the nicest conversation!”*

### ***Before You Call, Pray***

Ask God to make you sensitive, alert to how He may want to use you in the life of that person.

### ***Listen to What They are Saying***

There may be an opportunity for you to pray with them. Don’t miss it. It shows you care about what they have shared with you. It shows you paid attention.

### ***After You Call, Follow-up***

Within 48 hours, send a brief note or call again, referring to something said in the conversation. Tell them you are praying for them. It will take away the feeling you have about making friends just so people will support you. Think about ministering to them. In the process, you will be making friends. Isn’t this exactly what we do in reaching out to the international students?

### ***The Face-to-Face Presentation***

When you feel a friend is ready to be asked, your first choice should *always* be a personal, face-to-face meeting. This is the most effective way to raise personal support.

Our experience is that for every two personal presentations you make, one person is likely to support you. That is the *average*, and it is much higher than we can expect from letters.

A staff member who lived with low support for several years said,

*“I was depending on my letters to do it for me, so I threw more letters at the problem. I thought prayer might cover the shortfall, so I prayed more. I did everything but what I knew from my support training worked best. I needed to get up my courage and start meeting face-to-face with my friends. When I started doing that, the support began to increase and I have been adding new donors to my team.”*

Call to set up times to meet with people. The more you stick with this task, the faster you will see your support come in. Fear of the responses of our friends can be a serious impediment to support development. It may be rooted in a deep sense that there is something shameful in asking others for financial help to support your ministry. When anything in our nature hinders us from doing necessary things in our adult life, we must decide whether to continue being impaired by it, or get rid of it. The Bible teaches us to fear God, but never man.

*“Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love” (1 John 4:18).*

Identify the roadblocks between you and success in confidently pursuing support. Whatever is an issue with you needs to be dealt with in your life now, or you will continue to suffer its consequences.

*“You don’t drown by falling in water; you only drown if you stay there,”* Zig Ziglar.

When you call to ask for an appointment to get together, always mention that you will be discussing your financial need.

*“Would it be possible for us to stop by this week to tell you what God is doing in our ministry, and to share with you some of our needs? We’d like to give you an opportunity to have a ministry partnership with us. We only need half an hour. We won’t take up your entire evening.”*

If you’re unable to get an appointment to meet personally, ask if you can send them your letter.

### ***Other Approaches to Getting a Face-to-Face Appointment***

The telephone is not the only way to reach people. When and where do you see them? If you attend the same church, look for them and ask for an appointment. You might find your opportunity right then and there. Be prepared to shift from your goal, to focusing on a need they may present as you are talking to them. *“My dog was run over by an 18-wheeler this morning,”* should not be immediately followed by *“That’s too bad. Now when can we get together so I can ask you for money?”*

Whatever the opportunities, don’t be manipulative in setting up a situation where a friend feels he has to give you time. Offer options. Your flexibility could get you a positive response. Offer to pick them up at their office building or place of work and take them to lunch somewhere nearby. Suggest lunch after church with the whole family. That may be more welcome to some folks than having you visit them in their home. If the conversation doesn’t get around to your financial needs, the time is valuable for relationship building.

**Pray**—Before you make a phone call:

- Ask God to bless your efforts to raise support, to prepare hearts to hear you, be in tune with you, and be responsive to what you want to tell them.
- Ask for sensitivity to the person, to pick up on covert and overt signals.
- Ask God for wisdom to know exactly what to say and when to stop!
- Ask God to give you freedom to be open about why you are calling.

**Listen**—Don’t do all the talking. If you’ve been hearing your own voice for five minutes, it’s time to listen. Allow plenty of opportunity for them to interact.

- Be prepared to have the focus shift from you to them. If the initial conversation makes it obvious that you can’t get an appointment, use the time to build the relationship.

**Trust**—“God has my team members numbered already. He has already provided. I just have to be faithful and get out there, share my heart for His work, and harvest what He has already done. God is able!” ISI Staff Member

**Remember—**

- The date, time, and place of the appointment. Confirm everything.
- Take along materials, a short ISI video, and materials you will leave (including a reply envelope and all information for giving).

### ***Giving the Presentation***

Giving an effective presentation of the ministry is an essential skill for raising support. Whether you present in a restaurant, an office, or a home, the key to being comfortable with the process, is to be comfortable with what you’re going to say.

You know the ministry. Don’t worry about covering everything. Focus on sharing your vision and passion. If they want more detail than you have given, slow down and give it to them.

Avoid turning your presentation into a monologue. Allow for interruptions. You’ll get back to your purpose. If they have been getting your letters for some time, assume they know the ISI vision and mission.

A good presentation can be done in **ten minutes** and most people will appreciate the brevity.

Make your “**ask**” clear and gracious. You need financial support. You already have good prayer support—don’t you? Don’t waffle and ask for prayer. Be honest about what the need is. Avoid talking *poor mouth*.

Tell a couple of stories about students coming to faith. If you use visual aids, don’t use more than three or four pictures. A *very short* PowerPoint presentation can be useful. Don’t let it drag on until their eyes glaze over. Be alert to verbal and nonverbal cues and adjust accordingly. When you’ve said enough, stop.

#### ***Practice Your Ask***

If you think you may clinch up when you get to the **ask**, stand in front of a mirror and present to yourself until you can say and do it in a way that leaves you smiling and relaxed. If you don’t work to discover that, you will avoid getting to the **ask** in a conversation. When you ask for financial support, it works well to say, “*Would you prayerfully consider joining my monthly financial support team? I will call you in a few days to see how God has led you.*” This takes pressure off of them to make an immediate decision. Always keep the initiative in *your* hands, not theirs. Wait just 48 hours and then call. ***Always leave a donation envelope, an Easy Giving Plan (electronic bank transactions) card and online giving information.***

### ***On Leaving Messages***

A staff member once called 18 churches in her city for an appointment to meet with the pastor or missions chairperson. When she didn't get through to the person she wanted, she left messages with a secretary and was promised a call-back. (She's still waiting.)

Unless you know the person well, it is usually pointless to leave a message on a machine. This is true whether you are calling a friend to set an appointment for making a personal presentation or to talk to a pastor or missions committee chairperson. You are at a disadvantage if you leave a message. They may decide they don't want to talk to you, leaving you wondering what they are thinking. Meanwhile, you are growing paranoid.

### ***New Pastor Opportunity***

Many pastors switch churches every few years. A new pastor at a church is a strategic opportunity. Find out as much as you can about him from a member and stop by to see if you can catch him in the office. If not, ask the secretary to set up an appointment for you and leave your card. Tell her you only need fifteen minutes and what you want to talk to him about. When you meet him, offer to *serve him*. Pastors are much more interested in people who come in and say, "*What can I do to help you?*" rather than asking for money, time in the pulpit, or telling them about their own program. *Think like he's thinking!* What is his biggest need right now? Ask him about his vision for the church and what he wants to see happen.

Listen to him. Don't be thinking of what you want to say next. Focus on him rather than on sharing the ISI vision. You'll have the beginnings of a friendship, a place to start. Don't rush to dump ISI on him. Tell him you want to think about what **he** has said, and you'll call back in a few days; then do, call with some ideas. You may find that ISI can plug into his need in a significant way without immediate return for you. Building relationships takes time. But this is building the future of the ministry as well as potential for eventual support.



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## *Unit Four: What About My Local Ministry and Current Donors?*

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## ***What Do I Do About Local Ministry?***

You have an active ministry going. How can you make time to do this on top of everything else?

We recognize the tension that exists between carrying on the local ministry and taking time to raise more support. It may seem risky to drop anything or to fade out of the scene even slightly for several weeks. Opportunities will be missed; some students won't be served, and some events may have to be cancelled. You may fear losing goodwill with the university and others who count on ISI to be there when needed.

We have thought through all of these concerns and come down on the side of what Jesus said, "...*the worker is worth his keep*"(Matthew 10:10). We have allowed staff to work with less than their full wages and the remedy to that must take priority. This is not about your *willingness* to work for less. This is about an employer's obligation to be responsible for all his or her employees. If you are able to live on less than your current budget because of other personal income and spending issues, that needs to be discussed with your Regional Field Director. If agreed, a lower budget can be negotiated. Otherwise...

Time must be carved out of what you are already doing in order to spend time on this. It will not happen if you try to add this task to everything else you are doing. ISI requires that you raise personal support, and it is expected that the time for that will be *on the clock*—not after you have put in 40 or 50 hours a week carrying out local ministry.

The risk of offloading some of your responsibilities diminishes in proportion to the wisdom used in delegating responsibility to other staff and volunteers. One of our core values, stated in our Mission Statement, is that we will do this ministry "*in cooperation with the local church and others.*" If we mean that, we will have trained volunteers to work alongside us. Some are ready to be given leadership responsibilities. When they know why they are needed, they will step up to the plate.

### ***How to Temporarily Turn Ministry over to Others...Without Losing Control***

#### ***Explain What You are Doing***

You *cannot* carry on a full load of ministry in addition to the PD tasks that will be necessary to bring your support to 100%. Something has to give. Let your team know that you are temporarily stepping aside to finish the task of raising your full support. If you communicate this in a positive way, people will want to help you. Do not abandon ministry. Step back.

#### ***Assess, Delegate, and Trust***

Look at your weekly schedule to see what can be delegated to others. Remove some things that would eat up a great deal of time. Be willing to give that away. If you are a local supervisor, call the team together to discuss sharing your responsibilities. If you are part of a team, discuss your ideas about how to handle this with your supervisor first and then

with the full team. As you delegate, look to your team members, volunteers, and student leaders. Trusting them to do a good job is part of developing them.

### ***Look for Opportunities to Develop Leadership***

Don't be fearful of asking a volunteer, student, or co-worker to step into the gap for you temporarily. When you return to work full time, you may find that the temporary replacement has found joy and fulfillment and has grown in his or her leadership ability. You have just expanded the ministry! As you look for people to pick up your load, think of how this necessity may *benefit* the local ministry by identifying skilled people who should be given leadership responsibilities they've not had before.

### ***Monitor***

Continue to give minimal oversight to the ministries where you've been providing leadership, or ask another staff member to do that. Be sure it is covered. Ask for reports on how things are going. This keeps you informed though you are no longer in charge. If there is something you *cannot* off-load temporarily, talk with your supervisor to reach agreement as to how to handle it.

### ***Team Accountability***

If you are part of a team that meets weekly, discuss with your supervisor whether you need to attend. If you do, consider that part of your local ministry time each week. Ask the team to serve as an accountability group. Keep them informed of your PD progress. Ask them to pray about your presentations for support. Guard against being tasked by the group. Help them understand that you are temporarily unavailable. Your PD time is going to impact everyone, but it must be guarded.

## ***Present Donors***

Your focus is going to be on gaining new donors for a while. But your present donors need to be informed of what you are doing. Here is how one person informed their donors. Not surprisingly, it began the process of increasing his support before he thought he had begun. His donors applauded the action. Some of them increased their support. Some offered practical assistance. In a personal letter to each, he wrote:

*"Dear Jake and Heather,*

*In recent years I've become so involved in the ministry I've neglected my support team. I let that part of my ministry slip because I felt so driven to keep up with opportunities with students. Now I must bring my support up to 100%. To make the time to do this, I will delegate some of my work to others while I focus on partnership development for a time. That is hard for me to do, but I know that I need to do it. I am going to be putting a lot into the effort for as long as it takes.*

*I want to thank you again for your faithful support over the years. It is so good to see your name on my printout each month. Your faithfulness is never taken for granted. I want to ask you to do something else for me in the next few weeks. Please pray for me as I enter this process.*

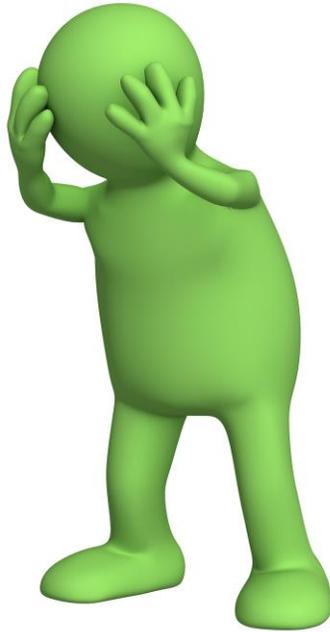
- That I will be **faithful** to this task so the Lord can bless me as I share the need.
- That I will be **joyful** as I do this.
- That I will be **persistent** until the job is done.
- That I will be **sensitive** to the leading of the Lord as I seek out people to join my support team.

*I'm taking a deep breath and digging in my heels. The Lord has confirmed His calling on my life to this work, so I know He has enough for me. I will keep you informed as to my progress. Thanks for praying!"*

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## *Unit Five: Am I In This Alone?*

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## ***The Partnership Development Refresher Training —ISI’s Investment in You***

Our desire and commitment is to see all ISI staff experiencing full provision for their ministry needs. We know it takes commitments of *more* than 100% to maintain 100% throughout the year and a fund balance of at least 30-45 days. That’s where we want **you** to be. It is our joy to work with you, investing in your service for the Lord. We look forward to rejoicing with you and seeing you get to *100% Plus* of your budget as soon as possible.

*“So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12).*

### ***Practical Assistance in the PDRT Resources***

We provide you with several tools to help you get organized before you begin your Partnership Development focus. The PDRT Resources contain samples of various types of letters useful in dealing with specific situations. They are easily adaptable to your own situation.

We offer help with your letters, reviewing, editing, etc. if you request it. We ask that you use *personal* letters or emails, sent individually. **Generic mail and newsletters are not effective in raising support.** This is explained in detail in the paper titled *“Writing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”* (see PDRF Resources).

### ***How the Program Works***

We begin with a *Partnership Development Agreement* in which you will tell us the specific commitment of hours, when you will begin, and both your weekly and monthly goals. That agreement is in the PDRT Resources accompanying this manual. We are committed to maintaining two-way accountability. Faithfulness is the key virtue in accountability. Keeping agreements with others is a measure of our personal integrity.

A PD coach will be assigned to you, to encourage you and help keep you on track week by week. The coach will help you determine how much time will be spent in this intensive period of support recovery. You may need just one or two days a week (for a month or two) to recover your full support. Those hours should be consecutive (two days in a row) and dedicated weekly until the end of the PD period. If you try to squeeze in a bit of PD work here and there, it will not happen. You will accomplish a great deal in two days dedicated to nothing but partnership development. A few have chosen to stop all student ministry and work full time at PD for a shorter period of time. If that would work better for you, this can be negotiated between you, your local supervisor(s) or RFD, and your coach.

### ***Coaching and Accountability***

The coaches are staff members who have raised 100% of their own support. They will stick with you, pray with you about appointments and opportunities to share, and rejoice with you as God works on your behalf.

The accountability tool in this manual is the *"First Thing Monday" (FTM) Report*, on which you report how you spent your time, the results, problems, and what we can do to help you. The FTM report is due to your coach every other Monday. You will receive a full response.

### ***Local Accountability Group***

One staff member was asked to put aside most of his ministry and focus on raising his full budget. He had been with ISI for a number of years and had always been under-supported. He developed a plan to do this, recognizing that his family needed the full amount budgeted.

He informed his local accountability group of what he was going to do. These people served as a lay ministry team with him. They felt he couldn't spend so much time raising support or the ministry would suffer. We explained ISI's responsibility to this family and the need to get them up to full budget. We invited the group to help. When they understood and faced the need, they were motivated to help him do it quickly. They picked up more ministry responsibility, helped with contacts, and championed him with others. Their involvement made a huge difference.

In the next four months, this man saw a phenomenal increase of over \$8,000 in annual pledged support. It was hard work. He made appointments with churches and individuals at the rate of 12 per month and reached his goal well before the time allotted for intense PD. If you don't have a group like this, consider inviting some good friends of the ministry to join you at this point.



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## *Unit Six: The Support Development Plan*

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## **Prayer**

Prayer is the place to begin. We recommend an entire day set aside at the very beginning of this initiative. First, reflect on what God has already done for you—His faithfulness through the years of your ministry. Thank Him for the faithful donors you already have. Ask for joy in this process and His wisdom as you proceed. Ask Him to settle your heart about all the issues to remind you of all His promises of provision. Ask Him to bless your every effort, to teach you new things about dependence on Him, and to use you to bless many people. If you have never spent an entire day in prayer, here are some helps to plan a day.

### ***How to Spend a Day in Prayer***

1. Find a quiet place alone that is conducive to concentration. The home and the office are not good choices. You will be distracted by people, the phone, computer, and chores you've been putting off. Go somewhere—a park, the woods, an empty office or room at your church, or someplace where you won't be interrupted or distracted. No iPad. No cell. No checking email or Facebook.
2. Your day will go better with some planning. If you want to spend some of the time praying with someone else (e.g. your pastor or a teammate), set up the appointment in advance. Spend the time actually praying, not *talking* about prayer requests.
3. Supplies: a bible, journal or notebook, donor list and PCL, a light lunch (unless you intend to fast).
4. Consider breaking up the day into manageable segments:
  - Praise, worship, and thanksgiving using the Word.
  - Pray about support needs and your attitude.
  - Pray with another person (cell phone, pre-appointment).
  - Be still and listen to God—respond as He leads.
  - Pray for yourself and your family.
  - Lunch or take a break that includes activity (a prayer walk?)
  - Pray for your donors and your prayer partners by name.
  - Pray for local team members and ISI leadership.
  - Take a break doing something active. Walk and pray.

If possible, use an hour of your time to meet for prayer with friends, donors, business people, team members, your spouse or pastor. Ask them to pray with you about your needs. This involves other people in what you are about to do.

### ***To Prime the Pump, Consider the Prayer of Faith***

Matthew 21:21-22 says, *"Then Jesus told them, 'I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don't doubt, you can do things like this and much more. You can even say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.'"*

Imagine being a new Christian and reading those words of Jesus for the first time. What has become so familiar to us, would sound incredible to a new believer. The promise is without limit. So why don't we pray more? We know in our hearts that our prayers accomplish more than our work. Fruit that comes from our work is the result of prayer.

*“Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20).*

*“Each time you intercede, be quiet first and worship God in His glory. Meditate on what He can do. Then expect great things!” —Andrew Murray*

*“But I am trusting you, O LORD, saying, ‘You are my God!’” (Psalm 31:14).*

*“The faith that believes that God will do what you ask is not born in a hurry; it is not born in the dust of the street and the noise of the crowd. Its birthplace is in the secret place and time. The open Word and a reverent heart are necessary to its growth. Into that heart will come a simple strong faith that the thing it is led to ask shall be accomplished.” — S.D. Gordon*

### ***Ask, Don't Tell***

Proverbs 23:12 says, *“Commit yourself to instruction; listen carefully to words of knowledge.”* We tend to want to tell God what to do instead of asking what He wants to do. He doesn't need our advice on how to solve problems or meet our needs.

### ***Silence***

Matthew 6:5-8 says, *“When you pray... go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. .... Don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. .... your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!”*

God works in silence. It takes time to reach a place of quiet to be able to listen. As we calm our thoughts, our soul tunes to Him.

*“There's no use slamming on the brakes and stopping the car on a dime if the motor is still racing at top speed.” —Trappist Monk*

## ***Planning Your Partnership Development is Vital***

ISI provides you with the format for designing an Action Plan that will cover the entire period of your Partnership Development. Designing a plan can be an encouraging spiritual experience. You will be taking a look at what your vision, your energy, and your passion will lead you to attempt. The time spent planning at the very beginning will save much time and frustration later.

*“If you spend 15 minutes a day planning, you will accomplish 60% more.” —Harvard Business School*

The Action Plan is a written version of exactly how you will reach your support goal. It helps you take manageable bites out of the whole, so you are not frustrating yourself with the big picture. The plan keeps the details of the task in order and your calendar filled, so you don't have to wonder each week what you need to do. It will help you achieve your goal with a minimum of time and effort. If your plan comes apart because of new information, or some part of it isn't working, rework the plan but don't throw it away.

A good plan should stretch you but won't leave you feeling constantly behind or unable to accomplish all you planned to do. It will gently propel you to keep moving toward what you know you can accomplish.

### ***Set Goals***

A major reason we do not set goals is because we fear not meeting them. Goals must be flexible and reasonable. What you plan to do next week will be altered by what happens this week. Detours and changes are inevitable. But if you have no goal for next week, you're not reaching for anything and your efforts are going to be fuzzy.

Numbers help verify our goals and can be useful to pull us along week by week. You may want to set dollar amounts per week as a goal to aim for—\$100 in new monthly support per week for 16 weeks to make up a total shortfall of \$1,600 per month. The dollar goals dictate the strategy of the Action Plan, and your daily expenditure of energy. You know what you have to do to bring in that much. Develop the plan to match the need. The strategy includes the prayer of faith applied daily! Don't begin to serve the goals rather than the Lord.

### ***The Calendar***

A serious commitment on your part is necessary to accomplish a goal. Keeping focused can be a challenge. That's why a calendar is necessary—strategically placed where you, your spouse, or accountability partners can't avoid it. If you want something to happen, you have to make a place for it to happen. That place is on your calendar.

### ***You will need:***

- **Prayer** – Invite your current partners to pray with you through this process.
- A clear **Picture** of exactly the amount of money you need to raise.
- A consuming **Desire** to get there as fast as possible.
- **Confidence in God** and your dependence on Him.
- **Confidence in yourself** that you are able, in His strength.
- A **Calendar** of specific activities week by week.
- **Cooperation** from your spouse, family, and the ISI team.
- **Consistency** in carrying out the tasks day by day.
- **Courage** to get started and keep at it.

### ***Updating Your Personal Contact List (PCL)***

If you haven't done any serious sorting of your PCL in several years, it's past time. If you have a PCL of 750 names, you have several hundred more people on there than can possibly be interested in you. If your PCL is too large, it can discourage you from regular communication and encourage you to do generic, third-class mailings, which have never been successful in bringing in full support and are, therefore, *not used in this program*.

- If an alphabetical listing is the only type you have, do a new 'sort' in your database.
- Put all donors in a category to receive a 'thanks version' monthly letter.
- Extract your prayer team people, those who have said they can't give but will pray for you. They should be receiving prayer requests, praise items and news of your ministry when you're doing a letter—not appeals for support.

- Create a category for those who are potential donors, people you are building a relationship with but who have not yet responded with support.
- A category for those you have never asked for support but will ask when you have established the relationship.

What is left? All that is left are people who have been receiving your letters for years that have never responded in any way—no support, no letters, not even a Christmas card. It is very possible (can your ego handle this?) they haven't been reading your letters and you've been wasting time, effort, and money keeping them on your mailing list. If you can't remember where you met the person, and if you can't put a face to them, it is likely they don't remember you either.

### ***Begin Culling***

If you have any hope of finding a new donor among them, get a phone number and call them. Maybe you will discover that more relationship building is needed. Take notes. Ask for an appointment for a face-to-face time to talk about the ministry and your needs. If they are far away, use the call to ask regarding their interest. If they don't even remember your name, they will probably be grateful to be removed from your mailing list.

If you need to cull with a letter instead of phone calls, consider that this option is second best because it gives very little opportunity to deepen the relationship and gain a possible donor. But it is an easy and *comfortable* way for people to let you know they want off your mailing list. A Cull Letter is in the Sample Letter section in the PDRT Resources.

Doing this PCL work is part of an Action Plan for the next few weeks. Following up on phone calls is going to go on your calendar. You'll also be re-sorting your list as you learn where these people are.

### ***Adding to Your PCL***

Now that you have sorted your PCL and worked at culling the list to a manageable size, it is time to beef it up with people you already know who have never made it onto your mailing list. It is very likely there are a number of people you've met, may even know fairly well, who have not been added to your mailing list. Do you have Christian neighbors you've hesitated to add? Ask them if they'd like to know more about what you do. Is your mechanic a believer? Your doctor or dentist? You probably support other missionaries. Have you given them the opportunity to support you? Are there believing international students who have returned home? If they know how you are supported, they may be delighted to assist in your support. What about former students who are Christians, who have stayed in the U.S. and have good jobs? If they have been ministered to by ISI, they are naturals to approach for support.

Are there others you are overlooking as potential sources of support? What about the teenagers of your close friends? Or their kids in college? Nurture a friendship with them. They will be wage earners some day. If you have invested time and interest in them as they are maturing, you will be considered a genuine friend, someone they know and trust, as they consider their own stewardship. You may be the first missionary they support.

Don't forget older people, even those who have moved into retirement communities. These people may have wealth you are not aware of and they know how to give. Some have stopped giving to a church or ministries because those people have neglected them. They are ready to give if approached with genuine friendship. Retired people also make great volunteers for some of the details of your ministry, helping with office details, driving for events, and *praying* for you.

There may be people right under your nose who are not yet on your support team because they don't know *how* you are supported. They don't know that you have a *need*, and they have never been *asked*.

***People are more willing to give than we are to ask!***

### ***The Action Plan***

Review the sample Action Plan located in the PDRT Resources. The plan is *very specific*, naming the churches and the individuals you will attempt to contact each week. It's important to break down large goals into very specific "bites" so that you can move forward in achieving your goals.

Using your PCL and Month-to-Date Report (or 13-Month Report), design a detailed plan that you will follow to bring your support to 100%. Fill in the detail for each situation. The plan that you make now will take you through several weeks and months ahead. List actual names, the steps you will take, and—this is very important—***mark your calendar with the dates for each task***. Some things will be refined along the way, but you need a basic plan to begin. This is likely to be several pages long. Prayerfully review it. Send a copy to your PD coach and to your supervisor and RFD.

Here are some items you will want to include in your plan.

#### ***Churches***

- Are you known at the church?
- Who is the primary contact person?
- When will you make an approach?

#### ***Individuals***

- Old relationships to renew and individuals to locate—doing heavy relationship building. List the names of those you intend to contact.
- What are the steps you will take to strengthen the friendship?
- When will you do it?
- When will you follow up?

#### ***Current Donors***

- Will you ask them to increase support? Will you ask them to switch to monthly giving?
- Which donors might champion you with others?

### ***Lapsed Donors***

- What will you do to encourage them to begin supporting you again?

### ***Internationals***

- Former students working in this country
- Returnees
- How will you contact them? When will you do this?

### ***Major Donors***

- Have you identified some? Business owners or professional people?
- When will you research this? How will you approach them?

### ***PCL Work***

- Add, delete, and clean up your database.

### ***Prayer***

- Will you be scheduling time daily to pray about your support and to pray for those on your PCL?
- Who are your present faithful prayer partners? How often do you communicate with them?
- Do you need to strengthen this group? When will you do it?

### ***Schedule of Partnership Development Letters***

- Personalized letter on your computer.
- Schedule one per month on your calendar. This may require more than a couple of days to write, process, and send.

### ***Support Development Trip(s) out of the Area***

Would a trip be useful? How many contacts or opportunities are in one location? Trips take time for planning, executing, and follow-up. Send your schedule to your supervisor well in advance.

Use the template found in the PDRT Resources to develop a specific Action Plan.

## ***Factors of Success and Factors of Failure***

Below is a list of factors that have worked for ISI staff members as they pursued 100% of their support—and what did *not* work. As you look at these factors, we will leave it to you to judge why they worked...or why they didn't.

### ***Factors of Success***

1. They followed an action plan and clear goals.
2. They kept an energetic pace.
3. They were prompt to follow up all contacts.

4. They were proactive in building new relationships.
5. They majored on face-to-face presentations and **asks**.
6. They were bold in asking.
7. They were willing to try different approaches.
8. They were faithful in accountability during the process.
9. They rejected the myths of '*people don't want to give*' and '*there's not enough money out there.*'

### ***Factors of Failure***

1. They never fully accepted the biblical principle of being supported by God's people.
2. They resisted working with a plan.
3. They never overcame the reluctance to directly ask for financial support.
4. They relied on generic newsletters to do all the work for them.
5. They remained fully involved with local ministry and neglected support tasks.
6. They had too few contacts and did little to expand their base.

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## *Unit Seven: Communication*

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## ***What We Need From Our Partners and What They Need From Us***

As we work at finding our partners for a lifetime of ministry our donors must become more than money machines in our thinking and in theirs. How do we make that happen? One way is to bring them along with us as we do the work. That may be physically impossible for those in other states, but how we share the stories of what God is doing will bless them and keep them involved with us.

When we are focused on getting people to commit support, we may not consider what else we need from *them* that is just as necessary—the sense of true partnership. The way we treat them communicates our respect and our dependence on them and our need for them. A letter, phone calls, a card in the mail (yes, with a stamp), and a personal visit every now and then may be enough for them. Some people may need more and some less than that. Whatever it is they need to feel they are genuinely partnering with us, is what we need to be giving them—not grudging the time it takes, but joyfully, remembering that we aren’t going anywhere without them. They are crucial to the success of the ministry.

Never forget that they are investing in new life. They need the reports of students progressing in their walk toward Jesus Christ. That is why they are giving. The fruit borne of our work is theirs too. It is what brings joy because they have helped make it happen.

If we ever hear ourselves say we are too busy to do this with so many people, we are thinking of our partners as mere money-givers. *“They should just write the checks, be happy with a quarterly newsletter and an occasional ‘thank you’ and let us get on with the important stuff.”*

## ***Communication***

Do you suffer from tradition paralysis when it comes to writing letters? The letters we wrote and received from missionaries and Christian workers years ago do not appeal to 21<sup>st</sup> century readers. Many of them go unread. They see the inside of the garbage can in the garage, unopened, right along with all the other third-class junk mail that never makes it into the house from the mailbox. The same is true for emails that direct you to an attached file or website. How many people hit ‘delete’ and never go there?

It is time to acknowledge present day realities. If you think your generic letters mailed out to the masses are great because some people have told you, *“I love to read your letters,”* only believe it if you have full support. If you don’t, it’s time to stop justifying the mass generic mailing. It isn’t working. What **will** work takes more time and is more intimate and personal— something generic mail could never be.

Consider the derivation of the word “Communication”:

com (with)

uni (one)

cation (understanding).

**With one understanding.**

It depends on both parties in a conversation to have understanding. When it comes to writing, whether it's a letter, email, your blog, messages on your website, or any form of written communication, the responsibility falls on the writer alone.

The best writers and speakers today have a unique ability to trade minds with the person they want to influence. God can give us that kind of insight when we are talking to people and writing to them. If we take the time to ask Him before we begin to communicate, we'll do it well.

### ***Definition of Three Types of Letters***

Christian workers and missionaries who use a letter as a means of communicating to many people at once use the terms 'prayer letter' and 'newsletter' to mean the same thing. They are not the same thing. More importantly, neither one qualifies as 'the partnership development letter,' the type of letter you will use as you raise new support. The definitions below of the three types of letters, have been the standard in ISI for years.

A **Newsletter** is generic. Its focus is news of the ministry. It can have photos, graphics, and may contain multiple pages. It can look like a brochure. It can be posted on a website. It can be written in narrative form like a formal letter or have columns and many short pieces of news. It can be designed for your local constituency with announcements of upcoming activities and reports of those that have already taken place. This can be sent to pastors, volunteers, the city mailing list, and your entire PCL. *The newsletter is not a support-raising tool.* If your local ministry produces a newsletter, it can be useful as an enclosure in your personal letter, but never as a substitute for it.

A **Prayer Letter** focuses on prayer and praise items. Period. It is current. It does not go to your entire mailing list, but only to the prayer team you have recruited. It is brief. It can be an email message sent out to your entire prayer group at once (bcc everyone). It can be sent monthly or more often and is an as-needed tool to keep people praying about your needs. It can mention your financial needs; however, keep in mind that these people may have told you they cannot support you financially, only pray. Be sure your mention of finances is a genuine prayer request and your expectation is that they will pray. The prayer letter is *not* a newsletter and it is not used as a tool to raise support. The prayer letter has only one job—to *get people to pray*.

The **Personal Letter** is the fundraising tool. It is always addressed to individuals, *never* to "Dear Friends" or "Dear Partners." Never use terms like "some of you," "all of you," or "many of you." It is on your letterhead and should go first class in an ISI logo envelope with your name on it. It can also go via email, using the same process of personalizing each one and sending them individually.

### ***How Many Versions of the Letter Do You Need?***

Maybe just two, but perhaps four or five. Some common ones are:

- Donors—with a special paragraph to thank them.

- Potential donors—with a special paragraph to ask them to support you. You will include a return envelope in this letter.
- A “no ask” version to people who did not respond to the first *ask*. You have decided not to ask again for a while but keep them informed. This would include new people just added to your PCL.

The personal letter can address the above areas as they pertain to each recipient. No generic newsletter or prayer letter can do that. The personal letter may *include* a newsletter or a prayer letter as an enclosure. Neither of these can substitute for the personal letter.

What about Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media? They can be useful tools in reconnecting with old friends and beginning to develop a relationship. But when you begin to talk about your ministry with students and move to your need for financial partners, you will need to shift to a more intimate means of communication, to keep this information in a secure and personal environment.

Read Steve Shadrach’s excellent article on “*Do’s and Don’ts of Using Social Media in Support Raising.*” (In the PDRT Resources.)

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## *Unit Eight: Why and How People Give*

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## ***Why and How People Give***

*“Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be” (Matthew 6:21).*

If we understand what motivates us to give to others in ministry, (and what does *not* motivate us), we will better understand people who do not respond to us or who do not continue to partner with us. This verse is a challenge to check our personal stewardship. In what ways do we give our hearts to the causes where our money is going? Think of whom you support—your church, a mission agency, or other missionary friends. Review your own giving and determine whether some of the decisions you have made about support need to be reconsidered. Ask yourself if your *heart* is still there. The answer may be “no.”

When giving becomes a habit rather than a monthly joy as you make the donation, it’s time to reconsider the investment.

Why did you stop? Perhaps you didn’t feel a part of what the group was doing, or you didn’t see an acceptable level of success (fruit) for all the time, effort, and money put into the ministry. The person or group was not communicating with you at an acceptable level. They kept asking you for money, but you didn’t feel like a partner.

Transfer that personal analysis of your own stewardship to those who support you. If a friend was giving and stopped, do your best to find out why. Our treasure does follow our hearts. What are you doing to inspire them to want to share their treasure with you? You may never know what you said or wrote, or even the moment when someone made a decision to support you. But there comes a point of decision and it is based on something you communicated. After you have communicated, God takes over. He prompts the recipient’s spirit in a way that you never could.

What keeps people partnering? What do we do that instills confidence that we are a good servant in a great work that is worthy of their partnership? As people make decisions and reshuffle their support, are you the loser, the one who is going to be dropped? Or are you going to gain from their decision?

This is serious business. If people give willingly of their treasure, it is because they believe in us or are going to risk believing in us until they see how we do. Giving is a matter of the heart. If we understand the dynamics of our own giving and how we come to decisions, we will better understand other people and how they make their stewardship decisions.

### ***The One-time Donor***

Understanding this donor’s motivation and learning how to turn him/her into a regular giver could change your annual support in a spectacular way.

*“I have lots of supporters, but mostly small or one time, and I don’t know how to get one-time givers to give again.”*

Do not confuse the end-of-year donor with the one-time donor. The end-of-year donor has chosen to make gifts based on an estimate of earnings and taxes. These donors are in a category of their own, and you don’t want to mess with their pattern of giving.

Often we find someone willing to give a “one-time” gift but not to commit to regular support. Why are they reluctant to make that commitment?

It helps to think about why you would give that way in order to understand this type of donor gift. Perhaps you have not seen the person in action, don't know his ministry record and fruitfulness, and are not willing to commit to regular giving until you know more. You may feel the need to respond before you know enough about the person or his or her ministry to make a judgment as to whether you want to get on board for the long term. This accounts for many one-time gifts.

You may give because the person has asked you so often, you want to put a stop to it by saying, “*Here's some money. It's all you're going to get. Go away.*”

You could also be in the process of reconsidering your giving commitments and are hesitant to make a promise of long-term support.

Any relationship requires nurturing, commitment, and accountability. We have to bring people in from the fringes. A first-time donor and the one who declares his gift is “one-time” is probably way out at the fringes.

Bring them in closer by giving them information slowly. Begin immediately but don't overwhelm them with too much information at once. Acknowledge their gift with a thank-you call or letter *immediately*. Don't wait a week. Tell them how their contribution is being used. Their money is their investment. They want to see a return on it.

Don't ask again with your thank-you letter. Donors increase the size and frequency of their gifts as they become more familiar with who you are and what you are doing. Communicate *results!* Write again after a month and tell them something that has happened in just the last week. Don't focus on your financial need. Keep them informed of *results* of the ministry. This communicates your interest in them and your respect for their investment.

Think of opportunities to make these first-time givers feel like insiders. Send a photo of a student in bible study, or a new believer, with or without you in the photo. Living color and real faces speak volumes.

If possible, get them involved at some level of your ministry. If they are not Friendship Partners® or volunteers, invite them to a student activity, on a short prayer walk on campus, or to meet you for lunch at a campus hang-out where they are likely to see you in context with internationals. If they live in another staffed city, encourage the staff there to get them involved.

Don't be afraid of losing your donor by encouraging them to work with and financially support other ISI staff members. Many donors give faithfully to multiple staff.

The ‘*what's happening*’ in the ministry is what matters to a donor after they have started giving. You shared the vision (the *why*) and that is what prompted them to give. Don't spend too much time repeating vision statements. Assume they got it. Tell the stories.

In your calls and letters, communicate that your donors are vicariously ministering to the students through you. Express what your needs are in doing that. They will identify. It will help them feel a part of what you do.

Cultivate the one-time donor. It's hard work. Never assume one gift is all they will ever give. See the Sample Letter "*Turning a One-Time Gift into a Regular Monthly Donation*" in the PDRT Resources.