

# A Giant Step Forward

TOWARD AN EMERGING  
CULTURE OF LIBERATION



A Giant Step Forward: Toward an Emerging Culture of Liberation

"This book tells the story of what GiANT™'s Core Group can do for leaders who are willing to work through the process and embrace their real challenges. This is an inspirational read for any group that may be stuck in the protector, abdicator or dominator quadrants and want to know that change can happen. I am so grateful for the liberation happening at GCI.

High Support and High Challenge - I love it!"

- **Jeremie Kubicek, co-founder, GiANT Worldwide™**

"WOW, what an incredible story. Thank you for being so honest and real, there is not even a hint of self-preservation! I love the fact that many of GiANT™'s challenges and struggles have acted as a catalyst to create new life and personal transformation in your world. I believe this book will have a profound impact on leaders and organizations far beyond the GCI tribe."

- **Steve Cockram, co-founder, GiANT Worldwide™**

"Personal stories. Leadership designs. Unusual history. Future dreams. All of these are combined in 'A Giant Step Forward'"

- **Leith Anderson, President, National Association of Evangelicals**

"The stories of the RDs brought us into their experience of communion in such a way as to invite us into something larger than ourselves. The Spirit's work of bringing his children into communion with the Father and one another was a tangible trail throughout the telling of their stories."

- **Lance McKinnon, Grace Communion Seminary**

*The Next Chapter of Grace Communion International*

**Greg Williams, Rick Shallenberger, and Tom Nebel**

# **A Giant Step Forward**

**Toward an Emerging  
Culture of Liberation**

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**The Next Chapter  
of Grace Communion International**

Greg Williams, Rick Shallenberger and Tom Nebel



**GRACE COMMUNION**  
INTERNATIONAL

3120 Whitehall Park Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina

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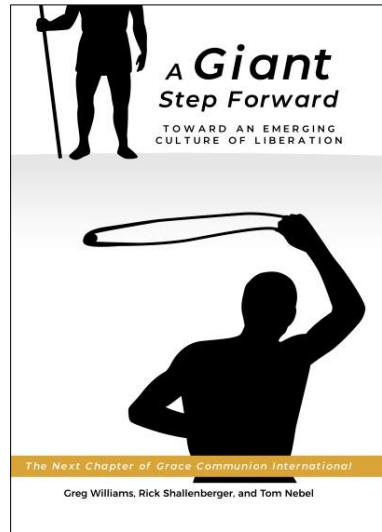
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### About our cover:

David versus Goliath is the classic underdog story of the young shepherd boy who slays the giant, the champion of the Philistine army.

In the rendering on the cover David is the prominent figure and Goliath, who is a master hand-to-hand combatant, is an easy target for the smooth stone projectile flying from David’s sling. David’s battle strategy is superior.



At the heart of the story is David’s proclamation “The battle belongs to GOD—he’s handing you to us on a platter!” (1 Sam. 15:47 MSG). It’s a story about the faithfulness and courage of God being lived out through the teenage boy David. (Eugene Peterson calls him “apple-cheeked and peach-fuzzed.”)

All these factors fit the narrative for Grace Communion International. We are a small Christian denomination made up of some 50,000 people scattered over 78 countries. And like David, we see our battles and challenges being the Lord’s battle – he is leading us, empowering us, and working through us.

Through the help of GiANT Worldwide™ and the comradery of many of our key leaders, we are employing better strategies. Grace Communion International, by the grace of the great Triune God, is ready to face its giants in our next chapter under the presidency of Dr. Greg Williams.

# Prologue

**W**hy write this book? And who is this book written for? The last significant books written about Grace Communion International were authored by Joseph Tkach and Michael Feazell way back in 1997 and 2001. A lot has happened over the past two decades, so this book is an update to anyone who may be looking in and wondering “What has transpired with this group that experienced such an amazing grace awakening? Where are they now?” This book recounts the peaks and valleys of the past twenty years.

It is a major transition for me to step into the shoes of former president Dr. Joseph Tkach. It isn’t just a big step for me personally, it is also a big change for our worldwide fellowship. Who is this new guy? What does he have in mind for the next phase of GCI? This book discloses a lot of my personality, big portions of my journey in GCI, and a glimpse into my leadership style. I am excited to serve in this next chapter because I believe the Lord has good things in store for GCI.

In the initial thought process, Dr. Tom Nebel pointed out that there has not been a book written about denominational transformation. And even though GCI is a small denomination, the amazing transformation that we have experienced and are experiencing can provide hope and insight to others who need/want to experience organizational change. Let our hard lessons inform and move your organization toward greater organizational health.

This book can serve as an “infomercial” for GiANT Worldwide™. Steve Cockram and Jeremie Kubicek are master teachers with the clear focus of developing leaders worth following. And what may be hidden in the process for some is that the CORE principles and practices of GiANT™’s material reflect the person and virtues of Jesus himself. We want to develop leaders of the “Jesus-kind” because these will be the real leaders worth following. Any potential clients interested in knowing about the value and practicality of GiANT™ products should gain a powerful overview from this book.

As GCI works intentionally to develop church leaders worth following, the overall thrust is continually moving us toward the vision of “Healthy Church.” The 21 tools strategically placed chapter by chapter serve as steppingstones toward defining the values and practices of what healthy

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church community can be. For me the movement in the 1990s out of bad theology and toxic practice has always been a move toward something else – that something else is a move toward Christ-centeredness, Christlikeness, and active participation with the living Jesus. It is in him and through him that GCI will become the healthiest expression of church we can possibly be.

If you want to know more about GCI, then I invite you to check us out online at: <https://www.gci.org/>

Greg Williams, President,  
Grace Communion International

## Introduction: Why read this book?

In any introduction it is best to begin with a clear description of who we are. Greg and Rick are Grace Communion International (GCI) leaders, and Tom is a friend, GCI consultant, and a partner with GiANT Worldwide™. Grace Communion International is a small Christian denomination with a broad international network. The following paragraphs provide a good overview of who we are, and by the grace of God, who we aspire to be.

We've titled this book *A Giant Step Forward* because it describes our journey – first into doctrinal reformation, then into a greater understanding of our personal relationship with God, and now into leadership reformation. We started the book with the idea that as we became experts, we would be instrumental in helping other organizations develop leaders

### **Grace Communion's Personality Profile**

We are a fellowship of churches around the world who emphasize the gracious triune God so that union and participation with Christ happens.

We are inclusive informers, heralds, teachers, and pastor-theologians who pursue God's Word and follow where he leads. We see an international mosaic of churches knit together in grace.

We are passionate about equipping, training, and proclaiming the relational nature of God. Our goal is healthy churches who want to be a part of God's renewal.

We are intentional about a pipeline of leaders, and new, growing, and multiplying churches. We lead with belief into the liberated love and life of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

We are committed to a life transformed, lovingly and enthusiastically proclaiming the incarnational Trinitarian gospel. Our consistent effort is high support, high challenge, and grace always.

We are a trusted theological voice, willing to lose it all so that we may gain Christ. We see people embracing and sharing the love of God in genuine ways.

Grace Communion – Divine participation!



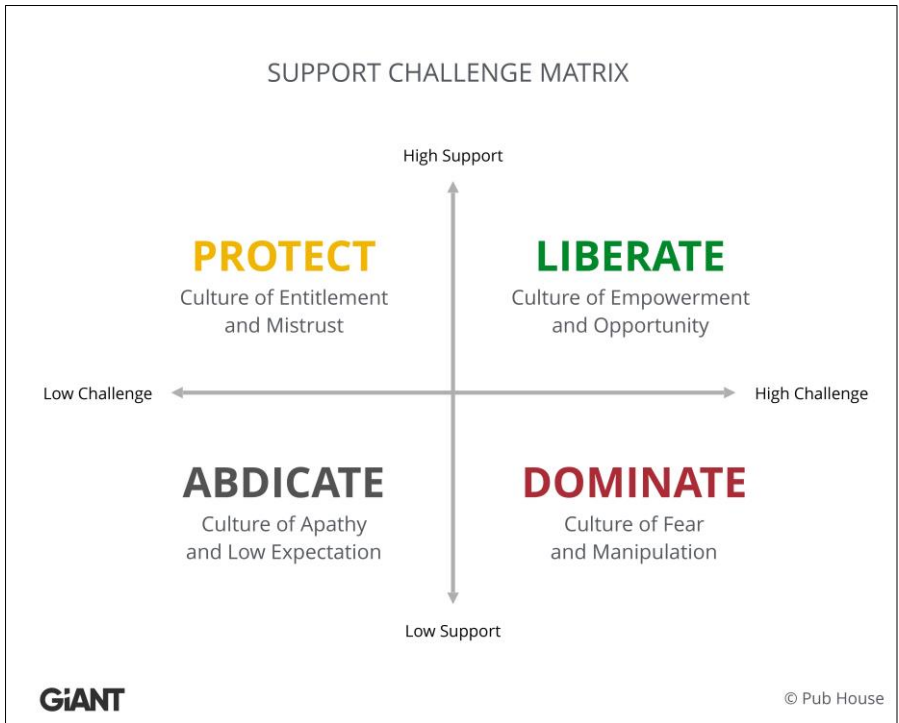
worth following. But having come out of elitism, we don't want to go back. The truth is, we are not experts; we are still students. Our hope in sharing our journey is that some readers may avoid some of the mistakes we've made, and many can be inspired by what the Holy Spirit is doing in our continual journey of transformation.

### **A brief history of Grace Communion International**

More than 25 years ago GCI went through dramatic theological and doctrinal reforms. Christian leaders in other denominations have likened our story to the transforming of Rabbi Saul, the persecutor of the early church, to the apostle Paul, the most prolific writer of the New Testament. While we don't claim to be prolific writers, the transformation of our worldwide fellowship was just as radical to us and others. We were on our own "road to Damascus" when the Holy Spirit knocked us down to get our attention. We became willing to come to the same conclusion Paul came to when he said, "I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ" (Phil. 3:8, NIV used throughout unless noted). Our journey was the story of a group based in elitism being humbled by a gracious God toward repentance and change. It was difficult and exciting; painful and joy-filled; and it forever marked GCI as Christ-centered and grace-based. May we never go back!

Once orthodox Christian theology began taking root in GCI, and our eyes were opened to a God of grace, a second movement toward a foundation in Incarnational Trinitarian Theology (ITT) swept through our fellowship. ITT is a view held by many of the early church fathers, and more recently in the traditions of Karl Barth, Ray Anderson, and Tom and James Torrance. Plumbing the depths of Father, Son and Spirit is a remarkable journey that informs all our doctrines and has brought us forward to this crucial third step – transforming the way we lead.

The right Christian understanding and the discovery of the God revealed in Jesus is now informing our ministry practices and deeply impacting our church culture. The *Support Challenge Matrix* of GiANT Worldwide™ is an outstanding tool that helps us to accurately chart the history of GCI, as well as spell out the path ahead in this third step. This tool helps us calibrate our leadership culture and gives us the direction we need to go as we build out a culture of liberation.



## Our Journey

Historically, we tended to rest in the Dominator/Legalist quadrant, continually challenging our fellowship to overcome or else lose out on their hope of salvation. Rules, tithes, mandatory worship days, dress and behavior standards all created a culture of fear – fear to disobey, fear of not doing enough, and fear of not measuring up. If you weren't under the culture of fear, you were likely under a culture of apathy. A typical mindset here would be to let the leadership take care of things; the member's responsibility was to "pay and pray." At the onset of our transformation, the majority of our fellowship entered a long season of healing in the Protector quadrant as members felt loving support, but little challenge. As we continued to move toward Jesus and focused on living out our Christian faith, we faced a journey of giving High Challenge with High Support.

The *Support Challenge Matrix* exposes pitfalls that all faith-based organizations struggle with, so GCI is not unique. We've learned and are continuing to learn in this journey of transformation. We believe there are

lessons to be learned by all churches, and any organization that wants to achieve teamwork at the highest level can use this matrix.

### **The GCI Mantra**

“High Support, High Challenge, Grace Always,” is the mantra of GCI and the road we continue to travel under the human leadership of Dr. Greg Williams, the current president of GCI. The relentless vision that follows this mantra is “Healthy Church.” With every fiber of our beings we want Grace Communion to be the healthiest expression of the living church of Jesus Christ that it can be!

A current view of GCI churches is similar to most denominations. We have a percentage of healthy churches showing growth in many areas – spiritual, leadership, community outreach, numerical. We have another percentage of what we refer to as “emerging churches,” those congregations who aspire to be healthy and are working with consultants and our regional supervisors to help them become healthier in one or more areas. We also have a third category we call “fellowship groups.” Many of these small groups of dedicated and loving children of God do not have the means or energy to become healthy churches. They are maintaining their present status, praying for and often financially supporting the initiatives we have developed to support our emerging and healthy churches. Typically, our fellowship groups have fewer than 15 attendees, and many of those attending are well past retirement age. They are a vital part of GCI and will always receive our loving support and appropriate challenge.

### **About the authors**

The three authors are friends and coworkers. Greg and Rick have been friends for almost 40 years and have spent quite a bit of time dreaming and scheming together. They now serve together on the Administration team of GCI. Greg serves as president of GCI and Rick assists Greg in writing and editing of publications that go out to the pastors. Rick also serves as one of the US Regional Directors (similar to the role of a bishop in other denominations.) Tom started off as a GCI consultant, but soon became a close friend and partner of GCI. Their names are followed by their personality traits and their prominent voices. Both of these will be described more fully in the book. Each will describe why they are co-authoring this book.

Dr. Greg Williams – ENTJ – Pioneer, Creative (these terms will be explained later in this book). I’ve been studying leadership for most of my life. I’ve read a myriad of books, attended many seminars, consulted with leadership experts. In high school I was captain of my football team and president of the Interact Club and then on to various leadership roles in the church that I cover later. Now I find myself in the role of president of GCI for the next phase of its journey. A key lesson I have learned about leadership is that it is not a solo activity; it is, however, about recruiting, investing in and relying on the best team you can possibly assemble. It was essential to me to develop a team I could trust to lead others, and these leaders have to be multipliers of new leaders. Getting the right people in the right positions, then around the table having the right conversations so we could develop a good and right strategy, has been essential for us moving forward.

Dr. Tom Nebel – ENFJ – Connector, Creative. I’ve been training leaders for most of my professional career, and now serve as a consultant of GiANT Worldwide™. I became connected with GCI through their multiplication ministry leadership and became a consultant for the church multiplication ministry coordinator. I was able to develop a relationship with Greg and we agreed I would become a consultant for GCI’s Church Administration and Development Team. *NOTE: Tom authored or co-authored a few books, including Leading Church Multiplication: Locally, Regionally, and Nationally with Steve Pike. Tom was an accomplished church planter having worked several years as executive director of church planting with Converge Worldwide (a fellowship of churches known at one time as the Baptist General Conference.)*

Rick Shallenberger, MA – ENFP – Connector, Creative. Good leadership has been a goal for a long time. As a result, I’ve studied leadership for several years, reading many books and attending a number of seminars on the topic. Though I have acquired more than a few leadership certificates, I always felt something was lacking. My constant desire was to find more effective ways to lead and train leaders. When I was given the responsibility to supervise 65 pastors and congregations, I knew it was time to develop a clearer vision for training and equipping others to lead. Working with Greg and Tom enabled me to focus on key leadership foundations.

One thing we’ve all learned is how important it is to know yourself in order to lead yourself. (We will explore this tool in Chapter 3.) Only then

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can you lead others. What talents and gifts has God given you? How do you work out of those gifts to lead others? You'll see the answers to those questions throughout the book. Our hope is you'll start where we started. Who did God create you to be? What gifts and talents has he given you? How do you use those effectively to lead others and train them to lead?

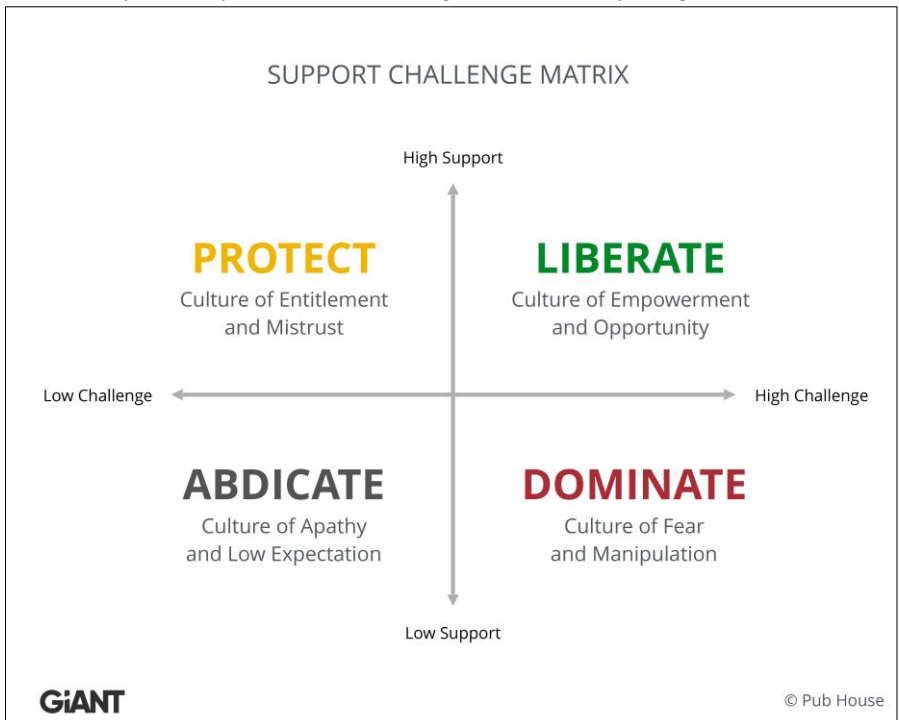
It's an ongoing journey and we invite you to join us.

# Tool Exploration: Support Challenge Matrix

In fall 2015 Tom Nebel introduced us to the Support Challenge Matrix. It became a frame of reference we use often, and one we will use throughout this book. To plumb the depths of this book, we encourage you to start here and become familiar with this tool.

A good leader focuses on both high challenge and high support. Our mantra in GCI is High Support, High Challenge, Grace Always. GiANT™'s leadership quadrant reveals the pitfalls of three of the quadrants and helps us focus on our ultimate goal – to be liberators. This tool can be used to examine where your present structure lies. All of us work better when we have clear expectations and challenges and when we know we have support. Most of us have worked in environments where we may have had expectations with no support, or support with no expectations. And some of us have worked in environments where there was neither challenge nor support. Let's briefly discuss each quadrant.

**Dominator:** In this quadrant, the leader gives high challenge, but low support. Micro-managers will fit into this category. A micro-manager will give you plenty of responsibility, but rather than empowering you to fill the task your way, the micro-manager wants everything done his or her



way. And because you aren't always clear what his way is, an atmosphere of fear and resentment starts to build. You might start to feel you aren't part of a team, you are a pawn, being manipulated to do the leader's work. The result can come across as someone more interested in the task than the person.

**Abdicator:** Leaders in this quadrant bring neither challenge nor support. These managers (one might question the term "leader") are often more concerned about maintaining the status quo than on moving forward. They just do what they are asked to do, and they expect others to do what they are asked to do – nothing more, nothing less. When we don't bring challenge or support to a pastor or congregation, we are working as an abdicator – we are taking no responsibility for what needs to be done. The result is apathy. When expectations are low, results are low.

**Protector:** To bring high support, but no challenge is to imply we might not trust the person or congregation to fulfill their responsibilities. You will often find enablers in this category. An enabler might initially give you a challenge, but then feels like the challenge might be too much, and so she does it herself. Or he is more focused on affirming you and making you feel special, than helping you be a better leader. A leader who is concerned about being liked or appreciated will give you high support but not a challenge that might make you change the likeability factor. This leads to mistrust and an atmosphere of entitlement.

**Liberator:** The goal of a good leader is to empower people to lead others. Our greatest example of a liberator is Jesus, who empowered his disciples – and all of us – to participate in the work he is doing. When he gives us the great invitation to join him (we call this the Great Commission), he begins by reminding us he has been given all authority on heaven and earth, and he ends it by reminding us he will be with us always. In the middle of these two amazing bookends, Jesus invites us to join him in his commission of sharing the gospel with others. This is high challenge and high support with grace always. A liberating leader gives you a challenge and then asks, "How can I help you, or resource you, to do this task?" She doesn't tell you how to do the task and she doesn't want you coming back to her with all the details. She trusts you to do what needs to be done using your own gifts and talents. You feel liberated and you start to look for more opportunities to serve.

In GCI we have modified this and use the mantra High Support, High Challenge, Grace Always. We often use the tool by putting the words in verb form: Do I Dominate? Do I Abdicate? Am I Protecting? Am I Liberating?

# 1 The Long Season of Healing

**G**reg: You may be familiar with the insurance commercial with the tagline: “We know a thing or two because we have seen a thing or two.” Because I have had a front seat view into the life and workings of Grace Communion International (GCI) for almost four decades, I can share a thing or two I’ve seen. I think it’s important to start by sharing a bit more of our history.

In my history with GCI I have held several positions of leadership from church pastor to national youth leader, from regional pastor for the eastern US to the Director of US Ministries, from Vice President to current President. Over the course of these years of service I’ve witnessed a couple of remarkable shifts in leadership styles, and I am in the midst of leading/participating in a third shift. The ultimate impact of these leadership styles shape and form the culture of the organization.

Through my experience in this organization I have served under the leadership of three very different presidents. Herbert Armstrong’s style was control-command, which flowed naturally from a legalistic system. This was an exact match with the Dominator quadrant from the Support Challenge Matrix.

Joseph Tkach Sr. was a strong personality who could easily be comfortable with a directive style of leadership, and because he had such a compassionate nature, he began shifting the culture of the church toward High Support. Before Tkach Sr. became president, he was known as the “widow’s elder” due to his dedicated service to this under-served population of the church. At large gatherings of the church, Tkach Sr. was known for staying around for hours after the meeting to greet and interact with every attendee. His theme slogan for the church was “We are family,” and he played the role of a caring father figure.

My predecessor, Joseph Tkach Jr., led GCI through the tumultuous doctrinal change and the subsequent fallout of angry dissenters. Joe did this with enormous patience and grace, and for those of us who remained through the reformation of the church, Joe helped knit us together by his highly effective relational style. Looking back, we’ve come to see what Joe taught and brought was a high level of support. In my opinion, Joe led us completely out of the Dominator quadrant into the Protector quadrant, where the church was able to go through the long necessary season of healing. This was much needed after such a dramatic time of loss, and then



most importantly, for us to become secure in the unfailing love of Jesus Christ. Joe's leadership brought us to the threshold of liberation. (For Joe's own story of our transformation, we recommend his book, *Transformed by Truth*. You might also want to read Michael Feazell's book, *The Liberation of the Worldwide Church of God*.)

The long season of healing was paralleled by the much-needed season of education. Our vision and mission during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was to become educated in orthodox Christianity. The unexpected blessing of this rich journey is that the depths of Incarnational Trinitarian Theology became our centerpiece. It was during this time that we were able to establish an accredited seminary (Grace Communion Seminary), and the bulk of our pastors went back to school and earned a master's degree in pastoral studies. We are proud to say that GCI now has the best educated ministry in all of its history, and this is vital to the organizational health moving forward.

As much as GCI needed the healing season, resting in the Protector quadrant created its own set of challenges.

Among those who came through the theological reformation we had a good solid group of competent, faithful leaders. These were smart, teachable men and women who were now being confronted with the overwhelming task of rebuilding their church (and individual families) after coming through a spiritual civil war. While our view of God and doctrines had changed – impacting how we viewed and treated one another – our internal systems of structure and operation did not change at the same pace. The simplest way to describe the environment we found ourselves in is through the concept of “silos.”

According to the Business Dictionary, the silo mentality is “A mindset present when certain departments or sectors do not wish to share information with others in the same company. This type of mentality will reduce efficiency in the overall operation, reduce morale, and may contribute to the demise of a productive company culture.” Read more: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/silo-mentality.html>

In GCI, each denominational leader had their given area of responsibility, and as much as they desired to be good leaders and stewards, they had a tendency to take such ownership over their area of responsibility that they viewed their area with higher importance than other areas. Territorialism (or the building of silos) was born out of this. Among other things, this caused us to become an organization with

multiple visions, each competing for funding and dominance, while not realizing the real evil we faced was division and confusion. These conflicted ministry teams were the root cause of the silo mentality, which was exacerbated by the mix of competing ideas about what our organizational vision “should be.” Rick shares a personal example of witnessing this silo effect later in this chapter.

On the bright side, it should be noted at this point, one of our biggest changes was our study and subsequent acceptance of women in pastoral roles. For much of our history, we followed the fundamentalist view that women should not be in ministry leadership and specifically not in a pastoral role. After a thorough doctrinal study we came to the conviction that GCI would fall more on the egalitarian side of the egalitarian/complementarian spectrum, and we now have a number of women serving in both pastoral ministry and key denominational leadership roles in the US and internationally.

Our protectionism allowed for a long season of healing. We needed to grieve our losses and to be saturated in the fresh truths of orthodox Christianity. That was the strength; the challenge we faced was this prolonged season actually frustrated the movement toward honest evaluation and meaningful organizational reformation.

As the silo walls grew higher, a lack of collaboration and comradery developed, leading to an escalation of entitlement and mistrust. In some cases, we had misplaced leaders in key positions. This wasn't the picture I described in the introduction; “Getting the right people in the right positions, then around the table having the right conversations developing a good and right strategy.” The silo effect had landed us in a frustrating and difficult place. We had come into the glorious light of the gospel, and progress was being made on significant fronts, and yet we were still hamstrung by dysfunctional ways from our past. We were liberated in our theology, and yet our practices had some catching up to do. Who can deliver us from this dilemma? Thank God that Jesus Christ can!

## **Jesus is the Master Liberator**

Jesus turned leadership on its head by shifting it from dominance and privilege to sacrifice and service. Our Lord declared the greatest would be the least, then wrapped himself with a towel and washed the soiled feet of his disciples. Jesus made space for sinners and outcasts to become accepted followers in a culture dominated by religious judgmentalism and

hypocrisy. He included and empowered women in one of the most male-dominated societies in history. Jesus sets the captives free as he intentionally goes about building his eternal kingdom of love and inclusion.

This freedom that the Lord has showered abundantly on Grace Communion International is a bit tricky. At first blush it is easy to think about “freedom from.” Freedom from being at church every week; freedom from paying tithes and offerings; freedom from fully engaging in the gospel-sharing community called the church. You get the idea. This was a reaction of a larger-than-expected percentage of our people as we journeyed through the long season of healing.

Ultimately it is better to think about “freedom for.” Freedom for fully abandoning ourselves to be in relationship with the Triune God; freedom for a life devoted to service and the welfare of others; freedom for becoming generous, patient, kind, and Christ-like. Freedom to fully become who you are in Christ. This is the true liberation and abundant life that Jesus brings. It has taken us a while to understand and walk in this.

In GCI we like to say that “Jesus is the center of the center.” This seems obvious, but it was a good reminder to us that it’s not about our silos or the things we’ve built – he is the one who holds all things together. He is, has been, and will continue to be the Head of the church (even our little part in the Body of Christ). He meets us where we are, at our level of maturity and our level of need. The really good news is that he doesn’t leave us where he found us. He continues to bestow his grace, and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit he shapes us into the people and church that will one day be his bride.

It is evident that Jesus has been orchestrating something unique with GCI in that he turned around an entire fellowship and it seems clear to me that he didn’t do this great miracle just to watch us age and die. I firmly believe that Jesus wants GCI to be the light on the hill, ambassadors who represent him well, and fully participate in God’s work of renewal for humanity. As the fourth president of this global fellowship of churches, I am committed to helping us continue the course of becoming the healthiest expression of churches we can be. A huge fundamental building block that will move us toward this healthy expression of church is to develop Christian leaders who are worthy of being followed, who can then form united, impactful teams, collectively serving our church around the world.

## Tom: A “Side-door” entrance to GCI

As mentioned in the Introduction, I became part of this team through the side door as a church planting consultant, having been introduced to Grace Communion International through then GCI’s Church Multiplication Ministry Director, Randy Bloom. (Randy now serves as a GCI Regional Director.) I didn’t realize it then, but GCI and I were born for each other. Like GCI, I had my own version of reset and marginalization, having made a difficult decision to end my marriage, and as a result, then being asked to step aside from a key denominational position. I knew a lot about church planting, had written the books, had spoken at large conferences. I carried my own baggage of elitism, and humility wasn’t my strong suit. I was wondering where God was in all this change occurring in my life.

I believed I was a good leader, and maybe I had accomplished a few things, but when I was introduced to GiANT Worldwide™, my healing escalated as my world was rocked. My life started to transform in ways that paralleled GCI’s journey of redemption and restoration. This quickly became clear as we began working together. Our shared journey has been one of healing for all parties involved.

Initially, Randy invited me to speak at some regional events about church planting and coaching. I hadn’t known much about the WCG/GCI transition, so Randy had me watch a 60-minute video on their reformation. I cried. It was marvelous. I was excited to meet these folks. Three things I noticed right away: 1) It was OK to have a beer. That felt legitimate to me. 2) At the event meals, a meal blessing wasn’t routinely assumed. It seemed like they had all been liberated from something. 3) I noticed how excited they all got when they sang about the Trinity. That was awesome and convicting to me. I was starting to like these people.

Somehow what I was learning in GiANT™ started to creep into my church planting consulting. Randy thought Greg should see more, so I was invited to a think-tank in Asheville, NC. When I pulled out the *Support Challenge* tool, Greg’s attention was piqued, and we started talking. Then, when I started to coach GCI’s new Church Multiplication Coordinator, Heber Ticas, Heber would often say, “Yeah, Greg needs to see this.” I was looking for a good team to teach the CORE curriculum. (You will read a lot more about CORE throughout this book.)

When we started doing a CORE group with the regional leaders, we

didn't know what it would lead to, but the parallels between my personal journey and the journey of GCI were hard to miss. Elitism, followed by brokenness and repentance, was being replaced with humility for all of us. And just as GCI had been "called up" to the greater community of orthodox theology, I was being "called up" and welcomed back into the room by this unique fellowship. (See the tool *The Liberator's Intent* in the Appendix.) When the CORE team began, I often referred to the group as "you." Before long I stopped saying "you," and I started saying "we." Looking in reverse, this relationship was meant to be.

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**Rick:** I'm going to take some time in this first chapter to share my journey. In the other chapters I will build on what Greg is presenting and explain some of the tools we used to lead us into our transition into being Liberators – a journey we have just embarked upon. We aren't naïve; we know we are just beginning this transition, but we trust the lead of the Spirit and we trust this is the path he has us on.

Like Greg, I have worked under all three previous leaders of our denomination. But unlike Greg, I spent many of those early years of my employment at what we called "Headquarters" (it's now called the Home Office). I saw and experienced some of the changes he speaks about firsthand. I was at work when our founder, Herbert W. Armstrong, died. I remember thinking, "Well, that changes a few things."

I recall the first "We are Family" sermon our new president, Joseph Tkach Sr., presented at our Headquarters congregation. Tkach Sr. talked about the need for every one of us to see that we were part of the body, and to see our calling was not just for the leadership of the denomination, but for each of us to use our giftedness to serve Christ. The "We are Family" slogan was to remind us to learn and grow as a family as we continue the work Jesus has given us to do. Tkach Sr. wanted us see ourselves as a spiritual family and work as a family – get to know each other, spend time together. He went around the globe giving this message, and Greg shared how he would hang around to meet every person who wanted to say hello.

My wife and I spent several hours discussing the significance and potential ramifications of this message. Would we stop being so hierarchal, would we invite more people to the table as part of a congregation's leadership? Or would most ignore the direction our president was taking us and maintain the status quo of the line of

demarcation that was so often drawn between those ordained and those not ordained? I asked these questions because I was one of many non-ordained leaders.

During those years at Headquarters, I became quite aware we needed to look at leadership in a different way. In the late '80s and early '90s my then mentor, Dexter Faulkner, who saw something in me I did not see in myself, gave me several books on leadership. Dexter was the Director of our denominational Editorial team and the one who hired me to write for the denomination's publications. I had written an article for our teen publication and it landed on Dexter's desk. It was poorly written, but he liked my style and asked me to take a college class on writing. I did, and he hired me shortly after the completion of the class. He later told me that he saw in me a desire to learn how to write and how to lead. He encouraged me to take the lead at meetings when I saw them going a direction they should not go, which I did on more than one occasion. Dexter's encouragement, and the books I was reading, awakened a desire to be a Christ-like leader. I wasn't sure what that was, but I was determined to figure it out.

As Joseph Tkach Sr. started leading our denomination into orthodoxy, I witnessed firsthand the varied responses to the many changes in our understanding of theology, as well as to our approach to leadership.

Greg begins Chapter 4 by telling the story of the early stages of our theological reform. I attended the classes he refers to and marveled at how some were able to grasp the truth of the Trinity right away, some took much longer to understand, and some simply refused to understand. I saw some of our top leaders refuse to even listen to reason. I witnessed some telling blatant lies. I watched as a few started having secret meetings as they determined whether they had enough followers to start their own churches. I saw men and women who had been set up as top denominational leaders, lie and connive, and deceive and be anything but good leaders. It shook my foundation, and it created an intense desire to learn what true leadership is about. If I was to lead, I wanted to be a leader worth following.

## **Entering pastoral ministry**

In 1997 I was asked to go into full-time pastoral ministry. Because I worked as a writer and editor in the home office until 1996, I was aware of the theological changes and had written and edited several articles

explaining some of the ramifications of those changes. I thought this spared me from being part of the pastoral ministry who were guiding members through those changes. I use the word spared because I saw many good friends struggle through our changes. To make matters worse, as some of our leading evangelists started their own groups, each one drew a small portion of our members away. Greg is correct in referring to this as a spiritual civil war, which occurred in many of our congregations around the world. In the midst of their own efforts to understand, many pastors watched elders and leaders walk out the door of the church and take people with them. They saw others leave confused and anxious and not go anywhere. They saw attendance drop and their income dive as people refused to believe God was leading us through these changes. I watched as dear friends felt a bit lost as they tried to teach what they were just learning to believe. To take a congregation from legalism to grace is no easy task. Not only do you have to change the message, you also have to change the method of preaching. Many good friends had to publicly apologize to their congregations for being wrong; some members embraced these apologies, some took it as a sign of weakness and left. Some friends were asked to leave their congregations in the hands of a qualified elder and move to help another congregation whose pastor had left or who felt decimated.

I went into pastoral ministry feeling confident I would not have to take my two congregations through the change from legalism to grace, and that I could start focusing on developing leaders. That confidence faded within weeks.

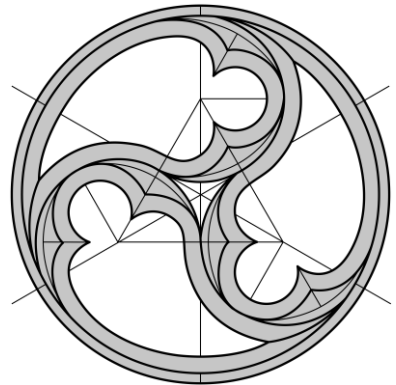
A few months after starting, I was asked to add another congregation who had watched two pastors leave with the afore-mentioned evangelists, and another terminated because of some personal issues. I'll never forget the first time I gave a message in this congregation. Three women came up to me after services and said, "No offense, Pastor Rick, but we want you to know we don't trust you! Right now, we aren't sure who to trust in leadership." (This references Greg's comments about why we saw the Protector quadrant as being necessary for our healing.) After what this congregation had been through, I was not surprised. I assured them it was OK for them to not trust me, but I was confident I would earn their trust and we would become friends. That was 20 years ago, and we are still friends.

## The congregation's greatest need

Though all three congregations were in various stages of healing and learning, I had leaders I could trust with the other two congregations and I could focus a bit more on this new congregation. Because of the intense hurt and resulting mistrust, I knew I had to give the members and especially the leaders a lot of support. They had to know they were valued and loved. I became the consummate Protector, high support all around, very little challenge.

I focused a lot on team ministry. One of the textbooks I was assigned for a graduate class on leadership was George Cladis' book, *Leading the Team Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders*. Greg will refer to this book in Chapter 6: REAL Teams.

Cladis encourages the reader/leader to build a team based on the perichoretic model of the Trinity. Perichoresis, a Greek term for mutual indwelling, is used to describe the intimate, indwelling, mutually interpenetrating relationship of the Trinity. Cladis also encourages the leader to develop community in a team and he then builds off several characteristics you would see in a perichoretic union. This book put a language behind many of the key concepts I saw missing in our leadership development.



Not realizing I was still playing the role of the Protector, I was befuddled why some of the teaching I was sharing was not making the impact I desired.

While I identified the greatest need in the congregation's leadership was to be supported, I was hesitant to bring any challenge. And when I did bring challenge, I quickly took it away because I didn't want to burden others, or to ask them to do something I wouldn't do. Besides, I was the employed pastor, how could I ask them to do things simply as volunteers? So, I would occasionally step in and do the very things I asked others to do. The result was leading to mistrust – the very thing I was trying my best to avoid.



And there was another issue at stake, an issue most pastors in the field had to deal with as we moved from legalism to grace, from hierarchy to “We are Family,” and that was encouraging leaders to speak up and share their opinions, and to learn to share when they disagree. Let me share an example.

As a denomination, we were excited about the idea of developing small-group ministry and we believed many of our congregations would benefit from instituting small groups. Wanting to build small groups in this congregation, I looked at a map of all the members and developed a plan of instituting and assigning members to various small groups. I identified several potential small group leaders, and started developing some training to take them through. I discussed the idea for several weeks with the leadership team and thought they were all on board. A week before I intended to share the small group vision and plan with the congregation, I had one last meeting to see if we missed any details. I wanted to get this right.

I noticed a general lack of enthusiasm and determined I simply needed to be more energetic, so I shared the vision again. I asked for questions, there weren’t any. I asked if I had missed any details, all shook their heads, but still something wasn’t right. Finally, I said, “Something is wrong. I just don’t see any excitement or enthusiasm. Will someone share with me what is going on?” One person timidly offered, “We don’t believe it’s going to work.” I was stunned and asked why. As this person shared the reasoning behind the statement, I perceived others agreed, so I asked, and to my dismay all agreed the plan was not going to work. When I asked why no one spoke up and shared this concern over the past several weeks, I was told, “You are the pastor. We didn’t feel we could disagree.” (Check out Tool Exploration: *CORE Process* in Chapter 2.)

A discussion about the difference between disagreeing and being disagreeable seemed in order.

It took time for the team to realize I needed them to feel part of the team. This meant I needed to hear them, their ideas, their opinions about my ideas, and when they disagreed. Within a year our leadership team looked entirely different. But I still felt something was missing.

### **A new leadership mentor**

In 2003 my family and I moved to Ohio to pastor two churches, which I combined into one after 15 months. I was again faced with a leadership

team that did not understand how to work as a team. This team was somewhat healthier because they had good leaders on the team, including one who was a long-time part of our denominational leadership and who would be my mentor for most of the years I was there. John Halford worked at Headquarters for many years, including several while I worked there. We hadn't run in the same circles, but we knew of each other. Like me, John had done quite a bit of writing and editing, and we wrote for some of the same publications. And like me, John had a passion for identifying and mentoring leaders. The difference was, he had been at it a lot longer and was a lot better at it than I was. Greg and I have shared many stories of what it was like being mentored and encouraged by John.

John was just what I needed for the next chapter of my personal leadership development, as he was good at bringing challenge. Soon after arriving in Ohio, John and I started meeting regularly for breakfast, and he often challenged me to be the leader God created me to be. I didn't always understand what that meant, but as we spent time together, it became more and more clear. Because I had become so entrenched in the Protector quadrant in my previous congregations, I continued the same type of leadership in this new one, and John saw I was hesitant to bring up certain issues during our leadership meetings. He reminded me of God's message to Joshua and told me to be strong and courageous. These were characteristics John said I would need in the years ahead. John saw that I was creative and had ideas for our denomination that he felt needed to be shared. He believed I would soon be one of the denomination's leaders and he was going to push for that as much as he could. John entered his eternal home just as I was transitioning into more prominent denomination roles. I credit him with not only being my mentor, but a good friend, and, I found out later as we shared one of his last days together, one of my biggest fans.

### **Transitioning into denominational leadership**

Through John, I was invited to become more involved with our international leaders. I was invited to attend their annual meetings and became friends with all of them. Soon afterwards, I was asked to travel overseas on behalf of our denomination, at times as a representative of our president. The international leaders all have great respect and love for each other, but there was not a lot of collaborative working; truth be told, there was little. Each international director carried a weight of responsibility

and, though supportive of one another and showing interest in the other areas around the world, they had to be focused on their particular geographical area of responsibility. In other words, I saw the silo environment Greg refers to.

The first time I experienced the silo environment was in a Church Administration and Development annual meeting I had been invited to. I knew these men and women and knew how much they loved and respected each other. Imagine my surprise during their annual meeting to see each of them with an open laptop on the table, typing and answering emails while their coworker gave his or her annual report. They meant no disrespect; they were simply keeping up with their own silo while listening to reports from the other silos. I left that meeting quite discouraged and became vocal to Greg and a few select others about what I'd seen. We'd come a long way, but it was clear there was a long way to go.

In 2013 Greg invited three of us to his home to talk about the future of Church Administration and Development (CAD). Greg was then the regional pastor over the eastern part of the US – a monumental job that was impossible to do. Knowing he was soon to become the Director of CAD, Greg wanted us to develop a new structure for pastoral ministry supervision. Our previous attempts at a new structure worked for us while we were in the Protector quadrant, but we knew God was leading us to much more, and we needed a structure in place to provide resources, direction and supervision. You will read much more on this in Chapter 4.

The next several chapters of this book share more of our journey and how God is leading Greg to lead GCI's leaders. My part in the rest of this book is to show how these changes are being implemented among our pastors and congregations. I will share insights from some of the other regional pastors as we move forward.

### **Questions for reflection**

- Where is your organization in light of the Support Challenge Matrix?
- Can you track your organizational history via the Matrix?
- Can you identify a viable path moving you into the liberation quadrant?
- What similarities or connections do you make with the GCI story?
- What do you perceive Jesus doing in your situation?

## 2 The Perfect Opportunity?

**G**reg: The concept of a perfect storm is when multiple systems come together at the same time to create a horrific weather event. This phenomenon, which occurs only two or three times a century, is the collision of a northeaster, a large high-pressure system with unusually cold Canadian air and a hurricane with low pressure and warm air rising from the south. This mixture produces a “once-in-a-lifetime” storm.

Sebastian Junger documented the true story of the fishing boat *The Andrea Gail* that was lost in the 1991 storm off the Massachusetts coast. I read the book and I was compelled to see the movie. It was Junger’s telling of this disastrous story that brought the phrase “The Perfect Storm” into popular culture. Wouldn’t it be cool if what has happened with GCI could bring the phrase “The Perfect Opportunity” into vogue? Instead of seeing the challenges as threats to our existence, what if they were temporary disruptions that provided opportunities to learn and grow and then adapt? This is the tack we choose to take.

We expressed in Chapter 1 that we need leaders worthy of being followed. While we are specifically thinking about pastors, we want all our ministry leaders to become liberators in the style of Jesus through the power of the Spirit. There was (and still is) quite a strong band of wind and rain to negotiate as we work diligently to get better tools, better practices, and better leadership down to our front-line level for the fulfilling of our vision – Healthy Church.

The first weather pattern contributing to the GCI storm was our old system of training pastors. Our pastors were nurtured in a system training them to be teachers (more so than preachers) and to be care-givers and chaplains (more so than visionary pastors who multiply more leaders). When you have an organization made up almost entirely of “teacher-chaplains,” it is easy to understand why we were content to dwell and remain in the Protector quadrant.

Our primary training practice has been conferences. We had the false notion that we could innovate through simply getting the right information to our pastors. (See Tools Exploration, where Tom explains the *Effective Learning* tool.) Through the long two decades that followed the sweeping reformation of 1995 we fell into a mode of “come to the annual pastor’s conference, sit through long lectures, fill in the blanks of your notebook,

and then go home and implement this instruction.” This “sage on the stage” approach lacked the impact we had hoped for, and notebooks just stacked up on the shelf. This weather pattern was beginning to feel like the long, gray rainy season that my mother-in-law lives through each year in Oregon.

The second weather pattern was our mode of existing as commuter-based churches instead of community-based churches. The original churches had been established from an extensive media ministry in the 1960s and 70s and their location was based on where listeners and subscribers who wanted to become members were centrally located. This system worked when the media ministry was producing interest, but with the advent of cable television and the internet, substantial change happened. Instead of making intentional and necessary plans to re-launch in more targeted communities and grow those networks, we continued to operate with the notion that we could be the exception and do okay as commuter-based churches. I’m glad to say that intentional plans of becoming community-based churches are now being considered and executed.

In all fairness we weren’t quite sure what to do, and yet we found ourselves in a slow-moving storm that was continuing to create flooding and power outages. Discouragement was growing, and this became the “low pressure” system that fueled the GCI storm.

The big revelation for me was when I addressed the “what if” question. What if we keep doing the same things, specifically, elevating teacher-chaplain types into pastoral leadership and then continuing to try to bring about change by more conferences? In my estimation this would be an exact definition of insanity – doing the same things over and over and expecting a different result. To continue the course of our old patterns would fit the analogy of the northeaster colliding with the hurricane, with the ensuing destruction.

In 2014, I transitioned from the regional overseer for the eastern US to the US Superintendent of Pastors. I found myself in a position of leadership where I could be an agent for change. During this time, I was immersed in a study of the apostle Paul’s instruction to the Ephesus church about the roles and functions of offices in the church.

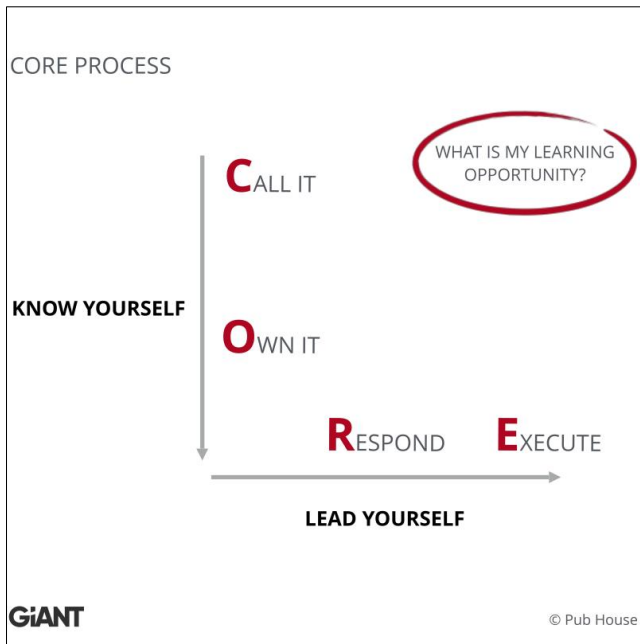
A reading of Ephesians 4 makes it plain that a pastor’s primary function is to equip and empower the believers for active participation in the ministry of Jesus through his church. Paul’s teaching marries well to

Peter’s teaching that the church is to be a ministry of all believers (I Peter 2:9). This mandate to equip and empower is straightforward, and yet how are our pastors to equip saints if they haven’t been equipped well themselves? They weren’t responsible for the system; they were simply products. They were akin to the fishing crew of *The Andrea Gail* – unfortunate to be on a fishing boat caught up in a deadly storm.

### Coming out of the storm

I came to see that the path out of this destructive storm would involve important, deliberate steps – steps that have not exactly been sequential, but a little more like hopping through a hopscotch court with its multiple patterns. This started with asking ourselves some important questions. Using the CORE Process helped lead us onward. The CORE Process encourages us to search for “Learning Opportunities” and then develop a plan of action through four steps: Call It, Own It, Respond, and Execute. (For a good illustration of the use of this tool, see Tool Exploration: *CORE Process*, where Rick shares a personal story.)

A fundamental change (Learning Opportunity) was to revise our profile of what we need/want in a pastoral leader. We had to make an intentional shift away from recruiting and developing pastors to be teacher-chaplains to now recruiting more natural leaders who will be groomed to become



“Liberating Leaders” (more about the topic of liberation as we go). These pastors will have to be humble, mature men and women who know themselves well and have the capacity to cast a vision and build a competent team to achieve the vision. They will have to build and lead vibrant churches that have a healthy balance of outreach/evangelism, true gospel preaching with inspiring worship, and community-building activities that help people grow in relationship with the Lord and one another.

Second, our methods for preparing future leaders for leadership needed overhauling. As they often say at GiANT Worldwide™, “We cannot give what we do not possess.” Thus, young emerging leaders need to be placed with the best mentoring pastors we have, and they also must be placed in environments where vibrant ministries exist. These young ones cannot be expected to lead the renewal charge in GCI until they have been given a season to explore and grow. This is why so much energy and resourcing is going into developing and supporting our Intern Program and Pastoral Residency. To better support this initiative, we see the birth of “Ministry Training Centers” (MTCs) – this will be a few of our healthiest churches, scattered across the countries where GCI has presence, where younger leaders can be cultivated.

A third important step is to define our polity in a way that portrays the biblical model of church. The language we have implemented over the past few years refers to leadership that is “*Team Based and Pastor Led*.”

I have been privileged to teach the *Polity of Grace Communion* course at Grace Communion Seminary, where in lectures and online discussions, I use the phraseology *Team Based and Pastor Led* to describe GCI’s system of governance within congregations. Rather than defining it with sterile statements of policy, let me provide some insightful and helpful responses from my students when I asked them to describe what they understand *Team Based and Pastor Led* to mean.

GCI’s modified-episcopal polity makes our churches Pastor Led, but our Trinitarian theology exalts those pastors within a model of community leadership. Our emphasis on how the Father, Son and Spirit perichoretically lead together creates a framework for Team Based leadership. A team creates a network of checks and balances, a wide array of gifting, and the critical ability to share burdens and workload. Being Pastor Led provides direction, focus

HEALTHY MINISTRY IS  
TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

and unity for the team that, without that leadership, may wander in 100 different directions. – Intern

I understand [Team Based, Pastor Led] to be a model that reflects the God we believe in. The Father does nothing without the Son and the Spirit, and vice versa. This system is one of care and growth. We need other people that are different from us to see things differently and to use the gifts and talents that they have. I recently learned, for example, that a little pessimism is sometimes required because the eternal optimist may try to make things go that need to be stopped. Lead pastors help build a team of ministry leaders and have an advisory council in place to make sure that the congregation is being equipped, listened to and going in the right direction, joining Jesus in ministry. The lead pastor should support the



congregation and they should support him/her as they both are accountable to the denomination and even more so to Jesus Christ.  
– Intern

[Team Based, Pastor Led] is a model that reflects the God we believe in. It blew my mind when I first thought of that! God as Father-Son-Spirit work as a team and are led by the constant unity and fellowship of pastoring each other and completely serving the other at all times. This beautiful system of relationship is a system of care and growth. That is why the Body of Christ is such a great example because we each play an integral part in what the Head, Jesus Christ, already has planned for us. – Pastor

Team Based and Pastor Led is an operational style that puts emphasis on outside accountability and trust in a divinely appointed/trained pastor to ethically lead a congregation within GCI under the Headship of Jesus and with the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit. – Pastor

I thank God for my GCS students. Who they are, and the abilities they exhibit, give me tangible reason to be hopeful about our future. They are my calm during and after the storm. I encourage you to look at Tool Exploration: Team Based Pastor Led for a visual look at how this works. The verbal descriptions from the students are helpful, but the infographics paint a picture for even greater clarity.

The fourth step out of the storm is that for change to happen on a large scale, it had to begin with leadership at the top. There had to be a team of Regional and Developmental leaders who grasped the need for change, the ability to see the path ahead, and the willingness to face the winds and hard-driving rain in which we existed. I will brag on this team in Chapter 5.

GCI's path out of the storm is growing clearer and a huge part of this journey forward has been through the relationship with Dr. Tom Nebel and the practical tools of GiANT Worldwide™.

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**Rick:** It's vital to explain to you, our reader, a bit more history about our congregations and what they went through during what Greg refers to as the perfect storm. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I became a full-time pastor after some of the more significant doctrinal changes took

place. However, once we determined the major changes, the ripple effect of those changes took years – in fact is still occurring. As a result, I was an “in the field” witness to many pastors riding through the storm.

As we went through our doctrinal transformation, some of our congregations split down the middle. Several of our former top leaders started new groups – some forming new denominations, some forming non-denominational congregations. Several pastors followed a few of these new denominational leaders and took portions of their congregations with them. Other pastors took the opportunity to pursue other careers. Each of the congregations I have pastored in Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio were the result of pastors leaving pastoral ministry. Not all left due to doctrinal issues, but nevertheless, all left GCI employment, and the congregations faced a leadership void.

We scrambled to find seminary-trained pastoral leadership for several of our congregations and for the first time in our history, we developed a bi-vocational pastoral ministry. The assumption was that some of these new pastoral leaders would be transitional until a full-time pastor was brought in, or someone within the congregation could take the pastoral mantle. As a result, some of our congregations ended up with untrained leaders who had the heart of a teaching chaplain but did not know how to lead the congregation into a missional mindset. As Greg said, there was a lot of concern about survival. (Some of these untrained leaders went to seminary to receive diplomas in Biblical Studies or a Master’s in Biblical Studies. These newly trained leaders are now leading their congregations through the necessary changes to become healthy churches.)

Most of us were in this survival mentality for a period as we sought direction from the Holy Spirit and each other about the future. We felt strongly that God had taken us through the transformation for a purpose – his purpose – and we sought to be clear on that purpose. We went back to some fundamental questions: What is the church? What are we called to do? The Scriptures make it clear that pastors are called to be servant leaders, and our mission is to equip the saints. But what does equipping look like? Considering the hurt many were facing, we knew we had to move forward in faith, but also systematically, and in some cases, painstakingly slow. How do we move from a teacher-chaplain approach to preaching and equipping?

Greg often talked about his studies in Ephesians, and I coupled that with what I often referred to as Jesus’ mission statement, which is found

in Luke 4. *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”* Jesus’ mission is our mission, to bring hope, peace, joy and love to others – all through Jesus. These are not just Advent themes – they are what people need, and the gospel God has called his saints to share.

All our pastors agree that their mission is to equip saints, but several feel ill-equipped to do so. Remember, some of them stepped in to fill a void, and with full-time jobs requiring much of their attention, several struggled with the idea of having the time or energy to do anything more than put together a sermon for each Sunday and take care of the flock. They are good chaplains, as Greg described, and many of them have become good teachers as they continue their own studies or enter one of our diploma or graduate programs.

### **Assessing our congregations**

One of the problems we faced as we gathered pastors together for our annual training conferences – where, as Greg noted, we gave them a notebook and helped them fill in the blanks – was that we treated each of our pastors the same. We did not consider the size of the congregation, the giftedness of the pastor, or where the congregation was located. As a result, the reaction to our training met a wide gamut of responses. Because most of our pastors have known each other for several years, and we work hard to build and maintain relationships, what happens after the training sessions – during meals and free time – is where we learn what people are really thinking. As I sat in several of those informal gatherings, I realized we had taken a lot for granted. Let me explain.

Some congregations were healthier and eager to learn how to move forward; others not so much. We did not consider that some of our congregations are quite small and primarily consist of a remnant of people who have worshipped together for years. They weathered through all the changes, moved past the survival mode and entered what some of us have termed a maintenance mode. They are a loving group of people who love getting together to worship and share life. They may invite family and friends for a special service such as Easter or Christmas, and they very much enjoy who they are and the relationships they have. While some are fearful of trying something new, others simply desire to maintain their

status quo. In our initial training, we failed to acknowledge and even honor these small congregations. (We have since renamed many of these small congregations Fellowship Groups.)

Other congregations are a bit larger, and would like to do more, but the changes we suggested were too much, too fast, and the reaction was apprehension and fear. Many shared that they went home from a conference feeling like a failure in ministry. This is the opposite of what was intended. (In the Appendix, you will see a tool called *Self Preservation*, which could have been helpful, but I'm getting ahead of the story.) These congregations also made it through survival mode, but they wanted to do more than simply maintain what they had. These congregations and pastors had a desire to impact their community but needed resources and support. I like to refer to these as emerging congregations.

I should make something clear: when we use the term healthy church – which we will clearly define later in this book – we aren't implying these maintenance and emerging congregations are ill and the members aren't healthy – we are simply acknowledging they don't yet have the tools, means, or in some cases desire, to do what it takes to become missional, reach into the community, and be the church that transforms a community, and ultimately the world. For this reason, Heber Ticas, (GCI's Church Multiplications Ministry leader), started focusing less on Church Multiplication and more on Church Renewal – a necessary step for our denomination.

### **Assessing our training methods**

As Greg mentioned, another error we made was assuming we could teach primarily through information, “If we teach it, they will learn, and change, and build amazing congregations that people will line up to be a part of.” OK, that's an exaggerated expectation no one really voiced, but it took some time for us to realize information of and by itself does not lead to change. It often leads to a desire to change, but until we got on the ground with our pastors and began sharing specifics and getting them to see what others have done, we remained frustrated. Truth be told, we went through years of heads full of information and hearts frustrated at how to move to application. I was one of those pastors who liked what I was hearing, but in most cases I wasn't sure how to apply the principles. I, too,

felt discouraged at times. My advantage was I could share my feelings of discouragement with denominational leaders I trusted.

When Greg started talking “What if?” in the context of moving forward, many of us latched on to that line of thinking. Believing God brought us through our transformation, we did not believe he did so with the desire we would fade away, but rather to share what he has done, to bring glory to his goodness, his forgiveness, his faithfulness. Going through the storm was not pleasant, but we knew God was with us and more importantly, for us. We believed God wanted more, so what is that more? How do we attain it? What is God doing in and through us? What is our learning opportunity? How do we claim it, own it, respond to it, and execute it? (See Tool Exploration: *CORE Process* in this chapter.)

Our desire has always been to move forward in his confidence – according to his will and his plan, not our own. Little did we realize one of the first things we needed to reexamine was the role and purpose of pastoral ministry and to move to a Team Based, Pastor Led paradigm.

By the time Greg started his study of Ephesians, I was part of the administration team. We spent a good bit of time discussing polity and how it looks in our congregations. We also came to see that the change in leadership style had to occur before we could focus on what it means to be a healthy church. Greg and team wrote up a new polity statement for our denomination, one structured on a Team Based, Pastor Led model for our congregations.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I had started working on this model after reading George Cladis’ book, and though I didn’t have the right terminology, I was starting to implement the right practice. Building a Team Based, Pastor Led ministry is still in its early stages among many of our pastors, but it is taking shape. Our pastors are realizing they are not alone, and they don’t have to do ministry alone. When they work with a team, much is accomplished.

# Tool Exploration: Team Based – Pastor Led

**Greg:** As much as we use words to describe concepts, and the students did an admirable job, we have come to realize that visuals are a big help in allowing many people to see the "big picture." The graphic below has been like magic for scores of our pastors. Many have had the spirit to include others in the ministries of the church and yet it hasn't been as focused and effective as it could be. And then there has been the 80/20 rule - 80% of the work being done by 20% of the people.



## A Giant Step Forward

Simply helping our pastors to have a clear view of the foundational ministries and to organize competent, passionate people into the positions that are their "best fit" is another step toward liberation.

We encourage pastors to take the base infographic and expand it as their congregation grows. The three venues of Love, Faith and Hope will have a number of teams – all led by the ministry team leader of each venue.

These graphics provide healthy boundaries so that no person can have leadership beyond their specific ministry venue, be it Love, Hope or Faith. They can participate in the activities of the other venues, but their leadership is limited to service in one area (this prevents burnout while allowing ministry opportunities for the broader group). We believe this is a Spirit-led directive and for that reason, we promote it to all our GCI churches.

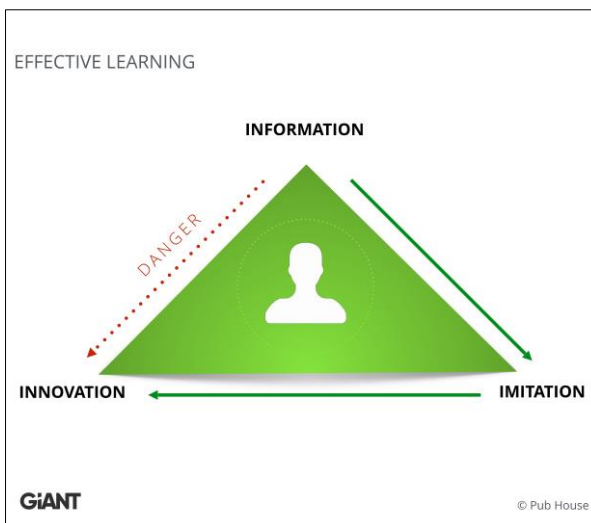
Luke 16:10 says, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.” For me, being trusted (faithful) in small things means we are paying attention to details, strategic planning and being trusted stewards over our resources, especially the development and placement of our people. For our ministries to be built out to the level we are projecting means that micro steps have to be carefully attended to and not short-changed. If we hope to reach the macro vision of Healthy Church, implementing the Team Based Pastor Led model is the structure that can take us there. (See more details about the pastoral role and the Love, Hope and Faith venues in the appendix).

## Tool Exploration: Effective Learning

**Tom:** A few years ago, I was having incessant sore throat problems. I was checked out and referred to a vocal therapist – a coach to help me speak. Me? A professional speaker? “I’ve been doing this for a while,” I thought. The therapist ran me through some tests and convinced me that I didn’t know how to breathe very well. She convinced me I’d been *Innovating* for way too long, so she brought me back to the basics. “Imitate me, and you will get back to proper health.” She had me blow bubbles in my spare time, intentionally inhale through my nose, gargle in the shower, make low, guttural sounds. It seemed so pedantic, but she was insistent, and her coaching ultimately led to my health.

There are a lot of good descriptions of “coaching,” and one I’ve always appreciated is that “coaches help others to do the things *they don’t want to do* so they can accomplish the things they *do want to accomplish*.” This can be done in a myriad of ways: persuasion, challenge, accountability. It’s not uncommon for us to hear a testimony of an accomplished athlete who owes their success to a coach who kept them on track. Good athletes may initially dislike coaching, but they submit themselves so they can achieve.

The *Effective Learning* tool describes what Jesus said, as recorded in Luke 6:39: “The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.” Even talented people need to submit to the hard yards of moving from *Information* to *Imitation*...and finally to



*Innovation*. That can be true of people in ministry, too. It’s way too easy to skip steps because we have history and experience. Note that the diagram says that the true trajectory of a disciple is to start with *Information* and then go to



*Imitation.* There will be a time for *Innovation*, but not until *Imitation* takes place. Above all we need to avoid the temptation to take a short-cut and go from *Information* to *Innovation*. When I'm teaching something and someone eagerly says, "Hey, can I have that?" I often suspect that they are looking for something cool to dazzle others with, but they haven't truly come to imitate the concept.

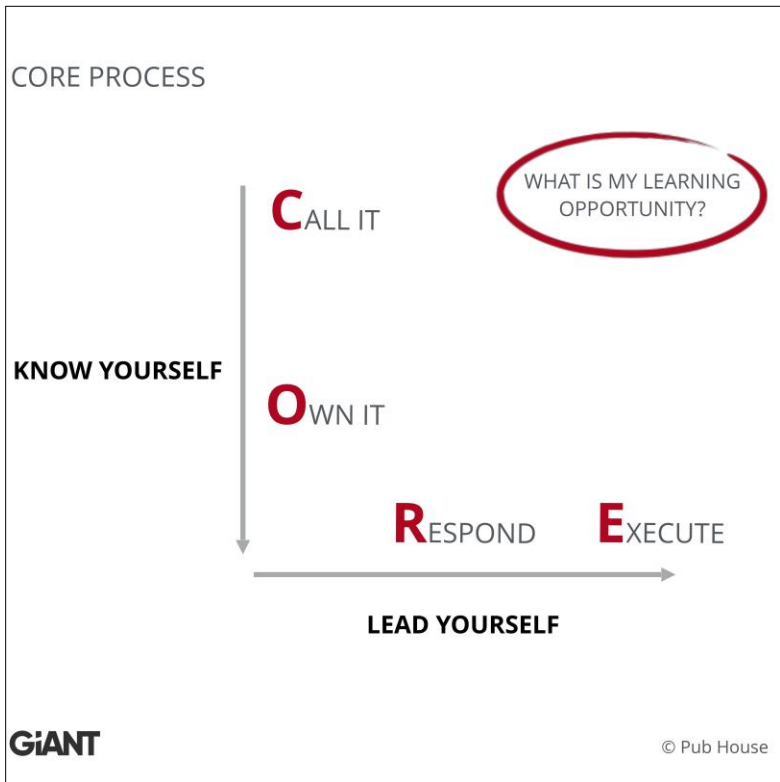
When I started working with our first group of GCI leaders, I had my own insecurities being around such accomplished leaders. But one thing I insisted on was that we would take turns teaching GiANT™ Tools to each other, and we were to stay on script. Yes, add a personal illustration or anecdote, but "don't you dare" go too far afield with some innovation. Stay on script. We accomplish more in the long run when we do that, because our ability to multiply is enhanced. It's hard to multiply innovation and intuition, so it's necessary that we play by the rules in the earliest days.

One funny incident happened in one of our online meetings, and veterans of our first CORE Group still laugh about it. Regional Director Mike Rasmussen was assigned to teach a tool, and he was in terrible physical shape because of some recent cancer treatments. But he was amazing in his delivery. We were awe-struck. How did Mike do that? What a champion, especially given the state of his illness! Well, we all know Mike is amazing, but it wasn't until months later when Mike admitted that he had the entire company-issued script taped around his computer screen. All he was doing was reading what was there! Mike was doing his part to *Imitate*. And, accordingly, he's one of the best multipliers of our content I've ever seen!

## Tool Exploration: CORE PROCESS

**Rick:** In Chapter 1 I shared a learning opportunity regarding small groups. You will recall I had a plan to build small groups in the congregation, and just before implementing the plan, I realized my team wasn't supportive. They were supportive of me, but knowing the congregation better than I did, they knew the plan would not work. When I asked why no one had shared their concerns earlier, the first response was, "Well you are the pastor; we didn't feel we could disagree." Then another person said, "Honestly, you didn't ask our advice." This second statement turned out to be a powerful Learning Opportunity.

This Learning Opportunity was for me and for the team. I assumed that



the team knew I wanted their input, their thoughts and that they were free to disagree. However, based on experience with previous pastors, the team assumed things would be done my way, because that's how it had always been done. As time progressed, we had some good laughs about our first few months together as we learned to work together through various

learning opportunities. Let me break down the four steps in the *CORE Process* of a learning opportunity. The first two steps deal with knowing yourself; the last two deal with leading yourself. All four steps include prayer and listening to the Holy Spirit.

**Call it** – I had to ask what I needed to learn from this situation. In this case, I failed to establish parameters with my team. Some of those parameters included the following:

- There is a difference between an idea and a decision. (In Chapter 9, Greg talks about the tool: PROVISION PLAN PROMISE.)
- No matter how enthusiastic I am at presenting something, I wanted their honest opinion, and I needed to let them know their opinion was valued.
- I needed to let the team know they were free to disagree, just not be disagreeable.
- I needed to explain Team Based and Pastor Led. My goal was team leadership (This was prior to my understanding of being a Liberator.)

**Own it** – It is important to take personal responsibility for a learning opportunity. It would have been easy for me to turn this to the team, “You guys were just going to let me fail?” Instead, I had to own it. “I apologize for not being clear on how I see this team working. I want you to hear your thoughts – even if you disagree. That’s how we work together.” It is unfortunate some leaders don’t understand their role is to lead, not to demand. A good leader owns the learning opportunities. Admittedly, it’s not always easy to take personal responsibility. If you are like me, your first reaction might be defensive. But work past that, listen to others and then own the learning opportunity.

**Response** – Once you *Call* the learning opportunity and then *Own* it, the next step is to determine the right response. What do you know about yourself that will inform your response? For example, knowing I can fall into being a “people-pleaser” helps form the response I know I need to make. Here’s a key: just because you have taken personal responsibility does not mean you are alone in determining a response. When I got over the shock that none of the team members in the meeting believed my plan would work, I asked for their advice. In order for us to work as a team, I needed their input. As we talked, I realized some steps I could take to be a more effective leader. I asked the team to help me be a better leader by

reminding me to ask for input, by helping me stay accountable to the team. We worked out some responses as a team.

**Execute** – After determining various responses, put them into practice. I believe this is where prayer is essential. “Lord, how do I take what you have revealed and apply it?” It is easy to fall back into old habits, so along with your prayers, ask others to keep you accountable. It wasn’t the last time I got overenthusiastic about a project or event that would not work, but the team now knew I wanted their input and we would work together as a team.

Call it, Own it, Response, Execute – all part of the CORE Process of being a good leader.

### **Questions for reflection**

- What are the contributing factors that have created the storm you are in?
- Can you identify the needed steps to move your organization out of the present storm?
- What is the profile of a front-line leader you need for your organization? Can you name the top qualities you are looking for?
- Following the CORE Process, what do you need to Call?
- Where are your opportunities to become more healthy?



### 3 Be All You Can Be

**G**reg: In 1979 the US Army launched an aggressive ad campaign. Still reeling from the negative effects of the Vietnam War, and relying on an “all-volunteer” army, their task was great. Starting with the college football bowl games of 1980, an unprecedented ten weeks of flashy television commercials aired the now famous “BE ALL YOU CAN BE” campaign. This successful campaign helped remake the US Army and raise the caliber of recruits. It was such an effective slogan that it lasted 21 years.

The meaning behind the slogan “Be All You Can Be” is to imagine living your life to its fullest potential, even beyond your fears. You can live courageously despite your insecurities; you pursue your dreams with relentless fervor, and ultimately, you be all you can be. It is idealistic, captivating and alluring.

I am not sure that many soldiers will attest to the achievement of having lived their lives to the full because of their time in military service. But what about us Christians? Didn’t Jesus say that he came to bring us life to the full and overflowing? (John 10:10) He also said, “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). This freedom is found in Jesus, and the promise of abundant living is more than an ad campaign. It is actual and available as we live and move and have our being in him. We can be all we can be in a life with Jesus.

Instead of working with raw 18-year-old soldiers, we Christian leaders get to work with people who are forgiven sinners set free from the bondage of sin, and who are coming alive in Jesus. And since Jesus is the ultimate liberator, our job as Christian leaders is to be liberators as well, in the form and fashion of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In Chapter 2 we talked about needing a new kind of pastor for GCI. We used the moniker “Liberator.” So, what do Liberators do? They care deeply and also think deeply about the people they oversee. As you can see from the tool here, a Liberator constantly fights for the highest possible good for those they lead. Notice the questions a Liberator continually addresses:

*What specific support and challenge do they need from me? You cannot know this unless and until you care deeply and think deeply about those you oversee. What are they facing in their workload? In their personal*

LIBERATING OTHERS



Fight for the highest possible good in the lives of those they lead.

- ① What specific support and challenge do they need from me?
- ② What is the tendency or pattern most undermining their influence?
- ③ How do I help them get to the next level?

**GIANT**

Source: Inspired by Kevin Weaver, REORIENT

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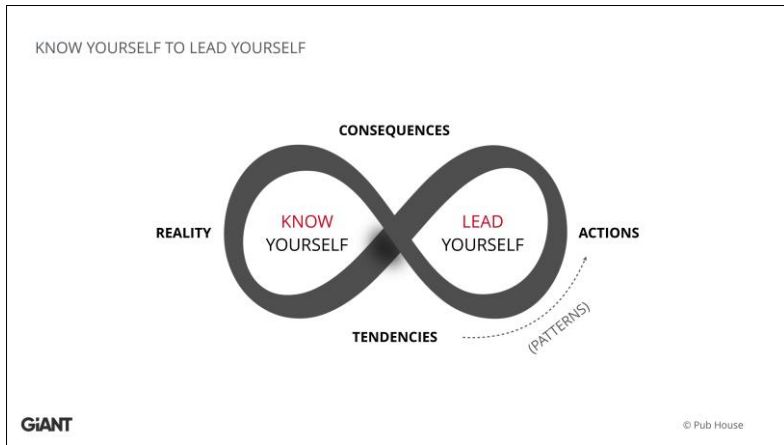
lives? What is their personality profile? What is their strongest voice? (We will address these questions in this chapter.)

*What is the tendency or pattern most undermining their influence? Do they know themselves in order to better lead themselves? Do they know what it's like to be on the other side of them? Have they developed unconscious patterns that lead to negative behavior and unwanted consequences? What are their strongest patterns that lead to positive behavior and desired consequences?*

*How do I help them get to the next level? This is going to be different for each person you lead. A challenge? Absolutely. Worth it in the end? Unquestionably.*

Before Christian leaders can rise to this high level of care for others, as mentioned in this tool, they must come to the place of maturity where they know themselves to lead themselves – a process that never ends. (Rick will describe this tool later in this chapter.) How did God create us? What gifts and talents did he give? Am I using those gifts and talents? Or have I developed tendencies and patterns outside of who God created me to be?

I soon learned one must experience liberation before one can be a Liberator. As a means of illustration, I will share insights that I have discovered about myself as I am growing into a Liberator. You will see a



lot of “I” statements as I strive to be honest and candid with both my strengths and my struggles, with the goal of being as authentic as I can be.

### **Personality type and voice order**

There are a number of personality-type tests, and there are mixed reactions to their validity. It’s easy to answer the questions based on perceived expectations, and results are affected by nature, nurture and the choices you make. While some employers use personality testing as part of their hiring process, others don’t because they are aware a job candidate can easily answer the questions based on what he or she believes the employer wants. (These types of tests are most useful when they are taken honestly with no ulterior motive other than to understand yourself better.) GiANT Worldwide™ starts with the online results of the Myers-Briggs test and then takes you through a thorough Best Fit process to determine your personality type.

Here is a simple summary of the Myers-Briggs 16 personality types.

- Extraversion (E) – Introversion (I): Your preferred source of energy
- Sensing (S) – iNtuition (N): How you prefer to take in and process information
- Thinking (T) – Feeling (F): How you prefer to make decisions
- Judging (J) – Perceiving (P): Your preferred lifestyle

My Myers-Briggs profile is Extroverted, iNtuitive, Thinking, Judging – “ENTJ.” The general profile of an ENTJ is that I am a “natural born” leader. Words like Executive, Field Marshal, and The Commander are



sometimes used. I like the descriptor “Strategic Leader.” It communicates my love for challenges and surmounting challenges.

I am a driven leader who is quick to absorb complexities along with large amounts of impersonal knowledge and then make quick, decisive judgments. I see things from a long-range perspective and am good at creating plans to turn problems around. ENTJs make up only 2% of the population and are driven in their work. More than any other personality type, we ENTJs enjoy our work and find work to be fun.

I dislike seeing mistakes repeated and I have a low tolerance for inefficiency. I struggle most with people who don’t see things from my perspective, and I have difficulty tailoring my judgments toward people’s feelings. I must consciously work on recognizing the value of other people’s opinions and be sensitive towards their feelings. Otherwise I can become a forceful, overbearing leader that dominates and bullies others.

My Voice, in descending order, is Pioneer, Creative, Connector, Guardian and Nurturer. Tom will describe these voices in Tool Exploration.

The combination of Pioneer and Creative serves me well as I step into the leadership of an international fellowship of churches.

The Pioneer is the most assertive Voice on the team, and as a Pioneer it feels natural for me to assume leadership. I love to champion the big-picture vision, and those who have created this tool tell me that I have the capacity to move fluidly between the macro and micro levels of management. Aligning people, systems, and resources to make GCI the best it can be really gets my juices flowing. As a former athlete, I love to compete and play the role of captain. I embrace the challenge to move my entire team forward and to mutually feel the sensation of winning.

My Creative Voice is future-oriented. I often muse about far-off visions and drive towards innovative possibilities. As a champion of innovation, I am open to new ideas, technology, and better strategies that can enhance our organization. I have an acute social consciousness that drives me to maintain organizational integrity. I often ask myself, “Are we being the church that we present ourselves to be? Are we being authentic? Are we truly aligned with our values and strategy from the Home Office all the way through to our local churches?”

It was easy to list the highlights of a Pioneer’s personality strengths, but to be more transparent and deliberate I will also itemize the major struggles I contend with. Please pray for me!

As a Pioneer I have the loudest voice on the team, and I have to intentionally be aware of this and check myself to make sure that I am listening well. A good example of a better listening practice is to make myself go back and read an email message a second time before forming an opinion and response.

I must fight the urge of pushing and pursuing my own agenda. It is easy for me to be in love with my ideas and plans and then become the domineering salesperson who pushes hard, ignoring the voices of others. I need to be aware of this tendency and maintain a “for others” mentality and be willing to accept the longer processes of team dynamics. It is through the gauntlet of the team process that the best ideas are shaped and reshaped into solid, worthy plans.

As part of my Pioneer nature, I rarely shy away from arguments or sharing critique. The judgmental aspect of my profile helps me see details and discern circumstances, and yet I have to be mindful of other people’s feelings as I march through my critiques. If you are reading this book and you have felt that I called you out in some mean-spirited, critical way, please accept my apology.

As a Creative, it is easy for me to live in my future thoughts and it causes me to struggle with being in the present. As the new GCI President, I already have a five-year calendar in place that will serve the new management system that I am introducing. Some of the team members appreciate the pro-active planning and others are confused by it. I have to sort this out one team member at a time.

GiANT™ says that the Creative Voice is hard to hear because what they think they’ve communicated versus what they’ve actually communicated seldom align. I have wrestled with this and I am discovering that I have to continually go back and repackage and restate the vision over and over. A recent experience taught me that pictures are so much better than words; not that we don’t need words, but we need both if we want to be understood. The experience reminded me that, while some on the team respond well to a verbal vision, others get the vision after seeing it presenting using infographics. Using infographics will be a big part of GCI’s future – especially regarding training.

The struggle to accept, and even to appreciate the other Voices that are not like mine has been a wonderful discovery, and an ongoing challenge. The Guardians are the champions who keep our organization legal and solvent. They are not there to block my plans; they are employed to

scrutinize any and all plans so that we remain operational. GiANT™'s *Build the Bridge* tool has been a tremendous help in my better relations with the Guardians around me. (See Tool Exploration: *Build the Bridge* in Appendix.) The Voice of the Nurturer is always needed to remind us that people matter the most, and it happens to be my weakest voice. The redemptive side to this story is that my dear wife Susan thinks, speaks and acts Nurturer. I am learning.

I am told that when ENTJ/Pioneers work healthily with others, they are incredibly effective. This is my aspiration. Through the grace of Jesus Christ and his presence in my life I am “being all that I can be,” and I am striving to help those around me be all that they can be, too.

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**Rick:** Who wouldn't want to be a liberating leader? Who wouldn't desire to “care deeply and also think deeply” about those you oversee? Who wouldn't want to strive for the “highest possible good” in the lives of the people you lead? Any good leader should desire to be a Liberator. But desire isn't enough – it takes commitment, it takes work, it takes practice, and it starts with knowing yourself accurately. What do I mean by that? Most of us would say we know ourselves. Perhaps I could have said it starts with knowing how others perceive you. To know yourself is, in part, to know how you come across to others – how does your personality come across – what it is like to be on the other side of you? What is your strongest Voice? How is your personality type and Voice order seen by others? (See Tool Exploration: *Know Yourself to Lead Yourself*.) Like Greg, I will also share what I've discovered about myself and share some of the lessons I've learned and am continuing to learn along this journey. Again, you will see a lot of “I” statements in my desire to be transparent.

## **Personality type and voice order**

My personality profile is Extroverted, iNtuitive, Feeler, Perceiver – “ENFP.” An ENFP is future-oriented – always looking at what can be – is motivated by new ideas, a people person who loves to see others fill their potential, full of energy and enthusiasm. An ENFP can't help but always see possibilities due to their insatiable curiosity. You often see a smile on the face of an ENFP. Words used to describe an ENFP include Inspirer, Creative Idealist, Campaigner, and Advocate. This describes me

well as I tend to be people-centered and love to see others reach for higher possibilities.

I am always looking to the future and planning for better or more effective ways to do things. I enjoy the challenge of finding innovative ways to teach and train others. I want others to succeed and will often campaign for others. I enjoy planning for the future and find myself not satisfied with the status quo because there is almost always a better way. You can likely perceive the stress this may cause on others. I am project-driven and look forward to new challenges. My mind is always going, thinking about solutions to various projects or problems. ENFPs work well with ENTJs, providing creative thinking to an ENTJ's long-range plans.

While I love projects, I find it hard to focus and finish projects I've started. (I had to get away from my office and sequester myself in a cabin in the Hocking Hills of Ohio to avoid distractions and focus on this book.) I love building the foundation and the main structure, but then I often leave the details to others, as I head on to the next big project. This can leave others in a state of frustration as they can't read my mind and know what details I'm hoping for. Because I am people-centered, I find it difficult to understand why someone would not like me or enjoy working with me. I have to constantly ask myself, what is it like being on the other side of me?

My Voice order is Connector, Creative, Pioneer, Nurturer, Guardian.

The Connector is the 2<sup>nd</sup> loudest Voice on the team. Connectors can take a presented idea or a problem and will either know someone or find someone who can help with relative ease. This Voice doesn't seem to get tired or worn out by people or new ideas, and often makes meetings fun. Connectors can transition from one conversation to the next easily and keep others involved. Thriving on making connections, Connectors often have a large social circle and many friends. A healthy Connector is easy to like, but a Connector who is not self-aware can be perceived as someone who is always bouncing from idea to idea and unable to focus. An unhealthy Connector can also be perceived as a people-pleaser who has many relationships with little depth.

Like Greg, my Creative Voice is future-oriented. Because my Connector and Creative Voices are close together, they are the right combination for the job I have of balancing the denominational hats I wear – writing and editing, along with supervising and directing 60+ pastors and congregations toward renewal and healthy churches. As Greg shared, I also like to visualize the future, thinking about different “what ifs.” I am

not surprised when Greg or I bounce an idea off each other and find we were either already thinking similarly or we grasp the validity of the idea within minutes. Because of our Creative voices, Greg and I often talk about our role as bridge-builders for the future leadership of GCI. We both find we must be careful who we share our visionary thinking with. Some of our ideas can be perceived as promises, when we are just doing some provisional thinking. (See the *PROVISIONAL PLAN PROMISE* tool in Appendix.)

Following Greg's lead, I'd like to share some of the struggles I face with my strong Connector and Creative Voices. I also ask for your prayers!

As a Connector, I like people and I like to be liked. Because I want others to like me, I can sometimes find it difficult to bring challenge. I continually remind myself that being liked is not the goal; helping leaders become leaders worth following requires challenge. It's easy to fall into the trap of putting people's feelings above the need to help them grow. If I fail to challenge, I am enabling others to fail. Sometimes this requires looking like the "bad" guy.

Because Connectors like quick wins and jump from project to project, I can get impatient with others. I must remind myself to be patient with others who have different Voices and personality types. Having an apprentice or someone to mentor is vital to helping me stay balanced and focused.

As a writer and editor, I know the importance and value of editing. Despite that, as a Connector I can find it difficult when my ideas are critiqued. After all, I've already thought this through and know it's a brilliant idea. Thus, I'll occasionally find myself getting defensive even though I know in my gut the opposing point makes perfect sense. It's vital to realize critiques are not personal. To become a Liberator, I encourage the other RDs and Home Office team to critique my ideas. I admit my initial reaction may not be the best, but I will hear their collective Voices and hopefully choose what is best

One of the most amazing Connector insights for me was that it's OK to acknowledge my gifts. Like everyone else, God has imbued me with gifts and talents to be used for his purposes. When I am passionate about something, it is a mistake to keep it to myself. I cannot let the fear of rejection or critiquing prevent me from sharing an idea.

As a Creative, I struggle with critique because I sometimes conclude people are not hearing or are ignoring my idea; I must remind myself it's

OK to be wrong. Sometimes my idea is just not that good.

I concur with Greg's point about Creatives believing they've communicated something clearer than they have. I'm often surprised at the follow-up questions, assuming I already made the answer clear. Because I am a good communicator, I sometimes assume my verbal skills are adequate. My wife, Cheryl, who likes to see charts and visuals, is the Voice in my head reminding me about the value of visual aids.

As a Creative, I need to realize my value to the team. Being critiqued does not equate to a lack of value to the team or that my contributions are not appreciated. It's vital to realize the team wants and needs the contributions I bring.

My biggest challenge is to hear and appreciate the Nurturer and Guardian Voices. Because of my future orientation, I want to see what can be, not be reminded of those who might feel they aren't being included. I don't want to be held back by the Guardian who is asking why we need a change, what good will this change bring, can we afford the change? These are good questions and I must learn to value the questions and the people who pose them. To be a Liberator, I need to see the Guardian and Nurturer Voices to be just as valuable as my voices. Like Greg's wife Susan, my wife is also a Nurturer. I often tease Cheryl about being a Nurturer, but the truth is, I value the balance her Voice brings to my Creative Voice. She reminds me to consider the people, to include them in the vision so they aren't left behind or feeling excluded. I praise God for Cheryl and for her Voice.

I am thankful for the personality type I am, and for the Voices I possess. These are gifts to be used for God's glory. When working alongside the other personality types and Voices, we start to see a picture of all Jesus was and is. We are all created in his image – all 16 personality types and all 5 Voices. Together we can accomplish much and be liberating leaders participating with Jesus in the mission he invited us to join. I praise God I learned it was OK to be the person he created me to be. I don't need to be a Pioneer, I don't need to be a Guardian. I do need to live in the fullness of who I am, so I can lead myself to build leadership in others.

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**Tom:** My Myers-Briggs Type is ENFJ, but for the longest time I didn't know that. Every time I took a Myers-Briggs "test" I came out ENTJ. In other words, I fancied myself as a "thinker," not a "feeler." When I finally

agreed that I truly made decisions more on how they affected people than on the basis of pure logic, I became much healthier.

Being ENFJ means I'm Extroverted, iNtuitive, Feeling, and Judging. ENFJs are warm and likeable. It makes sense, because ENFJs find potential in others and want to help them achieve it. We're highly attuned to the emotional pulse of others, are very sociable, lead groups well, and can inspire others. On the downside, ENFJs have built-in barometers that are very susceptible to praise and criticism. It's easier for us to bring more support than challenge because we want to be liked.

In terms of Voice Order, I am Connector, Creative, Nurturer, Pioneer, and Guardian. As a Connector, I like to sell, but I don't like to be rejected. Even when I don't think I'm selling, I'm selling or pitching something. Like Greg and Rick, I access a Creative Voice, too. When asked a question, I'm quick to say something, because I "talk to think." As a future-oriented Voice, I see patterns and can envision things coming together. But sometimes I get the jigsaw of life wrong, and the pieces don't fit the way I thought they would. Once Greg gave me a good challenge when he remarked, "Yeah, sometimes we hear what we want to hear, and we see what we want to see."

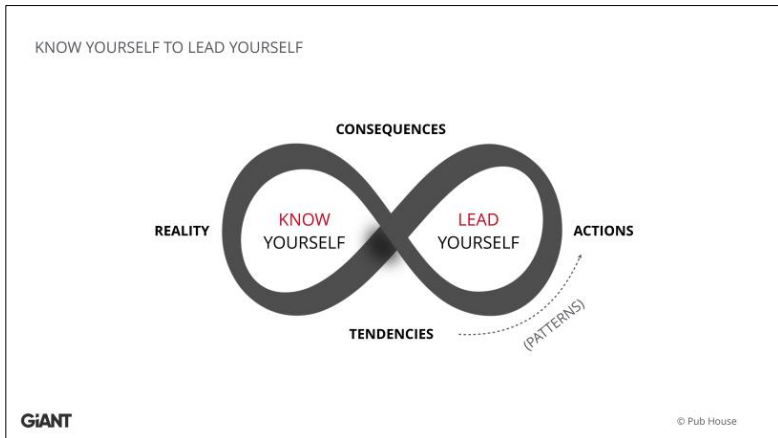
My 5<sup>th</sup> Voice is "Guardian." The 5<sup>th</sup> Voice is what we call the nemesis Voice. It's what we least like to hear and speak. So I brace myself when I'm around Guardians because I know I'll never have the clarity they crave, and it might feel like an interrogation. But maturity has allowed me to value those who are Guardians, knowing they'll perform the due diligence detail work to bring the most accurate information.

Practically, what does this mean? It means that I'd enjoy going camping with Rick because it would be non-stop fun being around a fellow Connector/Creative. And I'd enjoy going camping with Greg, too, but no matter how much fun we were having I'd still be suspicious that my Pioneer/Creative friend was about to pull me into some grand scheme he's dreamed up – like helping write a book.

# Tool Exploration: KNOW YOURSELF TO LEAD YOURSELF

**Rick:** Do you know what it is like to be on the other side of you? When Tom Nebel first asked this question, it set me back on my heels because I'd never thought about it. Tom termed this "It's like broccoli in your teeth: everyone else knows it is there, but they don't tell you and you have no idea." This is also termed being unconsciously incompetent (in another tool we will share as we go) and it relates to self-awareness.

The CORE of who you are is a mixture of your skill sets, your emotional intelligence and your understanding of how you are wired. As a leader, it is vital to understand this mix, which is like holding up a mirror and asking what is it really like to be on the other side of me? This leadership tool helps us understand the importance of knowing ourselves



in order to lead ourselves more effectively. Allow me to give you an illustration.

During leadership training I was challenged about my listening skills. I tended to bring the conversation back to me – called autobiographical listening. If someone was telling a story, I was usually thinking of a similar story that shows I may not only understand the experience, but my experience may even be a better illustration (at least in my own mind.) This tendency to share my story as soon as the other person took a breath created an undesired pattern of focusing on the self and a subsequent action or behavior of interrupting or not listening effectively. The consequences do not lead to good relationships. (More on this in moment.)



All of us have similar tendencies, which are hardwired into our character and personalities, and tend to create patterns of behavior. Those patterns can be good or bad, but they get so ingrained that over time we are simply unaware of them. (Thus the importance of the proverbial mirror.) These tendencies and the subsequent behavior will not only impact your reactions, but also your decision-making process. And actions have consequences, for good or for ill, and those consequences shape our reality.

The reality of the environment in which you lead is heavily influenced by the tendencies you have as a leader. Again, what is it like to be on the other side of you? The more aware you become of the answer to this question, the more emotionally intelligent you become. This leads to even more self-awareness, enabling you to make better choices of what your action is going to be. So rather than just be defined by the ingrained repeating patterns, you choose to react differently.

Knowing that my tendency was to talk too much or to interject a personal story into the conversation made me more aware of conversations I am involved in. More and more I am choosing to remain silent because I don't want that old pattern to be reinforced again or to define me. Because I want to hear what everyone else thinks, I choose at times to be quiet, to bite my tongue and simply listen to others.

The more you know yourself and lead yourself, the more you will find that your actions have consequences for good. Then the reality out of which you lead becomes healthier, enabling your influence to grow in the many opportunities you have to shape the leaders you have been called to lead.

## Tool Exploration: 5 VOICES

**Tom:** While personality tests can be helpful in understanding ourselves, in our experience as consultants, we have found they rarely help us in a team context. Why? Because they're too complex. Stop and think about it. How many tests have you taken? Can you remember their names? We've mentioned Myers-Briggs here, but what about the others? DISC, StrengthsFinder, Birkman, Enneagram, MMPI, and so on. They're all good; they all have their place in helping us with self-awareness and personal health. But it's hard to remember what they mean, and even harder to apply them meaningfully with others. "What am I again?" "What are you again?" "How does that affect how we communicate?"

The 5 Voices is different. Look at the tool and you'll kind of get it. On any sizable team (think of your church leadership team) there will normally be a representation of these Voices, which come with different traits and volume levels. Some are more natural for us to hear and speak, and some are difficult. We speak and hear all the Voices, to one degree or another, and we call this our "Voice order," but our unique wiring and experience gives us a unique Voice. Here they are, from quietest to loudest.

Nurturer: These are the champions of people; the relational oil inside an organization. They want to make sure people get along, and they don't like a fight. They come to battle with a medic kit. They often think, "Who is going to hate this most?" Nurturers are amazing, but they usually don't feel like it. We see them as professionals, but they don't think they belong. Too bad, because even though they're the quietest Voice, they represent 43% of the population.

Creative: Another quiet Voice, their "weapon" is a telescope; they see the future first. They are champions of innovation, there is gold in those hills, if we can mine it out. Creatives are so future-oriented that they often have difficulty getting their ideas out of their heads...and sometimes they sound confusing to themselves and the rest of us. But they're brilliant, and if they're supported and we help them with clarifying their thoughts, we all win. Just 9% of the population has Creative as a foundational (first) Voice.

Guardian: Now we're getting louder. Guardians carry a shield, and they think in terms of "safety for the organization." They hate to give up ground, and they're risk-averse. They ask a lot of questions, and

## 5 VOICES



**Nurturer**



**Champion of...**  
People, relational harmony  
and values

**43%**  
of the population

*Present Oriented*



**Creative**



**Champion of...**  
Future ideas, innovation and  
organizational integrity

**9%**  
of the population

*Future Oriented*



**Guardian**



**Champion of...**  
Due diligence, resources, and  
efficient systems and processes

**30%**  
of the population

*Present Oriented*



**Connector**



**Champion of...**  
Relational networks,  
collaboration, and effective  
communication

**11%**  
of the population

*Future Oriented*



**Pioneer**



**Champion of...**  
Strategic vision, results-focused,  
and problem-solving.

**7%**  
of the population

*Future Oriented*

sometimes it feels like they're interrogating because they need such clarity. They want to know "what is," so they will ask the tough questions. And they'll deliver tirelessly when the plan is agreed to. Thirty percent of the population has this as their primary voice.

Connector: Louder still, Connectors love to connect people with each other and with their aspirations. They have lots of acquaintances, and they always have a resource or "know someone" to get something done. They want others to be as excited about whatever they are excited about, so they sell and persuade and convince. And if they're rejected, they become passive-aggressive. Just 11% of the population are Connectors as their first voice.

Pioneers: The remaining 7% are the loudest, possibly by decibel-level, but certainly by results. Pioneers need a hill to climb, a strategic venture to embark upon. They have a militaristic capacity to align people and resources to get the job done. And they do. Pioneers (like our friend, Greg Williams) think in terms of winning, and they rarely let us down. As long as they understand that they can overpower others (thus undermining their influence), mature Pioneers will help us win the day.

What do you think your Voice Order is? If you figure that out, you'll understand better why it is that you enjoy some people more than others because you hear and speak their language better. And in a team setting we'll get the most out of each other because we will affirm and call up the best in each one.

## Questions for reflection

- What is your personality type? (Take the Myers-Briggs test and the 5 Voices assessment if you haven't already)
- <https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>
- <https://5voices.com/assessment/>
- What are your known strengths and struggles?
- How do you manage your struggles?
- How will you maximize your personality in your setting?
- If you "called" a Learning Opportunity in the last Chapter, are you owning it? How?



## 4 Pit of Despair or Learning New Tricks?

**G**reg: In the early stages of our theological reform we (the pastors of GCI) were asked to view 26 hours of video lectures from Dr. Kyriacos Stavrinides concerning the doctrine of the Trinity. Dr. Stav (as he was affectionately termed) had a background in the Eastern Orthodox Church and was more than qualified to teach our pastors.

The video lectures were a preparatory step before a major conference, where Dr. Stav would give more lectures and then be available for questions and answers. Some of the pastors who were grounded in the old Worldwide Church of God thinking were determined to remain stalwart in their rejection of the Trinity. Several would rise with weak ideas based in wrong translations of the Hebrew language, speak for an extended period of time thinking they made a point, then wait for Stav to give a rebuttal. Often he would retort “Your question is a non-question.” And he was correct.

Later Dr. Stav told Joseph Tkach that he felt as if he had been dueling with an unarmed man and losing. These misguided, stubborn pastors didn’t know what they didn’t know. We shall talk more about this condition.

This long process of learning about the triune nature of God was a large part of what divided the teachable from the unteachable. Either our pastors displayed an openness to new ideas, or a stubbornness that says I already know what I know. It was a sad and disappointing time in that many of those who left were my friends.

From that time forward, it has been about flowing in the stream of the Triune God’s amazing grace. Grace corrects without destroying; grace is comfortably patient and committed to the long view; and grace continues to transform as we are moved by its flow. One of my close friends told me that grace is this irresistible flow that once you are immersed in it you have no desire to fight against it, but rather to float along, allowing the stream to take you where it will.

GiANT™ has a wonderful tool called *Developing Others* (formerly *Apprenticeship Square*). We like the term apprentice, because once the term is used, a mentoring relationship is implied. I am a huge promoter of this tool because for me it is love in action. It is inviting a younger (or

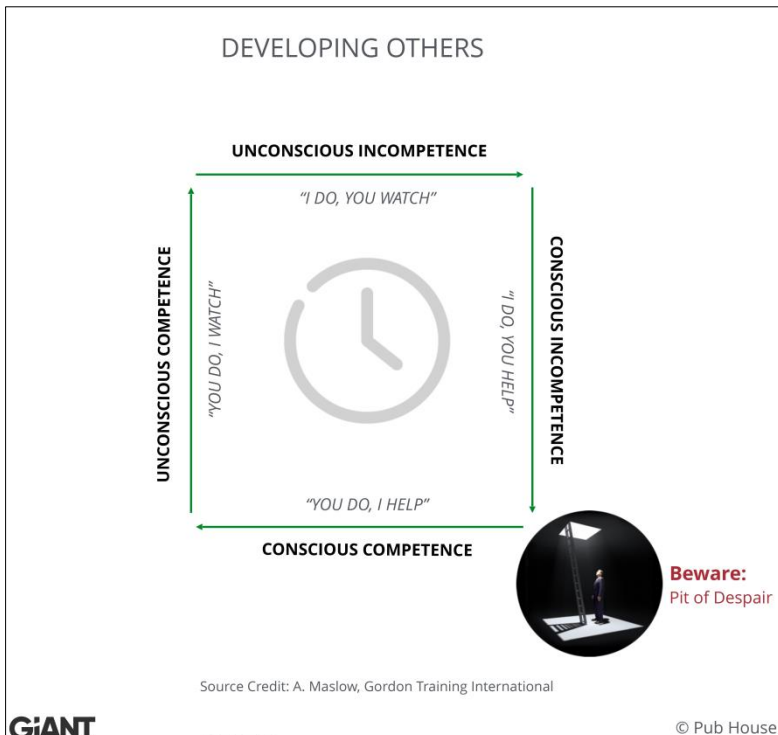
## A Giant Step Forward

older) less-experienced person into your life of experience and into relationship as you actively participate in the ministry of Jesus.

I can use myself as an example of moving around the apprentice square. When we began the theological reform, I was at the top of the apprentice square – Unconscious Incompetence – I didn't know what I didn't know. (Rick will describe this square in terms of leadership development in more detail later in this chapter.)

Through the early stages of the reform, we were rapidly turning the corner to Conscious Incompetence and into the realization that now I know that I don't know. This rocked my world because the enormity of change meant that my entire worldview of how I viewed God and what he required of me had been blatantly wrong.

This is such a crucial place in the process of learning because it is easy to fall into the “Pit of Despair.” Why didn't somebody tell me sooner? Why were all my Bible teachers grounding me in heretical teaching? Why was I so naïve as to go along? Do I even want to make the effort to turn the corner to learn a biblical view of God? Woe is me! (See *Pit of Despair* tool explained more thoroughly in the Appendix.)



PIT OF DESPAIR



**How to help people get out of the pit of despair:**

- ▶ **Time:** Informal & Formal
- ▶ **Vision:** Short Term & Long Term
- ▶ **Encouragement:** Specific, Not Generic

**GIANT**

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This is where Joseph Tkach Jr. played such a huge part in my transition from Conscious Incompetence to Conscious Competence. After huffing around for a while, I finally began sorting through the scriptures that I held tightly, and passage by passage began reading them in context. I would take my lingering questions and concerns to Joe via long emails, and to my surprise I got detailed, thoughtful responses that helped me reconcile what the Bible was actually saying. (Looking at the *Pit of Despair* tool, Joe was providing the ladder I needed to climb out of that pit.) This went on for about six months until I came to the realization that I was beginning to be consciously aware of what I knew. My personal relationship with God had moved from a God who loved me one day, but perhaps not the next, to a God whose love was unfailing and in whom my salvation was and is secure.

Being in this Conscious Competence stage meant going back to seminary and learning to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus as my life's quest. Personal faith and Bible knowledge are areas that are progressive (especially as viewed through a good understanding of sanctification). Because we are continuing to grow in grace and knowledge, I came to question whether one can ever truly be



Unconsciously Competent in faith and Bible knowledge. Can I, however, unconsciously share my personal testimony or reference the Bible accurately? Yes, and I am still growing.

Going around the Apprenticeship Square provides a journey from the mystery of the unknown to new information and new ways of thinking, and when done in relationship it reflects imitation of an able mentor. Ultimately these new ways of thinking and doing bring about innovation and a stronger organizational culture. This mentoring model of developing others amidst the environment of grace is magic. It makes us an organization capable of bypassing the pit of despair and learning the much-needed new tricks.

Liberating leaders not only face looming challenges head on, they are also keenly aware of the current circumstances. As my friend Tom has said over and over, “Reality is our friend, but it’s not our only friend.”

If you don’t have a clear understanding of where you are starting and what resources you have, you will not make clear, wise choices moving forward. This sounds basic, but you may recall the parable of Jesus in Luke 14 about “counting the cost.”

One day when large groups of people were walking along with him, Jesus turned and told them, “Anyone who comes to me but refuses to let go of father, mother, spouse, children, brothers, sisters – yes, even one’s own self! – can’t be my disciple. Anyone who won’t shoulder his own cross and follow behind me can’t be my disciple.

Is there anyone here who, planning to build a new house, doesn’t first sit down and figure the cost so you’ll know if you can complete it? If you only get the foundation laid and then run out of money, you’re going to look pretty foolish. Everyone passing by will poke fun at you: ‘He started something he couldn’t finish.’

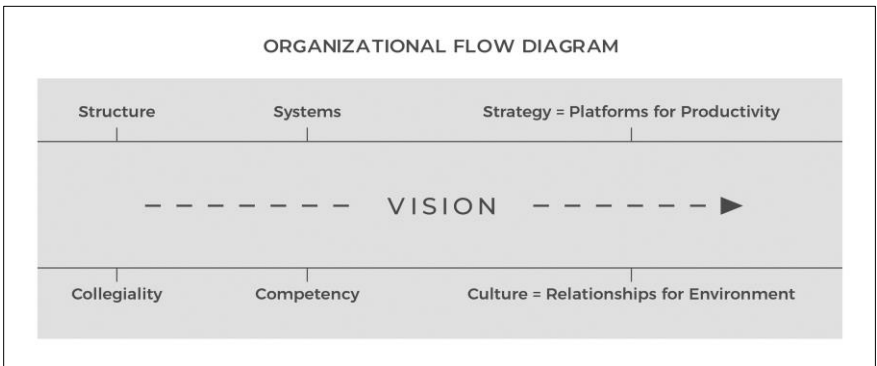
Or can you imagine a king going into battle against another king without first deciding whether it is possible with his ten thousand troops to face the twenty thousand troops of the other? And if he decides he can’t, won’t he send an emissary and work out a truce?

Simply put, if you’re not willing to take what is dearest to you, whether plans or people, and kiss it good-bye, you can’t be my disciple. (Luke 14:25-33, The Message Bible)

Wise, clear judgment is necessary when undertaking any major endeavor. And even more important than clear and wise thinking is coming to the end of living for one’s self and living a life totally

surrendered to Jesus. Before building a building, going to war, or transforming a church, the starting place has to begin in a surrendered life to Jesus. He isn't an add-on to your plans; he is the plan because we are his plan. We look to him for wisdom; we trust in him for provision; we participate with him through all stages of life, and we glorify him in all that is accomplished.

I've shared quite a bit about the theological/doctrinal reform of GCI. Allow me to turn our attention toward the organizational reform that I was growing more aware of as I dove deeper into leadership. Throughout the course of my life I have been a casual student of organizational management. One of the most concise overviews I ever received was in a workshop at a Christian Leadership Alliance conference in 2011. It wasn't presented by one of the top-billing plenary speakers, rather, it was by an introverted, brainy university professor who drew the following diagram



on the whiteboard and began to give me a framework that I have been working from ever since.

This diagram demonstrates how these key components are interconnected and must be addressed if the vision is to move forward and become the new reality. At this stage of the journey we had to rethink and reorder our structure (Rick will recall a benchmark meeting we held at my home in October 2011 where we addressed and amended our structure.)

Once I moved to our Home Office in 2014, I began working more closely with the top-level managers and discovering more about how our systems worked (or didn't work so well). Often systems are based on the philosophy "We've always done it this way." I discovered that you have to get neck deep into the system to understand it if you are going to unravel it and make effective changes.

Progress was beginning to happen as new strategies were emerging, especially as we were thinking about practical ways we could live out our Incarnational Trinitarian theology. These were all steps in the right direction, but as Tom often says, “Culture trumps strategy every time” (While “every time” may be a bit strong, there is a lot of truth to what Tom points out. Tom has spoken a lot of truth into GCI).

Culture is tricky. It embodies all the elements above and below the line. I talked about the three S’s above the line – Structure, Systems and Strategy. These are called the “smart” areas of business management. It was long believed that if you get these elements in alignment with your vision that you are off and running. In more recent times many in and out of the business world are discovering that the “softer” elements below the line are equally valuable and without these being attended to, the organization will suffer and falter. It was something we needed to discover in GCI.

The softer elements are by nature relational, and this is where we have come to on the journey. How will better, stronger chemistry be developed? Do we trust each other? Do the current leaders have confidence in one another’s abilities? What is the culture of GCI? Can we identify and define our culture? Tackling these questions and challenges was the next stretch of the journey. Who will be the ones to join the journey of learning new tricks? Stay tuned...

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**Rick:** Greg shared his journey into Incarnational Trinitarian Theology by using the *Developing Others* square. His journey is similar to the path many of us were on. We started by trusting God to reveal to us our blind spots – there is much we do not know, and we do not know what we do not know. No, that is not a typo, that is Unconscious Incompetence. We thought we knew more than we did, and we had no clue where God was going to lead us. Once we became teachable, and our theological dominos started to fall, we became aware that changes had to occur, but we weren’t sure how to make those changes. This is Conscious Incompetence. We had to admit we were theologically off base and this truth drove us back into God’s word to focus on what he said, not on what we might have been told or taught he said. In God’s grace, he moved us into the Conscious Competence side of the square, enabling us to teach others.

My theological journey had some advantages over the pastors in the field because I was working at the Home Office during the early part of

our transformation. Because I was on the editorial team, and because our publications were worked on months in advance (we were still publishing a weekly update from the president, two magazines and a denominational newspaper), when a doctrinal change occurred we had a series of meetings to discuss the changes before they were made public. This way we could make sure nothing was in the works that contradicted our new understanding. It also gave us opportunity to ask questions as the material was being discussed. Working at the Home Office gave me access to several on the doctrinal team and I was able to ask questions and receive clarification through the process. Joe Tkach Jr. was one of those I asked questions of, and like Greg, I am very thankful for his patient responses.

When I moved to Indiana and entered full-time pastoral ministry, I assumed that my studies would go a different direction, and as I previously mentioned, I was studying leadership when I read George Cladis' book. When Cladis suggested leaders use the perichoretic model of the Trinity as the foundation for building a leadership team, I had no idea what this model was. What was perichoresis? What did he mean when he referred to the indwelling nature of the Triune God? This led me to a deeper study of Trinitarian theology. I started studying Ray Anderson, Shirley Guthrie, and other Trinitarian theologians. I was excited about what I was learning, but soon realized I did not know what I did not know. I apprehensively called Joseph Tkach Jr., not sure of his reaction to my newfound understanding. To my great relief, he not only encouraged me to keep studying, he sent me several books that would increase my understanding. My route around that *Developing Others* tool was one of my most enjoyable journeys – a journey that is continuing.

## **A new Apprenticeship Square**

When I entered full-time pastoral ministry, I entered an entirely new *Developing Others* square. Unlike many of my pastor friends who started as trainees working under a senior pastor, I was asked to replace a departing pastor and fill the role of lead pastor. Let me state for the record, this is not the way to start ministry, and we would never do that to someone today. At the time, we were desperate to fill some spaces, and mentoring was not as much a focus as it should have been.

Fortunately, I had a supervisor (district superintendent) who was readily available. I had no idea what I did not know about pastoring a congregation. I thought I would simply love the people, teach them the

amazing truths I was learning about God, and all would be good. I am chuckling at my naivety as I type this. My supervisor, Bob Persky for the first year, then Bob Taylor for the next several years, was on my fast dial. Much of what I learned was the result of mistakes I made. Learning from mistakes is a valuable tool, but it's even more valuable when you are being mentored by someone who isn't dismayed by your mistakes, but rather turns them into learning opportunities. I give God credit for the members of those congregations being so patient and understanding as I learned how to be their pastor.

Bob Taylor did not have the *Developing Others* tool to help me understand the various stages of my training, but he intuitively followed the pattern the square defines. He spent a lot of time mentoring me by sharing things he had gone through and was going through and explaining how and why he responded the way he did. So, while I was not on the ground watching Bob, I was being mentored via our lengthy phone calls, enabling me to catch the training, which was shaping me. Bob mentored by listening, by asking clarifying questions and by giving timely challenges for me to apply many of the principles of leadership I had learned over the years. He was my mentor, coach, and cheerleader for several years, and I owe a lot to his patient leadership as he helped me become a good pastor.

His mentoring carried with me to Ohio, where I had the opportunity to take an intern and a pastoral resident through the *Developing Others* square. The intern had been a ministry leader in his previous congregation, but most of what he learned had to be unlearned. He came to the internship program realizing he had a lot to unlearn, so there was some conscious incompetence, but he had no idea how much he needed to learn that was still under the unconscious incompetence. The pastoral resident had just finished his MA and was full of knowledge, but little pastoral experience. He had no idea what he needed to learn. Like Bob, I didn't have the tool in front of me, but because of my personal experience, I started both men under the assumption that they did not know what they did not know. A key element of the *Developing Others* tool is that you do not put a time limit on when the person you are mentoring should move from one side of the square to the other. (More on this in Tool Exploration: *Developing Others*.) Some things your mentee will learn quickly, other things by trial and error. It's OK for them to make mistakes. Both my intern and my pastoral resident made a number of mistakes, and their biggest surprise

was that I didn't come down on them for their mistakes. I'll never forget the day the Pastoral Resident was at my home and I could tell he was nervous. We talked for a few hours and then I asked, "What's on your mind – you seem uptight." He responded, "Aren't you going to get on me for the mistake I made?" I asked him if he had learned from it. When he responded in the affirmative, I said, "Lesson learned, then. No need to go over it again."

The intern is now a pastor on the eastern side of Cincinnati, and works in my region. The Pastoral Resident replaced me as pastor over my Ohio congregation as I transitioned into my new administrative role.

### **Changing the structure**

When I was asked to move to Ohio, I determined to put spend more time in leadership development, and I became frustrated because I didn't feel the denomination was making leadership training and development the priority I believed it should be. I didn't realize there were several of us having the same concerns – including those at the Home Office. I was soon asked to be a district pastor. The role of the district pastor was to represent the Home Office in the field. We were asked to keep in contact with a small group of pastors and meet several times a year to provide a place where pastors could build relationships and share best practices. It was to be a safe place where pastors could also be open and honest, sharing their concerns, their successes and failures, and some of their frustrations. The structure was a stop-gap structure at best, because the training to be district pastor was limited. The truth was, we were never empowered to do the job we were given to do. We were given responsibility with no authority. This led to feelings of disempowerment. (See *Effective Delegation* tool in Appendix.)

One of my main frustrations was the disconnect I saw between our theology and our leadership development. Greg knew of my frustrations, so when he asked me to be part of the initial vision team to rethink and rework our Church Administration and Development (CAD) structure, I suggested we start by basing the foundation of any new structure on our theology. Greg asked me to write a theological proposal for CAD, and that proposal set the foundation for our meetings in his home. During the three days we were together, we not only developed the present CAD structure of regional pastors and development team members, we also started a plan toward multiplying leaders. We realized that GCI would not continue if

## A Giant Step Forward

we did not focus on multiplying good leaders. We realized we were being tasked with building a bridge to the future. It's not our place to determine where the next generation will take GCI as led by the Spirit, but our commission is to build a bridge for the next generation. To do this, we must multiply ourselves and train leaders worth following. We ended the time together amazed at how much we'd been able to accomplish in such a short time. Thank you, Holy Spirit!

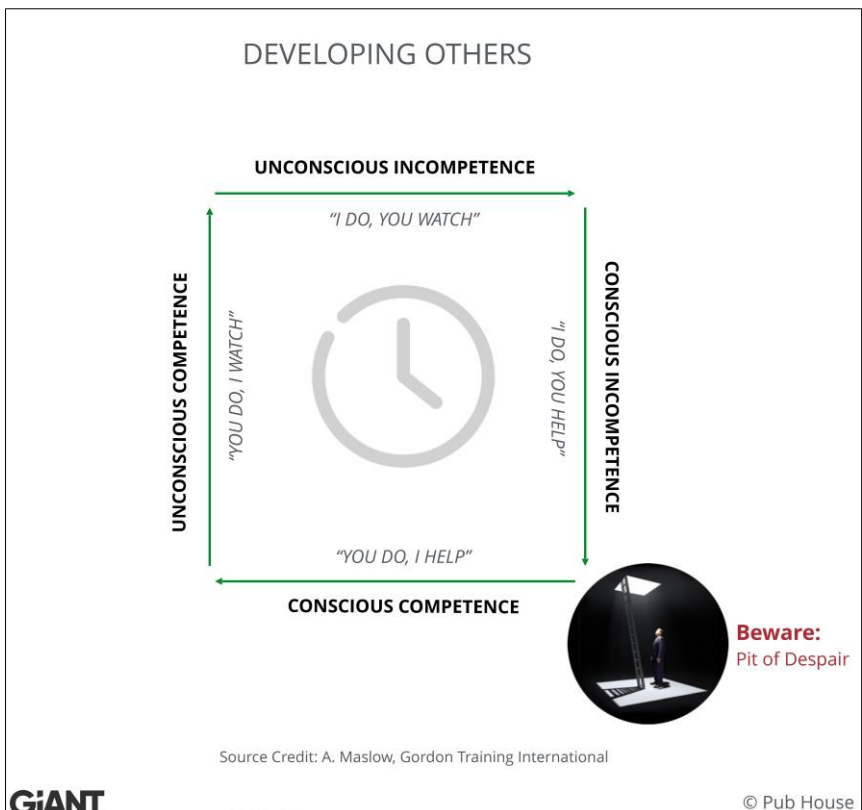
When we presented our proposal to the GCI board, we used what I had written about leadership being in sync with our theology as the basis for our proposal. God was leading us forward. At that time, I had no idea we were simply at the beginning of where we aspire to be.

## Tool Exploration: DEVELOPING OTHERS (Apprenticeship Square)

**Rick:** All three authors have had opportunity to experience the apprenticeship square as the trainee and the trainer, the mentor and the one being mentored. The four sides of the square describe a clear path for developing leaders who will develop leaders, the goal of GiANT Worldwide™ and GCI. In Christian vernacular, this can also describe the path of making disciples who make disciples.

Whether you are a bricklayer, a ministry leader, a baker or a pastor, the four stages of DEVELOPING OTHERS are applicable in mentoring. Greg and I both focused on the competency layer seen on the outside of the square. Let's notice the inside statements of the box.

*"I do, you watch."* The inside of the box describes a path for mentoring. When you are working with someone who doesn't know what he or she doesn't know, the best thing to do is model the behavior or action.





Encourage the mentee to observe. This is the best way to learn how to do something – watching someone who does it well. Be careful to not stay in this spot or your mentee will quickly get discouraged.

*“I do, you help.”* The mistake many make is turning something over too quickly. It takes time to develop leaders (we will get to the clock in the middle of the graphic in a moment.) Give her something to do. Let him participate by presenting part of an idea. Have her produce the back-up material and answer questions about it. Work as a team – still showing how, but giving opportunity for participation. Keep in mind this is when someone can fall into the pit of despair. He might determine it’s too much and he will never learn. She might grasp things quickly and wonder why you aren’t giving more freedom. Don’t rush turning the corner, but don’t delay either. Know your mentee so you can lead your mentee.

*“You do, I help.”* Let her present the next big idea after you’ve helped her prepare. Give him support by affirming he knows more than he thinks he knows. You are lending support, you are helping fill in the gaps; you step in when it is needed, but you are empowering others to lead. This is when you start to feel real satisfaction that the work you’ve done, the training you’ve given, is bearing fruit.

*“You do, I watch.”* This is when you stand in the back of the room and watch them lead. You are still there to give support when it is asked, to give advice, to affirm, but you are empowering them to be the leader you’ve trained them to be. A caution here is to allow them to insert their own personality and giftedness into their leadership. Be proud of the way they present things differently than you would present them.

The next step, which is indicated by the arrows going around the square, is to encourage them to start the square mentoring someone else.

The clock is a subtle reminder that it takes time to apprentice well. How much time? As much time as it takes. More than just a conveyance of information, mentoring is taking a long-term view of developing others, believing that this is how we participate most effectively in Liberating new leaders.

## Questions for Reflection

- Can you think of a personal journey where someone walked you around the Apprentice Square?
- Who are you mentoring? What stage is that relationship at on the Apprentice Square?
- How can you be a ladder to help aspiring leaders get out of the pit of despair?
- Using the Organizational Flow Chart as a guide, answer the following questions:
  - Is there clarity of vision that is understood at all levels of the organization?
  - How is your organization functioning structurally, systematically and strategically?
  - How is your organization functioning collegially, competency-wise, and culturally?



## 5 Draft Day (Choosing a Strong Team)

**G**reg: Sometimes you don't have much of a choice whether you inherit a team or you are given the opportunity right from the gate to pick a team. I have gone through this process on five occasions. It doesn't necessarily get easier and sometimes "it is what it is." However, as a leader, in the process of choosing your best team, you sometimes need to make tough choices regarding those you have "inherited."

I mentioned before that my wife is a "Nurturer." Susan has entreated me on multiple occasions "Greg, can't you work with him or her? Don't you have the ability to help him or her change?" I am influenced by her hope for good, and it persuades me to go the extra mile. However, experience has taught me that if a person is misplaced, and especially if they have been working under the illusion that nothing is wrong, then all the patience and additional training in the world will not bring about the needed change.

Separations are hard. I would not sugar coat this in any shape or fashion. Separations are also necessary for the good of the organization and the sake of the vision.

How does a leader go about picking his or her team? Once again let's look to Jesus. In Mark 3 we see the example of the Lord engaging in prayerful contemplation of whom he would choose and invite to become his original followers. Then it is revealing when Mark uses the words "*so that they can be with him.*"

Being with Jesus in shared activity, in communion of friendship, and wrapped in the deep experience of his transforming love was what shaped these disciples. Nothing less than this will work if our leaders are to be Liberators multiplying other leaders worth following. Whether extrovert or introvert, no matter what personality type, leaders must be relational.

Jesus prayed throughout the night in serious consideration of who the 12 original disciples would be. If Jesus chose with such great care about who would come alongside him, then we better choose and lead with great care as well.

Seeking the Lord's will through prayer is the first and most important practice in forming a team. I also recommend a short list of other qualities to look for in leaders who will make strong members of a healthy team. This list follows the acronym of FATE (Faithful, Available, Teachable and Enthusiastic).

Ask yourself the following series of questions. “Is the potential teammate...?”

**Faithful:** Do they display a life that is fueled by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:20, NET)? Has the person displayed a life of faithfulness?

**Available:** Is this person a self-starter? (I have little time or energy to micro-manage). Will this person conform their schedule to show up to the appointments, meetings and activities that ministry demands? A person cannot lead if he or she is not present.

**Teachable:** Does this person display the wonder of a small child who is like a sponge soaking up new ideas and experiences? Are they dedicated to a journey of life-long learning? Skills can be taught if a person is willing to learn.

**Enthusiastic:** Does this person have fire in their belly? Are they passionate and committed to the disciple-making ministry of Jesus? It takes positive people to build the culture of liberation.

I desire self-starting people who crave higher levels of responsibility. They need to be innovative implementers who can make things happen, and at the same time be collaborative team players. I don’t have much room for “Doug-Downers, Negative-Nancys or Straggler-Stans.” The FATE check-list has served me well in making initial assessments.

I have learned not to be intimidated by people who have experiences different to mine, nor people who are smarter than me. If my identity is centered in my relationship to Jesus then I can be comfortable with smart, talented people on my team – and then my team is much stronger and more capable. Many years ago I read some leadership advice from John Maxwell that said if you are a high capacity leader (he refers to those in the 90% range), and if you surround yourself with other leaders in the 80% range, guess what level the 80%’s will surround themselves with? That point stuck with me.

Before divulging the team I selected, please remember the culture that was present in GCI at the time. As I mentioned earlier in the book, prior to 2016 our standard way of operation in GCI was to attend select Christian conferences, and then host in-house conferences across our regions. We also held an annual planning meeting for our leadership team (unfortunately these had devolved into a meeting where most participants would bury their heads in their laptops and only come up for air when called upon). This combination of meetings provided a small measure of

learning and sharing, and yet the greater impact we were hoping for never materialized.

In late 2015 Tom Nebel approached me with the opportunity to begin a CORE Group through GiANT Worldwide™. My trust for Tom gave me the sense that this would be a great opportunity to invest in my key leaders.

Initially I thought to just go with the team I had at the time, but through prayer and deeper evaluation my mind was being swayed. It was a difficult process to determine which people I would invite, especially when a couple of the regional leaders were scheduled to retire in one to three years. Ultimately, I chose to leave off the ones who were retiring soon, and I added three others who were lead pastors that I envisioned taking on greater roles in the near future. I believe that it is always important to be thinking about emerging leaders at all levels and making significant contributions to their development.

In 2016 I rolled the dice and I asked the US Regional Directors plus the three invited pastors if they would commit to the year-long CORE Group experience. This was no small thing. The rigors of CORE Group meant a minimum of 30 minutes pre-work every two weeks in preparation for our 90-minute video discussions, 24 times over the long haul of an entire year. This was a hefty challenge to people whose schedules were already full. Not only was the schedule a hurdle, but several were concerned that somehow, we might be trading our beloved theology for the clever craftiness of psychology.

Sometimes a leader has to cash in his or her “credibility chips” and move the group in a direction they don’t quite see. I vividly recall the dinner meeting when I shared the invitation to CORE Group. There were concerned looks on several faces, and a few comments questioning the demands of such a request. Then one RD said, “If Greg is asking me to do this I will say yes.” This comment rallied the troops and we were set to begin CORE Group. This initiative has paid off big, and I can see it paying for at least a generation to come as GCI’s culture is being established in a fresh way. I am glad that this “band of brothers” trusted me enough as their leader to take the deep plunge into the commitment of the CORE Group.

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**Rick:** As I’ve mentioned previously, I’ve had opportunity to mentor two different men who moved into full-time pastor positions. Let me share the story of my first intern, who is currently pastoring a congregation near Cincinnati. Some of the first things I noticed about Jason as I interviewed

him was how well he fit into the four elements Greg calls his FATE checklist. Let me share a few details about our time together.

Jason grew up in Ohio around the Dayton area. I'd been introduced to him at camp ministry, and I periodically ran into him at events we both attended. The first thing you notice about Jason is his enthusiasm – for people, for ministry, for the Lord. He is what others call a “people-person.” I don't think Jason knows a stranger; he is loved by all because of his warmth, his love for others, and his passion. I saw how well he related to the campers and staff at one of our youth camps and saw great leadership. As I got to know him more, I recognized several pastoral gifts in Jason and wondered why he wasn't being groomed for pastoral ministry. (I often ask this question to pastors about young leaders in their congregations.) Years after I met Jason, Greg and others encouraged me to interview Jason for possible internship.

I jumped at the opportunity and spent several hours talking to Jason and his wife Julie. I was able to hire him as a part-time intern and we spent several hours a week together for 18 months. Jason then continued his training as a Pastoral Resident and Associate Pastor in Kansas City, MO, for several months before being commissioned as their senior pastor. Four years later Jason had the opportunity to transfer back to Ohio to be near his extended family and to serve in my region. I'm not only thrilled to have him back in Ohio, but I'm blessed to have him as part of my regional team.

While I would not have hired Jason if I hadn't seen his faithfulness, availability and enthusiasm, what was most important to me was his teachability.

As with all interns and ministry leaders I've trained, Jason had a lot to unlearn as we went around the apprenticeship square together. He had come through some unhealthy ministry experiences that made him over-sensitive in some areas and led him to making some wrong decisions in other areas. Add to that his overall inexperience and as you would expect, he made a number of mistakes along the way. (I should add here that I made a number of mistakes along the way as well, as you will read about below.) Jason's first surprise, as I mentioned in a previous chapter, was that I didn't come down on him for his mistakes. In some cases, I didn't even mention the mistakes. I made it clear from the beginning of our relationship that making mistakes was part of his learning process. I told him he would continue to make mistakes even after years of experience, and as long as he learned from them, he would do fine. I would then share

mistakes I had made and told Jason and Julie I would strive to be transparent about any mistakes I made while mentoring them. I had to do this a number of times. What impressed me over and over was Jason's teachability.

I've mentioned previously in the book the importance of allowing those we are mentoring and leading to make mistakes. Allowing an apprentice to fail on a minor issue and learn from the experience will help him/her avoid failing on a major issue. And while there were times I didn't mention the mistake because Jason was already owning what he had done, there were other times I had to point it out. One of the challenges of learning is realizing something that looks good initially, can actually prove to be a large problem later on. As a leader, it's important to know when to intervene. Small failures can be learning experiences, but we never want others to feel like a failure. That leads to the pit of despair we talked about earlier.

The mistake I made more than once was forgetting Jason was still learning. On more than one occasion I gave him advice without considering where he was on the Apprenticeship Square, thus risking him falling into the pit of despair because of decisions he made. Other times I gave advice without getting all the facts, again causing him to make a few unhealthy decisions regarding leadership or a church policy. I often reminded him I was learning as much from the mentoring experience as he was.

There were many opportunities in our time together for me to go into reverse gear and apologize. I'd like to stress this point. Leaders who lead in humility will learn the value of an apology. I'll never forget the time I told a leader in one of my congregations that he needed to apologize to his team because he had caused some offense. His response: "Leaders should never have to apologize." I tried to help him see the error in his statement, but he wouldn't budge. It was clear he wasn't teachable, and soon after, I stopped using him in leadership. If a leader cannot admit a mistake, he should not be a leader. If a leader cannot go into reverse gear and apologize, she will soon find herself with no one to lead.

Allow me to be even more transparent. This is my second attempt at writing this chapter. My first attempt, which I thought was well written, proved to be anything but, and had the potential to cause hurt and offense. When this was brought to my attention, I deleted the chapter and started



over. Leaders never stop making mistakes; good leaders never stop learning from those mistakes.

Going back to Jason, one of the biggest challenges facing any new leader is putting a leadership team together. Like all new leaders, he has struggled with this and has made a few mistakes – promoting some too soon, unintentionally sidelining others, coming across to others as playing favorites. I remind him often that choosing a strong team takes time, and you will make mistakes along the way. That’s OK if you are teachable. Leaders must be just as teachable as those they lead. Because I’ve been transparent about my own struggles and mistakes with leadership teams over the years, he has learned that the mistakes he makes are temporary; hurts can be healed, and relationships can be restored as long as humility and teachability are evident.

Jason has gone through CORE training and is in process of learning the value of Team Based, Pastor Led leadership teams. I will be leading his leadership teams through CORE in the months ahead.

One final point: even if you have inherited a team, it’s vital to continually work toward building a healthy team that can join you in whatever mission or vision God has given you. In Chapter 6, we will discuss the concept of a REAL team. Keep reading...

### **CORE Testimonies from our US Regional Directors**

**Rick:** We want to share testimonies from the Regional Directors in our original group. My testimony is shared through the book, and in detail in Chapter 7, so I will only make a few short comments here. Unlike the other team members, I had only taken a few personality tests over the years and wasn’t impressed with the results. So, I was lukewarm about the personality profile, but I was excited to join with a group of peers and study leadership together. Greg had already shared a couple of the tools we would be discussing, and I believed it would be a beneficial exercise for the new team. I was blown away right from the start when we started discussing the difference between nurture and nature and we went through the personality profiles slowly and methodically. I was learning things about myself from the very start and knew this was going to be a great learning experience. What I did not expect was the transparency, the bonding, the depth of sharing experiences and the humility from these peers. We entered the group sharing similar responsibilities and through the process we became brothers sharing life.

**Randy Bloom:** I met Tom Nebel at a national church planting conference and soon thereafter, I invited him to speak about church planting at a couple GCI regional conferences. Over the years, we've become good friends.

When Tom first told me about the CORE Process, I recommended it to Greg, who liked it and began planning with Tom how to share this material with our team. I was happy to join the first GCI CORE group with Greg, the current US Regional Directors, and a few others.

The CORE material gave broader and deeper insights into who I am in Christ. The insights into personal strengths, and strategies for modifying weaknesses, as well as gaining insights and appreciation for other personality types, were invaluable. Self-understanding is a foundational aspect of the CORE Process and is an essential aspect to growing in Christ. Understanding ourselves helps us to better enjoy and appreciate the participating work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as Jesus leads us. Then it enhances our ability to lead others.

The *5 Voices* tool added some new insights regarding the strengths and challenges of my preferred, natural style of communication. *5 Voices* also helped me better understand how others communicate – helping me avoid jumping to conclusions and responding inappropriately when communicating with others. Being able to communicate well is essential for healthy relationships as well as building and growing healthy teams.

The *Support Challenge Matrix* is a tool that helped me see I was resting in the “Protector” style of leadership, a whiplash reaction to the “Dominant” style of leadership we previously experienced (and even implemented). I don't believe I was stuck there, but I believe GCI's Protector environment was preventing me from raising challenges and making tough decisions. CORE helped me see how the Holy Spirit is calling and leading us away from all three of these problematic styles of leadership into being Liberators who empower and release others to recognize, appreciate and grow in their unique identity in Christ.

I share CORE principles and tools on a regular basis when interacting with pastors, sometimes formally (sharing a visual tool) or informally. Whether I use the tools overtly or without reference to them, they are helpful. I taught the CORE materials to a group of pastors throughout 2017 and the experience of growing closer to them and watching them continue to grow as Christian leaders has been exhilarating and fulfilling. I look

forward to sharing another year of growth with a new CORE group in 2018.

Aside from the learning, I am especially grateful for the opportunity to get to know the people in the group more deeply as friends and family. My love and respect for my fellow regional directors, as well as my family at the home office, has grown tremendously. The CORE experience accomplished what I personally hoped – it has enriched me, drawn our team closer together and made us more the leaders in Christ we are called to be. I would like to think it is also helping me to be a better husband and father as well as a better friend, brother and leader for pastors in my region.

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**Tim Sitterley:** Having worked in the corporate world – both private and public sector – for a substantial portion of my non-ministry life, I was convinced I had experienced every motivational/self-help/leadership mantra that the pseudo-Jungian gurus had to offer. Between break-out sessions at corporate retreats, leadership videos, a couple of “mandatory” workshops, and elective classes at Stanford, I knew my personality profile, my color, my representative animal, and had memorized enough acronyms and initialisms to fill a crossword puzzle. I was not excited about another “know yourself to lead yourself” program.

I had the right to say no. After all, I had to come up with my own funding, and that alone could have given me the out I was looking for. But when a friend and fellow co-worker used the term “career suicide” I resolved myself to learning yet more new attributes about myself. Which, in hindsight, is one of my favorite things to talk about...so what could it hurt?

I was not an immediate convert to the GiANT™ material. Processing through my Myers-Briggs profile for the ninth or tenth time was as frustrating as ever. What I want to be, and what the testing indicated for me were in different time zones. But the CORE material approached my ENFP profile more from the vantage of how others see and interact with me, than how I see myself. That was new.

The value of CORE that quickly became obvious, was not so much in the material itself, but rather in the facilitated interaction of the group. The development of a common vocabulary was invaluable, as was coming to know the rest of the team through the constructive give and take initiated by the GiANT™ curriculum. Add to this fact that our group facilitator

quickly made himself “one of us” through his transparency and openness. These all softened my resistance.

Then came the *Self Preservation* tool. (See this tool in the Appendix.) “What are you afraid of losing?” “What are you trying to hide?” “What are you trying to prove? To whom?” Perhaps it was the timing. I was entering a new phase and position in ministry, and I was not handling the transition well. Whatever the cause or motivation, this one tool changed how I moved forward in the program. The *5 Voices* of leadership dynamics followed, and I was all in. The *5 Gears* presentation was game changing. (See Tool Exploration: *5 Gears* in Chapter 7.) And at the personal level, my relationship with the rest of the team will never be the same.

At the end of the program a fellow participant spoke into the changes they saw in me from the beginning of CORE till the end. I am not certain if their summation was a compliment to what I had become, or an indictment of what I was initially. I suspect both. But I would like to claim the statement, and perhaps grow into it. Because...while in the beginning I couldn't think of a single reason why I should have to sit through “another” leadership program...at the end I couldn't imagine NOT having been a part of the CORE experience.

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**PD Kurts:** When Greg approached us about going through a year-long process together called CORE with GiANT Worldwide™, I thought to myself, “Here we go again, searching out the magic bullet that’s going to save our church.” I was sure I didn’t have time for this with everything else on my plate, but what was I to do? Greg was my boss, and as Greg does so well, he strongly “encouraged” me (us) to make this a priority. Additionally, he asked us to raise the money to pay for it, and it wasn’t cheap. I thought, really? I was pleasantly surprised at how responsive and supportive congregations in my region were to contribute funds toward this effort. By God’s grace, more money was raised than was needed!

It wasn’t long before I realized that the Holy Spirit was definitely in this. Through facilitator Tom Nebel and the encouragement of others in the group, I discovered for the first time in 47 years that, even though I’m what some would call a people person, I’m actually an introvert. This was embarrassing at first to admit to the group. I had spent my entire life wanting to be an extrovert and looking down on introverts. It was one of the most liberating things I’ve experienced in my life. For the first time I could be honest with myself about how God had uniquely created me.

Because of this, I've come to believe that a big part of Jesus' ministry in and through me is to help Liberate introverts by helping them see that, in spite of what our culture communicates, they are gifted people with a lot to offer the world around them. I will forever be grateful to Tom and my GCI family for celebrating with me how I'm uniquely wired. I'm also forever grateful to Greg for giving us the nudge we needed to do this.

Learning our Voice order was an amazing team journey, helping us better understand what strengths each brings to the table. It also helped us understand what weaknesses we bring to the mix and the importance of relying on each other. Understanding Voice order was imperative to helping us become a more effective team.

I found the *Support Challenge Matrix* to be the most effective tool for me personally. After many years of disappointment in ministry and life taking its toll, I found myself abdicating as a leader in a variety of ways. I looked around and discovered that I had allowed, and in some cases created, a culture of apathy and low expectations. The Holy Spirit quickly convicted me that this had to change and that it was *worth* changing. High support and high challenge are necessary if, as leaders, we truly want to fight for the highest possible good in the lives of those we lead.

When Greg asked each of us to start and lead our own CORE groups, I pushed back because I didn't think I was qualified to lead a group. I pushed back even though I knew objectively we couldn't let this whole thing end with us. It had to be replicated so as to spread throughout our GCI culture. I reluctantly recruited a new group going into 2017. One of the unforeseen things that happened was that nearly each person in the group was an introvert! There were many times when silence ruled our video chats. At times it was almost painful, but I learned a lot through that. Though I made a lot of mistakes facilitating this group, those mistakes prepared me for the next group I am leading in 2018. Thank you, Holy Spirit, we'll have more please!

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**Michael Rasmussen:** When Greg sent an email inviting a number of us to participate in a special leadership training opportunity, I didn't feel I had the time for one more thing – and besides that, it was expensive. One of the congregations in my region offered to cover the cost. (I will be forever grateful to my brothers and sisters in that congregation).

So, with the fee covered, I told Greg yes, though I still didn't want to do it. I heard things mentioned like Myers-Briggs and other typical

evaluation tools, which I had taken a number of times and found them to be only mildly helpful. The thought of going through it all again was almost unbearable. However, I trusted Greg and was curious about the excitement he had for this program he called CORE by GiANT Worldwide™.

At first, I was not very impressed. We spent quite a bit of time going through the Myers-Brigg's personality profile and I found it only mildly informative. However, what I did see was the bonding, that was beginning to take place within the group. As we moved on in the class the material became more and more exciting and tremendously helpful in my day-to-day ministry as a pastor and regional director. The hands-on practical tools and insights helped me align my congregation's and my region's vision and plans for the future. It gave us simple tools and common vocabulary to bring us together in ways I could not have imagined.

The *5 Voices* tool is tremendously helpful in helping convey a vision to a congregation and/or region. It teaches you how to listen to all the other Voices in a group even though those Voices may not come naturally for you. We also went through the *5 Gears*, which helps you address balance in your daily life. I found that I was failing at 1<sup>st</sup> Gear, which is providing proper time for me to personally recharge and get refreshed. I was so busy taking care of the needs of others I neglected to take care of me. Who knew?

CORE provided a safe place for us to face our fears and our failings together. It was powerful and life altering. I can honestly say the yearlong process forever changed and bonded our group together in a special way. We can be open and honest with each other about things we would have never shared before. We have given each other permission to call BS when we are hiding and being self-protecting. How empowering and refreshing it is to be real and honest with the most critical concerns in your life.

I have since started several CORE groups of my own. I have heard the lament on more than one occasion, "Where was this information 40 years ago?" We are excited to see what God has in store for us.

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## **Tom – Consultant Viewpoint**

Greg talked about taking the risk – cashing in his chips, so to speak – with the idea of implementing GiANT™ through developing an initial CORE Group. I felt like it was a risk, too. This would be my first notable

denominational team to take through the CORE curriculum, and I had my own self-preservation. They were going to pay full price, all at the beginning, so I felt blessed by that. But I also felt insecure. What if I blew it? What if it didn't work? I'd worked with GCI, particularly with Randy Bloom, relative to church planting (my career specialty), but now I was feeling like the late-career guy who was selling vacuum cleaners door-to-door. I was enthusiastic about what we were doing in GiANT™, but, still, I hadn't led a denominational team. And if you re-read what the RDs and others from our original CORE Group wrote above, you'll see that they came into this with some tepid caution and reluctant compliance. We were all “unconsciously incompetent”; we didn't know what we didn't know.

I saw Greg's leadership from the beginning. We say that Pioneers can make the tough decisions, and I think he landed it perfectly in terms of whom he invited into the group. It meant that some weren't there who probably wanted to be – and (as we've said), some were there reluctantly. I wasn't there reluctantly, but I was scared. I had already “fallen in like” with GCI when Randy had me view *Called to be Free*, by Living Hope Ministries, about the grace awakening in GCI, and I saw the testimonies of what happened. I remember crying when I saw that. To me it was a privilege to play a role in the next steps, and I didn't want to blow it. Thank God it went well.

The group was protective at first – high support and low challenge toward each other. And there was some image-managing. How couldn't there be? Many in the group had been groomed to not show weakness or admitting to being “less than.” Lots of fear. Here's an internal observation I made, but I never told anyone: When we started the group, I sent an email out to everyone to get their input relative to which day of the week, and what time of the day, we would meet online for the year. No one responded. No one. Crickets for a couple of days. Finally, Greg wrote, “I think Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. Pacific time would be good.” Within the next few hours, virtually everyone weighed in, “I agree with Greg.” “I agree with Greg.” It was hilarious. No one was going to bring challenge to Greg quite yet. That would eventually start to change.

One thing that I love about GiANT™ is that it doesn't allow people to hide behind a wall of pride for very long. We are big on “applied learning” – practical applications. Everyone is routinely shown mirrors and asked, “Which one or two of these things are you going to work on?” I wish we had the moment recorded when that started to happen. We say that leaders define culture; they don't just talk about it. I'm sure that Greg defined the

culture of that group by sharing his own shortcomings when the opportunity presented itself. Sometimes I would press Greg intentionally. “Leaders go first. Whatcha got for us, Greg?” Others started to play along. I remember a time when Rick shared something about his own insecurity, and everyone else “umm-hmm’d”. It was legit. He was showing the other RDs how to do it. It’s been said that when one person plays a face card, others will open their hands. By the third meeting people were being transparent. That’s a pattern I continue to see. Three meetings and people see it’s safe.

Two final observations. Initially we used *GoToMeeting* as our online platform, and while it allowed for everyone to be online, only six could be “on camera” at a time. I think the guys liked that at first, and they’d learn how to be off camera to “hack the system” so they could multi-task. I felt like the substitute teacher whose class thought they were pulling something over on him. But I figured out how to keep them on edge. However, it didn’t take long before the enthusiasm became endemic, and these guys were falling in love with each other, so people were eager to be on camera. (We now use Zoom, which accommodates for up to 50 people). The second observation was that we had to expand our meetings from 75 to 90 minutes, because the group was so large. But by that time, everyone was “in,” and they were good with it. I am proud of these guys for leading the way and giving their best. We had become a band of brothers.

### **Questions for Reflection**

- What kind of teammates do you have?
- What kind of teammates do you need? What will your selection process look like?
- Do you have team members who are not “good fits” and need to be either re-assigned to a different position, or let go from the organization? What is your plan for working through this?
- How are you currently investing in your team? In what ways are the investments making a difference?
- What is your Learning Opportunity in choosing your team?
  - Call it
  - Own it
  - Respond
  - Execute





## 6 REAL Teams (Getting to know your team)

**G**reg: In my 57 years of life, I have come to believe that effective leadership means *really* knowing your team members so that you are able to oversee them effectively through the many challenges you will face. In my many years of conferences, consultations, and training sessions, I have not encountered anything as fully-rounded and impactful as the CORE Group process through GiANT Worldwide™ that exposes, challenges, and builds the individual and team at the same time. And as much as the material is excellent, I think the master ingredient is the consistency of focused, interpersonal time among the participants. You can know another person in depth only through a massive collection of meaningful shared interchanges.

GiANT Worldwide™'s mission is to develop leaders worth following. Humility and accurate self-awareness are fundamental to the process. For CORE Group to work to its fullest the participants have to first be brave, and then be willing to be open and honest.

As our leaders went through GiANT™'s material, I watched them become progressively more honest about themselves to the point they are not willing to settle for anything that is not “real.” The same is true about my experience through CORE. In our annual spring retreat after we had completed CORE Group we gave our team members the license to call “BS” on one another (BS is a common American expletive; look it up if you must). The permission to “call up” applies to me as well, even if I am the team leader. (See Tool Exploration: *The Liberator's Intent*.)

In the journey to include other pastors, the authenticity of what we are doing through GiANT™ has been questioned. This notion “Are we trading our theology for psychology?” continues to be asked. And then the same type question worded a bit more boldly – “Are we looking to the world for wisdom instead of looking to Jesus?” Below is my written response to one of the pastors who was seeking understanding in these matters.

GiANT™'s material is way more than techniques. Having greater self-awareness (not self-absorption) allows me to have a deeper dependence on Jesus and to treat others with greater care.

Allow me to provide one example. I am the kind of person who processes in communication with others. A regular pitfall that occurs is that some people who are in the meeting will take away the notion that we are working on a plan, or that they were given a promise of something that is supposed to happen. A tool that GiANT™ taught me is to frame the context of the conversation – Is this provisional (brainstorming)? Are we making a plan? Or are we in the execution stage? This one tool alone has helped me to lead meetings in a much healthier way and to show proper love and respect for my colleagues. Misunderstandings are less frequent, praise God! I do not disassociate this healthy change from the abiding presence of Jesus in the learning and execution of this tool. It is not an “either/or” approach – either looking to Jesus or looking to the world.

I don't view this type of tool (and many others that GiANT™ has taught me) as “slick techniques.” I have seen how this is transforming me to be better at what the New Testament calls “one-to-anothering” with the people around me. I have also witnessed marvelous transformation in the Regional Pastors. They are listening to others more deeply, respecting the variety of personalities in the mix of people they oversee, and are more patient with processes of leadership that require a high level of maturity. This is culture shaping.

Yes, we are new creations in Christ, and yes, our inner man is being renewed day by day as we grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus. Nothing I have learned from GiANT™ is about manipulation. It is firmly grounded in honesty and humility and it is helping me to better live out my Christian life. One of the greatest personal impacts came from their session called 5 Gears, which challenged me to begin a daily devotion with my wife that has re-centered us in a significant way.

All glory goes to God above for his transforming power, and in the same breath I thank our marvelous Triune God for how he has led us to Dr. Tom Nebel and GiANT™, and the magnificent way he has used this experience.

Thanks for asking the questions!

Greg

I hope my answer was explanatory and not viewed as defensive. I shared earlier that my nurturing voice is the quietest, and I have to check myself regularly to make sure this voice gets expressed in my responses.

For a leader to gain the confidence and allegiance of the people who are being led, “authenticity” has to stand out. Does the leader truly care about the value of the vision? And equally, does the leader care about the good of each team member? These crucial factors cannot be anything less than genuine.

In GCI we are beginning to use the phraseology “REAL Teams.” (REAL is the acronym for Relationally Connected, Enthusiastically Engaged, Affirming, Liberating Leaders.) Whether it's the field team of our Regional Pastors, or the leadership team in one of our congregations, I believe it's vital at all levels of the organization that we become REAL Teams – teams that possess the characteristics listed in this box:

George Cladis, in his book, *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders*, shows how important Team-Based leadership is to the health of a congregation. He paints a compelling, theologically grounded vision for how effective leadership teams are built and then operate.

Cladis makes the case that throughout Christendom as well as the business world, it has become evident that Team Based models are the best leadership models for what we face in the twenty-first century. This is why we have arrived at the “Team Based, Pastor Led” model discussed earlier.

For us in GCI it is paramount that we view the mysterious relationship of Father, Son and Spirit as the beginning place for how we see harmonious relationship, and how this informs what ministry teams will be and how they will function, and then mature into REAL Teams.

Cladis works from the foundational understanding of the perichoretic relations of the Trinity, viewed as a joy-filled “dance” in which the Father, Son and Spirit relate in perfect freedom, intimacy and harmony. These relationships are the ideal image for how we want to relate within our leadership teams – helping each one become a REAL team. Doing so takes the triune God's inspiration and empowerment.





The perfect mutual giving and receiving found in the eternal relationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the ideal for healthy ministry teams. Cladis says on page 9 that the goal of emulating the Trinity is both idyllic and absurd, but if we don't move toward an image that is spiritually meaningful, our failure in relational breakdown is a certainty. I'm on board

## A Giant Step Forward

with the goal of us reaching toward the ideal and emulating the love, respect and harmony of the Trinity.

As I dream and pray for our fellowship, I often think “What will we be like one day when we have REAL Teams operating at every level of the church?” This is the long road we are walking, and may the Lord have his way with us.

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<b>R</b> <b>RELATIONALLY CONNECTED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Value relationships.</li><li>» Invest in teammates.</li><li>» Pursue Jesus.</li><li>» Genuinely like their teammates and enjoy spending time together.</li><li>» Chemistry between teammates builds the foundation for trust and confidence in one another.</li></ul>	
<b>E</b> <b>ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENGAGED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Focused and determined.</li><li>» Passionate pursuit and follow-through.</li><li>» The daily “can-do” spirit, working under the realization that Christ is for us and that we have every spiritual blessing in Him.</li></ul>	
<b>A</b> <b>AFFIRMING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» “Calling Up” good instead of Calling Out” mistakes.</li><li>» “How do we face the challenge together and move forward?”</li><li>» A team that can be honest about their strengths and challenges, and then work out of this reality is a REAL Team!</li></ul>	
<b>L</b> <b>LIBERATING LEADERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Believe investing in others is the highest investment.</li><li>» Willing to take risks.</li><li>» Create safe environments for failure and learning from mistakes.</li><li>» Equip others, empower others, and provide long-term encouragement.</li></ul>	

**Rick:** I graduated from high school in 1976. Most of the 400+ members of my class would not have a clue who I was. Though I've always been an extrovert, I am typically a shy extrovert and in high school I did my best to blend in and not be noticed. Despite my efforts, I always had friends to play cards with during lunch (euchre was the game of choice) and I was involved in a couple of clubs. While I would consider myself a "nobody" at school, I was popular in my youth group at church, serving as president of youth group during my senior year of school. In college I served in a variety of leadership positions all the way through graduation. After graduation I continued to lead in my congregation and work environment. I've been in leadership in one capacity or another for more than 40 years. However, I believe it's only been the last few years when I began to understand what it means to be a leader worth following.

It's one thing to lead – many people lead – it's quite another to bear the responsibility that true leadership – leaders worth following – brings. Leaders worth following are leaders willing to make unpopular decisions to get the job done. They bring High Challenge because they want the most from and for people who are following; they bring High Support because they want others to know they are not alone. Leaders worth following are Liberators. Like Greg and the rest of our team, my goal is to be a Liberator. I want to lead leaders who also want to be Liberators and who share the goal of leader multiplication.

Let me share a bit about my region. My region encompasses 11 states, 60+ pastoral leaders and congregations, several youth camps, and an annual regional celebration. Let me give a bit of detail about each.

*Pastors and congregations:* Many of the congregations and fellowship groups in my region are fairly small. When one of our congregations consistently has a regular attendance of less than 15, we refer to them as Fellowship Groups. Nineteen of the 65 congregations in my region are listed as Fellowship Groups. I have several congregations averaging 50 or more in attendance each week, and three are approaching the 100 mark. That number likely seems small to many readers, but this means my region is similar to regions in most denominations.

*Youth Camps:* Of the five youth camps in the region, three of them are weeklong camps with the campers residing on the camp premises. One is a weekend camp with campers spending the night, and one is a congregational community camp where the campers come for several hours a day but go home in the evenings. We are working toward closing

our regional camps and focusing on congregations hosting community camps.

*Regional Celebration:* For more than 20 years, we've hosted an annual weekend celebration in the region. Attendance will range from 300-400 and it has started growing as a result of making some necessary leadership changes. This is a combination training, worship, and family celebration where we have activities for all ages.

### **My path toward building a REAL team**

It didn't take me long to realize the job was too big for one person; I needed a team to help carry the load. However, being new to the RD role, I made some mistakes. I knew I needed a team. I was being encouraged to build a team, but I wasn't sure who to have on the team, or what they would do. I sought counsel and quickly formed a team by asking two former district pastors, a fairly new pastor, and a man I liked and believed would be a good team member to join me on my regional team. I made four major mistakes in building this team. First, I relied on the advice of others rather than spending a devoted amount of time in prayer and building relationship. I also discounted some because of what I had heard about their leadership abilities. (See Tool Exploration: *Go to the Source.*) Second, I was more concerned about giving honor to a few long-serving pastors and others than I was about who needed to be on the team to help me serve the region more effectively. Third, I did not give the team a vision or a mission, primarily because I wasn't sure what I wanted them to do. And fourth, rather than admit my mistake, ask for forgiveness, and start over, I determined to give it a go. Basically, all I did that first year was bounce ideas off the four team members. They served as a pseudo advisory team, and morale was low. We fumbled and bumbled our way through my first year as a regional director, and then I disbanded the team.

I stated four mistakes; now let me share the four steps I took toward building a new team.

- 1) I spent time in prayer, talking to God about what I thought the region needed, and listening to make sure I was following his path more than my own.
- 2) During that prayer time God and I built a vision for the region and it became clear I needed people on the team who could speak into that vision. The vision includes leading congregations into renewal to build healthy churches, to reimagine youth camps and

move away from regional or district camps and focus on community day camps, to develop and maintain our Ministry Training Center, and to continue our annual regional celebration. I also needed people on the team with whom I had, or could build relationship.

- 3) I determined I needed the following on the team (keeping in mind that one person can fill more than one role):
  - a. A pastor whose congregation can be used as a good example of a healthy church
  - b. Someone familiar with the regional camps and who can spearhead the move toward community day camps
  - c. Someone who is an integral part of our MTC vision
  - d. Someone I can trust to be intimately involved in the planning of our regional celebration
  - e. Someone who can assist me in my job as a regional director and I can mentor toward replacing me
  - f. Someone who can provide coaching and training of CORE to other pastors and leaders
- 4) I spent more time praying over the potential team members, to make sure they are REAL – relational, enthusiastic, affirming, liberators. Once I chose the team members, I invited all to my home for a one-day meeting to form the team. We plan to have an annual planning retreat enabling the team to bond and develop a vision for the following year.

I praise God that he lets me learn from my mistakes and he is there to help me build this new team. I am also thankful to Greg for being patient with me as I bumbled my way through building a REAL team. Becoming a liberator is a continual process of learning.

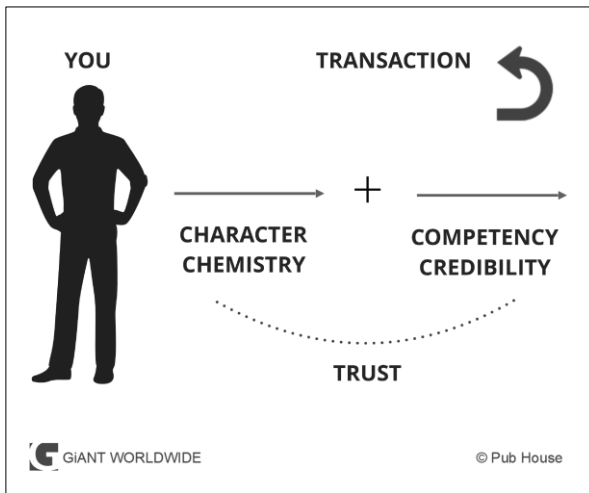
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## Tool Exploration: THE INFLUENCE MODEL

**Tom:** Being REAL means we come to the table with humility. We gain an accurate understanding of ourselves when we listen to what others tell us, and we look in the mirror. Many of GiANT™’s visual tools are mirrors. As we say, everyone gets broccoli in their teeth; we can’t see it unless we use a mirror.

One such mirror is GiANT™’s *The Influence Model*. While complex at first sight, it’s basically saying there is a process by which we gain our influence with others. We can’t demand influence with others, but we can



work on our part.

I want to highlight a segment of the tool that describes the “Four C’s of Influence” – our part in seeing who we are and looking to improve for the sake of our team and our mission. Each of us has some of these C’s working for us, and each of us has at least one area of growth, something that’s not natural to us. Having a humble view of who we are positions us to work hard at improvement.

As the apostle Paul wrote, “For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you” (Romans 12:3).

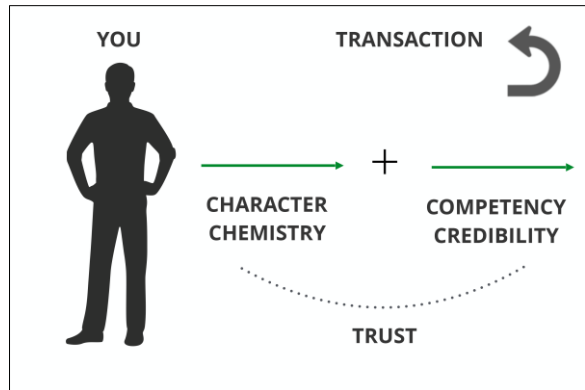
All of God’s children have gifts to use in glorifying him and building up others, and then likewise we all have gaps where we are not gifted. The apostle Paul says to use “sober judgment” about ourselves. This means to

judge accurately and fairly as we view our individual selves, not to think too highly lest we become arrogant, nor have a false humility that paralyzes and prevents us from fully participating in the way the Lord shaped us.

*Character* asks the question, “Do I trust you?” Have you been around someone whom you trust instinctively – or perhaps distrust instinctively? It might be you! This might be something you have going for you, or it might be something you need to work at.

*Chemistry* asks the question, “Do I like you?” Some of us are easily liked; others not so much. It’s not satisfactory to say, “Well, that’s just the way I am.” In a culture of “high support, high challenge, and grace always” we will “call up” one another to know what it’s like to be on the other side of ourselves and to be more likeable.

*Competency* asks, “Do I see that you are competent?” In other words, “Do I see that you know what you’re talking about?” Have you done the rigor to be good at what you should be good at? The apostle Peter challenges us to “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks



you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15). As children of God, we steward ourselves toward competency, even when it requires work.

Finally, *Credibility* asks, “Are you relevant?” In other words, you could be trustworthy, likeable, and competent while not at all being helpful to me. But if you take the time to understand my situation, be “interested before being interesting” you will have huge credibility with me, and your influence will be remarkable. (See Tool Exploration: *Interested Before Interesting* in the Appendix.)

In which area do you excel? And which will be a natural barrier for you to overcome? We will all be amazing teammates when we learn how it is that others see us and when we take a good look in the mirror as to how we come across. Moreover, we will be amazing teammates when, in the

## A Giant Step Forward

proper way, we point out the broccoli in the teeth of those we journey with. In GiANT™ we call it “fighting for the highest good in the lives of those we lead.”

May we recommend that you be especially thoughtful and methodical in addressing the reflection questions? This analysis will help you determine how much of a REAL Team you have or don't have.

## Tool Exploration: Go to the Source

**Rick:** Many years ago several people “warned” me about a person I was going to be working with. I was told the person was difficult to work with and I’d better go into the working relationship prepared to battle. I’m ashamed to say I fell for the talk and wasn’t surprised to find conflict as we started working together.

One day, while praying for this person to be more agreeable and humbler, the thought came to me (credit the Holy Spirit): “Do you even know the person? You are basing everything you say and do on what you’ve heard.” Ouch! It was true.

I took the person to lunch and said, “Tell me your story.” By the end of lunch, I had a completely different view of the person and realized most who had shared things with me didn’t know the person at all. We ended up having a productive working relationship – after I had changed.

As leaders, we know gossip spreads quickly. We can sometimes be surprised at the things we are quoted as having said. We often hear about trials people are going through not from the people themselves, but from other people. And we often hear things – about a myriad of topics – and if we aren’t careful, we can jump to conclusions or make decisions based on what we’ve heard, rather than what is true.

The *Go to the Source* tool is based on the Matthew 18 principle of going to your brother. In Matthew, the context is when someone sins against you and you want restoration, but the principle goes beyond restoration. Allow me to give you an example from the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Joshua.

Prior to the Israelites crossing the Jordan River into the promised land, Moses had promised the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh the land east of the Jordan. Before they could inhabit the land, though, the rest of Israel needed the warriors from these tribes to clear the west side of the Jordan for Israel to inhabit. After defeating 31 kingdoms, Joshua gave them a blessing and permission to go to the land promised them. When they crossed over the river, they built a huge altar on the eastern banks of the Jordan.

To the Israelites on the west of the Jordan, the altar posed significant problems. There were specific rules to follow for building sacrificial altars. The Israelites were prohibited from building sacrificial altars wherever they wanted. Those who saw the altar immediately started gossiping among themselves. They got upset, they wanted to go over and destroy

their fellow Israelites for their idolatry. They complained to the priests and chiefs, who served as a conduit for the people's fear and anger, rather than as a firewall. What they should have done is say, "Let's go talk to them and see what's up, rather than prepare for war and storm over with accusations."

Instead, a contingent of leaders was sent to confront this group of rebellious Israelites who so quickly deserted their faith and started following other gods. This group went before the leaders of the Reubenites, Gadites and half-tribe of Manasseh and accused them, saying, "The whole assembly of the Lord says: 'How could you break faith with the God of Israel like this? How could you turn away from the Lord and build yourselves an altar in rebellion against him now?'" (Joshua 22:16). They continued accusing the eastern tribes of putting the entire nation of Israel at risk of the wrath of God for their unfaithfulness without giving opportunity to reply.

Long story short, the altar was not built for sacrifices; it was built to be a witness – a constant reminder to all that the brothers and sisters on both sides of the Jordan honored and worshipped the same God. It was built to glorify God, not to cause division.

I believe this story is in the Scriptures to remind us to go to the source. As leaders, we need to be a firewall against gossip and to teach others to be firewalls rather than conduits. When we teach others to also go to the source, we will have much fewer problems with gossip in our congregations.

Note: We also know from Matthew 18 that there is provision made when our "going to the source" falls on deaf ears. Though the stories are addressing different challenges, the principle still applies. When our words fall on deaf ears, we are encouraged to bring someone with us. On occasion all of us are the person being asked to agree with the accuser or go with the accuser. When we choose to be a firewall we also say, "If going to the source doesn't seem to work, let me know. I'll be happy to come with you to help get this issue resolved."

## Questions for Reflection

- Do your team members work well together?
  - Do they trust one another?
  - Are there deep relational connections?
  - Do they share the same ministry vision?
  - Do they work in a collaborative spirit to fulfill your team vision?
- How is the experience of being on the team both challenging and rewarding?
- How is the team growing together – deepening its commitment to God and to one another?
- Are team members contributing out of their giftedness and passion? How?
- Are they in positions where they can do so? If not, what is your learning opportunity?
- How do they measure up relative to Character, Chemistry, Competency and Credibility? And how can I help to get them to the next level?



## 7 Know Your Team to Lead Your Team

**G**reg: Just as it is important to know myself to lead myself, I also need to know my team to lead my team. In GiANT Worldwide™’s language, this would be “Know Others to Lead Others.” This makes me think about when Jesus was sharing so many heartfelt comments to his disciples on the evening before he was betrayed. He said to them “*I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you* (John 15:15).” Jesus knew every facet of the lives of these 12 men he called friends. He knew that Judas would betray him, that Peter would deny him, that Thomas would doubt him, and that he would always love them with whole-hearted abandon. Friendship beyond conflict and hurt is what Jesus brings and what we aspire to.

As I start this chapter, I feel like we need a drum roll and a massive curtain opening to reveal the magnitude of what our first CORE group experienced. To say it was rejuvenating and life-giving may be an understatement.

Throughout the 24 discussions of the CORE group I was fascinated to learn many new things about myself and also about each of my team members. Each of us did serious battle with the Myers-Briggs profile to determine our best personality fit. We learned that the test by itself did not give us all we needed to know. GiANT™’s “Best Fit” process encouraged us to go deeper and introduced another level of knowing yourself. We each had breakthroughs at different stages of the process, and I was especially proud of how we displayed loving support for one another.

I shall elaborate on three of the deeper findings that I observed over our year of discovery.

### *Liberation #1*

First, there were a few who had identified as extroverts for the entirety of their lives. (Only Greg and the RDs are included in the chart below.) The drilling down to discover the “Best Fit” was liberating for those who came to find out that they were “socialized introverts.” (PD Kurts shared this in his comments in Chapter 5.) Their surroundings and circumstances had shaped them into outward behavior that appeared to be extroverted.



Embracing their introversion and establishing healthy margins freed them to be more of their natural selves.

*Liberation #2*

This leads to the second major finding which has to do with self-care. In the exercise of learning about the *5 Gears*, we came to realize that most of us were task-driven and had been this way for decades. The permission for self-recharging was not a part of our DNA, and as we came to find out, many of us lacked the ability to know how to approach 1<sup>st</sup> Gear. Many conversations came back around to this particular struggle, and it was inspiring to observe how the team ministered to one another. (See Tool Exploration: *5 Gears*.)

*Liberation #3*

The third interesting observation was the commonality that we shared. All nine of us in the original CORE group scored an “N” on the Myers-Brigg’s profile. This means that all of us are iNtuitive (future-oriented, pattern-oriented, possibility-oriented, and less detail-oriented). None of us were Sensors (present-oriented, fact-oriented, detail-oriented.) About 30% of the world are iNtuitives, and the other 70% are Sensors. But our initial CORE group, which consisted of mostly field leaders (team members who work outside of the Home Office) were all iNtuitives. It became apparent that we had a future-oriented bias, and we must have been undermining ourselves by distancing or subtly belittling so many of our other leaders who were present-oriented. As Tom Nebel reminded us, we all (iNtuitives and Sensors) have our favorite Bible verses, and this group was decidedly living in the world of possibilities. Were we “so heavenly-minded” that we were in danger of being of “limited earthly good”?

One of the best and easiest-to-use tools was the *5 Voices* of the Team. It takes the complexity of Myers-Briggs profiles and distills them into five easy-to-remember profiles. It wasn’t a surprise to know that “Pioneer” was the most dominant voice among the five US Regional Directors. These guys need to have a visionary mindset and a clear, loud voice to do the work they are asked.

I believe it is in this commonality of personality and purpose that these RDs have become a band of brothers (Rick will have more to say on this).

## GCI CORE Group 1 - Greg & RDs

NAME	TESTED TYPE	BEST FIT	VOICE ORDER	GEAR ORDER
Randy	ENFJ	ENTJ	Pioneer, Connector, Guardian, Creative, Nurturer	4, 3, 1, 2, 5
PD	ENTP	INFP	Creative, Connector, Pioneer, Nurturer, Guardian	1, 3, 2, 5, 4
Mike	ENTJ	ENTJ	Pioneer, Connector, Creative, Nurturer, Guardian	4, 5, 2, 3, 1
Rick	ENFJ	ENFP	Connector, Creative, Pioneer, Nurturer, Guardian	4, 2, 5, 3, 1
Tim	ENFP	ENFP	Pioneer, Connector, Nurturer, Creative, Guardian	4, 3, 5, 2, 1
Greg	ENTJ	ENTJ	Pioneer, Creative, Connector, Guardian, Nurturer	4, 2, 5, 1, 3

### Concerns

The one area I found most troubling was the lack of “Guardian” Voices on our team. This is a special focus area since these RDs have to be our chief administrative voices in the field. As their team leader it makes me conscious that I have to top load our annual planning meetings with administrative topics, and also make sure that each RD is working closely with the Guardians who serve our Home Office.

We have a tradition of passing out a handsome star made of brass to the Regional Director who has kept all reports current. It is in good fun, and it also makes a value statement.

The second concern was “How will we push this innovative GiANT™ experience out to other leaders?” You will recall the dinner meeting when I cashed in my credibility chips to get the CORE group started in the first place. Let me share with you the story of dinner #2 with the RDs.

We were in a private room in a sleepy little Italian restaurant. Everybody was in good spirits, regaling anecdotes from our incredible year of bonding and growth. Tom and I had previously had a discussion about the idea that these RDs could now become facilitators and lead their

own CORE group (this was new territory for GiANT™ as well). So, amidst the story telling and laughter, Tom and I sprung our idea on the group. It amazingly went from a din of noise to silent reflection. There was a palpable sense of anxiety from a few – “Do I know this material well enough to facilitate a group? There is no way that I can do as good of a job as Tom.” And thus the discussion began.

Between my Pioneer/Creative Voice, coupled with Tom’s Connector/Creative Voice, we came up with a provisional idea. What if the RDs could have monthly access to Tom as a coach? If they had Tom as their support system, would this relieve their anxiety and allow us to go forward? Fortunately, this idea was accepted, and a plan took shape before dessert was served.

The unfolding story is that many of our key leaders have experienced an incredible season of transformation. Every participant discovered a greater awareness of himself as we honestly opened up with one another. The transparency demanded by the group process both humbled and empowered each person. In hindsight it was like we went through group therapy without it being labeled as such. It was a powerful season of enlightenment and restored health that is continuing to bless our fellowship in trickle-down ways we would have never dreamed.

It was through the trenches of the yearlong process with self-discovery and humble clarifying that has propelled our GCI leaders into a posture to be Christ-like leaders worth following. And it is our mission to develop more Liberating Leaders for the sake of GCI and the kingdom of God.

### **Advice to any organization who may embark on a CORE group experience**

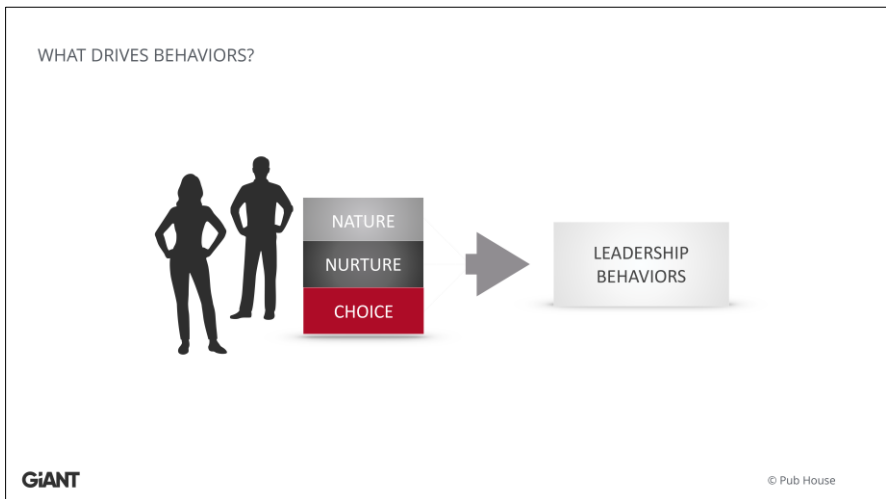
From my vantage point, it makes a huge difference when you start with a CORE group of willing, teachable men and women who trust their leader and are willing to actively participate in the process. It’s akin to John 6, where Jesus asked if the disciples would remain with him. Peter answered, “Where else would we go – you have the words of life” (John 6:68). I am personally grateful that the five RDs were willing to follow beyond their doubts and commit to the process. Participants must do their preparatory assignments and then show up for videoconferences ready to interact. These Regional Directors turned out to be the perfect group to begin our relationship with GiANT™. These RDs have become the poster boys and living examples for the emerging liberating leadership style in GCI. We

can't give what we don't possess. It was important that we would all go through the process and see personal transformation before reproducing, but we were ready.

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**Rick:** While I whole-heartedly concur with the three liberations Greg mentioned, there was something else that occurred during our year in CORE together that I'd like to comment on. At the beginning of our training Tom shared a tool that I've thought about many times over the past two years. The tool, shown below, is called *Behavior Drivers*.

Leadership behaviors are driven by nature, nurture and choice. When I think of nature, I think of my creation – how God created me, who he created me to be, what gifts and talents he gave me, how my DNA determines my physicality and influences my personality. Nurture includes parental influence, environment, culture, education, relationships, work environment and expectations. Nature and nurture greatly influence the choices we make, and thus determine our behavior.



When I started CORE, I asked God to make clear to me my nature – who he created me to be – and help me see how nurture had impacted or even drastically changed that nature. Nurture is a powerful influence. It can be positive and negative; it can lift us up and tear us down. Nurture can lead to empowerment and it can lead to discouragement. It can help us “be all that we can be,” or be so influencing that we find ourselves living and working out of what others have made us to be, rather than out of our natural giftedness.

## A Giant Step Forward

I wanted to confirm the gifts and talents I believed God had given me and focus on those as the team went through CORE together. The apostles Peter and Paul remind us we have been given gifts and talents, and we are to use them in service, and especially in leadership (1 Corinthians 12:5-6, 1 Peter 4:10-11). In Romans 12:6-7 Paul admonishes us to use the gifts God gave us “according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching then teach...”

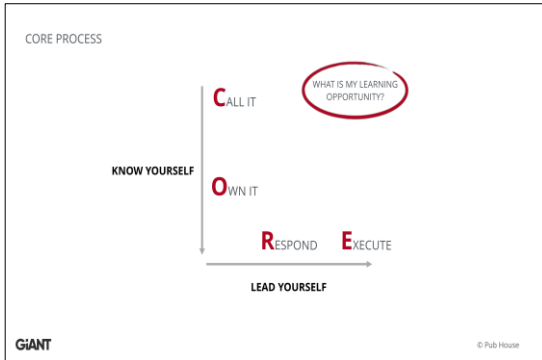
As we progressed through the first few months of class together, I found I wasn't the only one struggling with nature and nurture. As Greg mentioned in Liberation #1, some of the introverted team members found they were striving to live as extroverts because “that seemed to be what was expected.” Nurture had erroneously taught them that extroverts are more successful than introverts. They were working and living out of what they perceived was expected. This was just the beginning of our insights. We soon realized that most of us were living out of perceived expectations. Many of our work habits were the result of nurture – previous jobs with certain expectations. Often the way we interacted with others was more out of how we'd been nurtured than the way we would naturally respond. It was eye-opening and empowering.

A breakthrough occurred when one of the most driven of our team members realized how much nurture impacted his life. He rarely stopped because he believed that was expected of him. He rarely took time off, because he was nurtured to believe time off wasn't necessary. If he didn't work a 10-12-hour day, he ended the day feeling guilty and that he had let others down. As he identified the power of nurture, he used his nurtured driven nature to set specific goals for himself. Interesting, all those goals dealt with spending more time with the family, going on vacation, and dating his wife. These were things he had to schedule until they became natural to him. Now he lovingly gets teased about all the vacation he takes. What a contrast. Now he is allowing nature to have a greater part of the choices he makes, which leads to different behaviors.

I saw every team member face the nature-nurture question as they started examining their leadership behaviors. Each CORE member wants to live out of his or her God-given gifts and talents. We know that is what enables us to be Liberators.

At the end of our year together, Tom asked us to identify our greatest learning opportunity? Recall the CORE process of identifying the learning

opportunities, Call it, Own it, determine a Response, and Execute that response.



I struggled to share what I considered my greatest learning opportunity because it seemed shallow. Yet the more I prayed about it and thought about it, the same thought came to me. I went back to the personality type insights,

and back through the insights for my Voice order to see if I was missing something. Interestingly, as I went back to the leadership insights for my Connector Voice, I found the very words that I believed led to my greatest learning opportunity. So, when Tom came around to me and asked for the one learning opportunity I was going to take from CORE, I said, “I have come to understand it’s OK to be me.”

Tom paused, smiled, and then said, “And there isn’t anyone on this team who would disagree that was your most profound learning opportunity.” God had answered my prayers to show me that my leadership skills were some of the gifts he had given me. I have tears in my eyes as I recall that moment. Let me explain a bit why it was so profound.

As an ENFP with a Connector voice, I have a lot of friends. Two close friends, Greg and Randy, were in the CORE group with me. Another close friend is Joseph Tkach, the former president of GCI. Joe and I have known each other for years – long before he became president. We attended the same congregation in Indiana many years ago, our families have vacationed together, and we share a lot of memories. I’ve almost always been good friends with my supervisors. I mentioned an early mentor, Dexter Faulkner. He was my boss, but also a good friend. I spent many hours at his home sharing meals and good conversation. Bob Taylor was my mentor, and also a good friend. We just spent a week in Gatlinburg together with other close friends. I mention this because I have sometimes been accused that I am where I am because of the people I know, and not because of my giftedness.

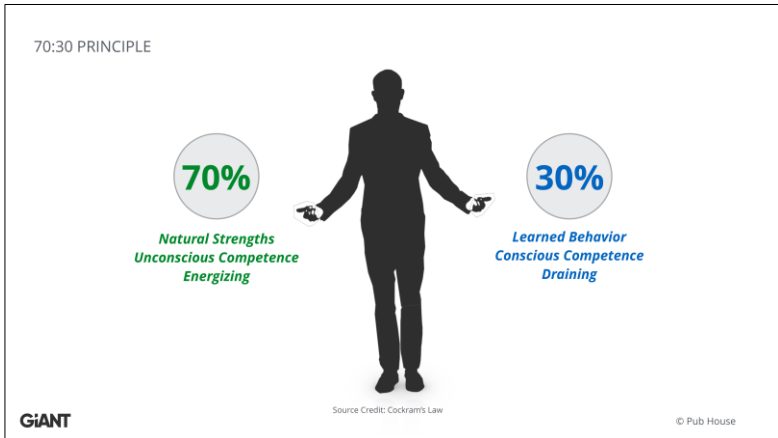
There is a good bit of truth in the first part of that statement. Who you know has always been important as relationships open opportunities. If I need to hire someone, for example, I'm first going to ask whom do I know who can do the job? If I were looking to build a team, I would look for people I trust and with whom I have a good relationship. However, because I was still dealing with baggage from the nurture side of me, the second part of that statement would bring up questions. Was I where I was simply because of relationship? Am I gifted and qualified to do the job I'm asked to do? Without going into unnecessary details, my early years consisted of a lot of negative nurturing – to the point I often questioned my worth. Thus, part of my question to God at the beginning of CORE was to answer this question – was I living and working out of the gifts he'd given me, or was there some truth to the negative comments some people like to make?

God answered my prayer in profound ways. One of the strengths of the CORE group was learning how important it is to encourage each other, speak words of life into each other, and challenge each other. We learned to love each other. Greg mentioned in Chapter 6 that we gave each other permission to call “BS” on one another. One of the ways we do this is to recognize when one of our team members, myself included, start to live in the lie of who we are not. The enemy loves to constantly whisper “I am not...” thoughts in our heads. As a band of brothers, we call “BS” on those “I am not...” thoughts and we remind each other of our strengths and our gifts. When I told Tom my greatest learning opportunity was that it was OK to be me, I was giving glory to God and my brothers for helping me toss those lies out and live in the reality of what I have been asked to do. It was a liberating moment that enables me to be the Liberator I strive to be.

I would encourage every leader to go through the *Behavior Drivers* tool with your team. Encourage discussion on how nature and nurture impact the choices we make, and how all three determine leadership behavior. Speak truth and life to each other. Remind them of the enemy's “I am not...” whispers and get them to call “BS” on those whispers. Combat the “I am not...” whispers with reminders of their true identity – beloved of the Father. And trust that God has equipped you and the members of your team to be the team and the leaders he wants you to be.

## Tool Exploration: 70-30 PRINCIPLE

**Tom:** One great tool to find out how we're doing – and how our team members are doing – is called *70-30 Principle*. When Rick describes the Nature/Nurture/Choice elements of the Behavior Drivers tool, he's pointing us in an important direction, because here's what we know: If a leader consistently fights his or her true nature, they will be exhausted of energy and purpose.



The 70/30 rule is used in many areas of business. In GiANT™, we use the tool to remind us are at our best when we are mostly (70%) functioning in our Natural Strengths, “Unconscious Competence” (things that are effortless for us) and places that are Energizing. If we do that, we are fine with having about 30% of our activity being in the areas of Learned Behavior, Conscious Competence (things we have to think about to do well), and are ultimately draining. In GiANT™ we say, “If you consistently break this law, it will break you.” I once met with a business leader who was in terrible shape. I showed him this tool and asked him to tell me where he was at. He said, “I’m 10/90.” I said, “That’s going to change.” And it has.

So, ask yourself, and ask your team members, two questions:

- 1) What’s your 70/30 lately?
- 2) How’s it trending?

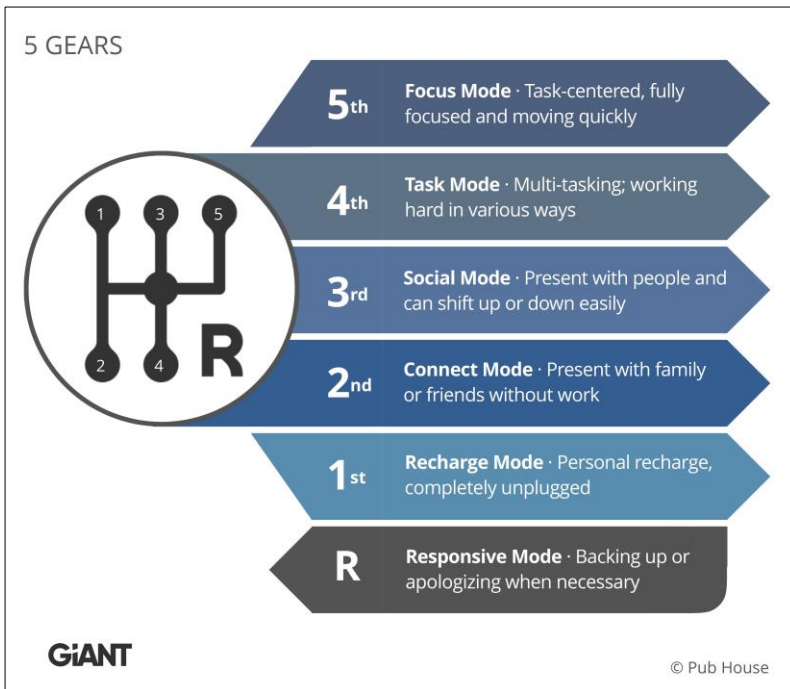
Knowing others to lead others is a huge value-add to life and ministry. Let the tools do the heavy lifting and bring the support, challenge, and grace needed to fight for each other’s highest good.



## Tool Exploration: 5 GEARS

**Rick:** I sometimes suffer from insomnia. I can have so many ideas, projects, plans and worries going through my mind that I cannot turn my mind off. And I know I'm not alone. Many pastors and ministry leaders are driven workaholics, some even become avid overachievers – they never seem to do enough or get enough done. Sometimes the work, or the desire to achieve, can get in the way of what we really need to do – connect with others. Busyness can easily lead to disconnect. Or said differently, when the agenda or the work is more important than the people, disconnect occurs. And one of the reasons for that disconnect is that we are not taking time to recharge.

During CORE training, Tom asked the question, “What do you do to



recharge?” Most of us had an answer or two that included going on walks, working on a hobby, going on vacation, etc., but the next question was, “How often do you recharge?” Most of us admitted we don’t recharge very often. Unanimously we shared that we were too busy to recharge. Tom reminded us we were too busy NOT to recharge and then introduced us the *5 Gears*.

Thinking in terms of a manual transmission, we know the best method of driving is starting off in first gear. As we drive through town, or in the hills, we might maneuver through the other four gears, but we have to start in first gear. Most of the RDs admitted we spent most of our time in 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> gear. Let me explain the gears and their subsequent unhealthy warning signs by paraphrasing what we learned. Remember that the over-use or neglect of any gear can lead to unhealthy places.

5<sup>th</sup> Gear is Focus Mode: This is being “in the zone” and hyper-focused. Time flies by in this time of maximum productivity. We so are focused on the task at hand we might not react kindly to interruptions from phone, email, or others – even spouses and children.

Unhealthy 5<sup>th</sup> Gear: You are constantly exhausted, or even ill from working too hard. You may have relational issues because others know “work always comes first.” Family members don’t even complain about your work habits anymore. Invitations to participate in outside events become fewer and fewer. You are eating more meals in front of the computer.

4<sup>th</sup> Gear is Task Mode: This is where RDs seem to spend most of our time. We are multi-tasking for much of the day. We may have two or three emails we are responding to while being interrupted with phone calls or text messages. We are planning some training, answering questions, planning a retreat, filling out our monthly reports or reading the pastors’ reports. It’s busy time and we stay busy.

Unhealthy 4<sup>th</sup> Gear: You start your day with email. You feel constantly drained and never fully recharged. You feel anxious when you are away from email or phone. You struggle for consistent sleep and your mind is always problem solving (note to self.) You are often physically present with family and friends, but intellectually or emotionally absent.

3<sup>rd</sup> Gear is Social Mode: This is when we spend time with others, and we “try each other on.” We may be at a meeting, a dinner party, in the foyer after church, or at a social event. Conversations can quickly slide us up or down in our gears. A question may put us in 4<sup>th</sup> or even 5<sup>th</sup> gear, or we can slide down to 2<sup>nd</sup> gear.

Unhealthy 3<sup>rd</sup> Gear: You procrastinate and avoid 4<sup>th</sup> gear work. You avoid social settings because of shyness or fear of what to say to others. Or, you actually need a party to make life exciting. You rarely go deep in relationships and many of your relationships end up being superficial. You are reluctant to share with others.

## A Giant Step Forward

2<sup>nd</sup> Gear is Connect Mode: This is a time of deeper conversations. It's when we share a meal and put the phone away, or we share authentic connection with someone. This is a time of active listening or being truly present.

Unhealthy 2<sup>nd</sup> Gear: You talk too much or too long and don't listen well. You place unrealistic expectations on others to connect and end up isolating yourself. You might spend more time caring for people at work than actually working. You tend to be more focused on key relationships in your life than the person you are currently talking to.

1<sup>st</sup> Gear is Recharge Mode: This is when you personally recharge, when you spend time alone or with God. You might read, walk, or write in a journal. You might exercise or sleep or watch movies. You are completely unplugged and not worrying about the things you need to do. This can be devotion time, or time on the golf course. It can be time in the hot tub, or time talking with God.

Unhealthy 1<sup>st</sup> Gear: You get lost in a new book and ignore work and other obligations. You binge watch your favorite show – frequently. You devote more time to self than others. Or you allow your personal recharge routine to dictate everyone else's schedule. Or you get so focused on recharging – like diet or exercise – that it becomes a barrier to relationships.

R is Responsive Mode. From time to time we need to back up and reprioritize. This often includes apologizing to others who have been affected by one or more of our unhealthy Gears.

Understanding there are 5 GEARS helps us establish right priorities and practices. Here are a few challenges:

5<sup>th</sup> Gear: Schedule 5<sup>th</sup> Gear times on your calendar for an upcoming month. Practice shifting in and out of that Gear intentionally.

4<sup>th</sup> Gear: Avoid e-mail before breakfast for a month. Replace that time with a devotion or something that inspires you and charges you for the day.

3<sup>rd</sup> Gear: Choose three relationships you want to deepen and create a plan to make it happen.

2<sup>nd</sup> Gear: Practice 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Gear before jumping into 2<sup>nd</sup>. Value others.

1<sup>st</sup> Gear: Ask someone you trust to help you schedule recharge time and keep you accountable to take that time.

A good key to remember is this: If you are over-productive, you are under-present. If you are under-present you will eventually be under-productive. However, when you are smoothly going through the Gears of your life, you will find yourself healthier, happier and more able to take on the tasks that arise unexpectedly. We have a lot of work to do, so let's make sure we are constantly recharging and keeping our leadership lives in good health.

### **Questions for Reflection**

- Which teammates challenge you or intimidate you? Identify why that is.
- How does this impact your leadership?
- In what areas does your team need liberation?
- What would it take to get your team to take a deep dive like GiANT™ CORE Group?
- Which of these tools can you start to use today?



## 8 Five RDs and the Multiplication Factor

**G**reg: One of my favorite books is *Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell. In his book he cites multiple examples of trends that reach a magical tipping point and then become movements. The phrase “tipping point” was adopted from physics, where it refers to adding a small amount of weight to a balanced object until the added weight causes the object to tip suddenly and completely topple over.

Scientists at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute discovered that if 10% of the population holds an unshakeable belief, that belief will always be adopted by society. I find this a bit frightening and at the same time hopeful. While it is scary to think that 10% of the population can have so much sway; it is hopeful for us in GCI that if we can systematically push out information about “High Support, High Challenge – Grace Always,” and work toward 10% of our leaders living this out with unwavering belief, a new culture will take root.

What I saw accomplished in 2016 was the deeper formation and bonding of a group of US Regional Directors who are more humble, self-aware, capable, and catch this, better team members. Because each one of the leaders has a greater insight into each one of their team members, they communicate more effectively, they care for one another with deeper concern, and they function as a team in a way that I have not previously encountered. This bondedness and high level of care will be the launching pad for a new and exciting trajectory for the entire organization.

Now that the RDs have experienced a season of reflection and growth, they are venturing forward to make a similar personal investment in key leaders within their sphere of oversight. They have been careful to invite men and women who can step into this challenging work. The forming of a team is important work (probably more significant than we think). It’s our intention that these teams become REAL Teams as illustrated in Chapter 6.

One exciting development that came out of the original CORE group is that each US Regional Director began leading a CORE group of their own in 2017. This means that we are multiplying the philosophies and tools of GiANT Worldwide™ that we see as closely matching GCI’s understanding of the heart and nature of the Triune God. We are

effectively pushing leadership values and skills down to second and third-tier levels, which is what is needed to build out a desired culture. In 2018 we began our first international CORE group.

In addition to the good work done through our RDs in 2017, staff members from the Home Office along with our Development Team Leaders participated in a CORE group. The Development Leaders will join ranks with the RDs to multiply even more CORE groups as we move forward. We have decidedly emerged from our “Long Season of Healing” and entered what we hope to be a long season of development. This new season signifies great promise as it is already shaping our culture into what we have tagged “High Support, High Challenge – Grace Always!”

We have great hope and expectation for what the Spirit is doing among us. We are anticipating that the ongoing good work of CORE groups will escalate from a trend to a tipping point and then to a movement that firmly establishes us into Christ-like Liberators. Holy Spirit, we will have more, please!

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**Rick:** In Chapter 5, you read testimonies from the other four Regional Directors. The initial CORE group included Greg, five US regional directors, one member of the development team, and two seasoned pastors. The group was a bit large as we wrestled with hearing from all nine team members, but we all benefited from the group as it was. It was important for the RDs to watch the two seasoned pastors assimilate what they were learning. This helped us become better RDs and helped prepare us to lead our own CORE groups. All of the RDs have pastoral experience, (three on the team were still pastoring congregations as well as serving as RDs), but we were primarily looking at the CORE experience as training for our RD responsibilities, and hearing the two pastors share how it was going to impact their pastoral leadership was insightful.

The CORE training wasn't the only time the RDs were together during 2016. We had scheduled monthly video meetings with Greg, an RD retreat in April, and our annual planning meeting in October. However, because we were moving into a new era in GCI, 2016 and 2017 were also filled with an unusual number of “unscheduled” opportunities for us to spend time together. There were a number of other events on the Master Calendar, but we were not required to attend all of them. We do our best to stay within our budgets and don't often travel into each other's regions due to the cost, but the past two years turned out to be a time of significant

training opportunities and several of the RDs were able to attend a number of events. As a result, we spent an extraordinary amount of time together at the same time we were going through CORE, and as we were facilitating our own CORE groups. I can't help but see the Holy Spirit's hand in providing these opportunities. Long story short, the RDs became more than a team, we became a band of brothers, as Greg likes to refer to us.

I tease Greg that he made it sound like all the fun stopped when he and Tom suggested that the RDs lead CORE groups of their own, but that pause in our joyful banter was only temporary. Because of the relationship we'd built over the previous year, we not only trusted Greg more than we did before, but we also trusted Tom and each other. Thus, when Greg presented the challenge for us to lead our own CORE groups, we knew we would be in this together. As we talked about how Tom would provide monthly access to us, we gained confidence and got excited about the possibility.

Let me return to the comment I made above about our joyful banter. I'd like to say I am the wittiest guy in the bunch, but I'd likely have four guys argue with me. We all enjoy bantering back and forth, we enjoy teasing each other, which we can do because we know how much we respect and love each other. That's the greatest blessing of being in CORE together; we got to know each other intimately. We learned each other's hot buttons and we do our best not to press them, or we know when to press them and they will be taken in the right manner. We know each other's families – more than just the names – we are together when a family member is struggling. We pray for each other and our families. Even as I'm working on this book, I know the other four are praying for me. How do I know? They told me ahead of time, and I've received messages reminding me I'm in their prayers. How cool is it to have a team that works together like that?

But it's not just work; when the meetings are over, we are still together. During our annual planning meetings, we join the rest of the CAD team. When it is time to go eat, we often split into two or three groups and head out. More than once we've ended up at the same place (those poor servers). After dinner we usually head outside to sit around a fire and talk. Most evenings you would find us together sharing and laughing over each other's stories. We marvel how often these informal gatherings lead to significant discussions. Because Greg is usually with us, he has told us on



many occasions how much he enjoys these discussions, which often end up shaping future decisions.

This leads to a point that should be made. Our team is not all work and no fun. Each of us takes our job seriously, but Greg has encouraged us to also have fun together. He always includes a recreational activity in the middle of our annual planning meetings. It is said that a team that prays together, stays together, and I know there is amazing truth to that as we spend a good bit of time praying together. But I submit a team that plays together is just as important. We spend a lot of time laughing, sharing stories, teasing each other, and sharing life. We aren't just coworkers; we are close friends and confidants.

I know I can call any of the other four RDs at any time and they will take the time to listen. They know the same about me. In the past two years we've grown to have amazing trust in each other, we've given great support to each other, and we are comfortable challenging each other. As I said a few times in this book, we've grown to love each other.

It reminds me of Proverbs 18:24, which says, "One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." This is referring to Jesus, of course, but when I think about the RDs, I am reminded I have four friends who stick closer than a brother. Jesus told his disciples in John 13:35, "By this everyone will know you are my disciples, if you love one another." (More on this passage in Chapter 9.) Most can quote this passage from heart, but have we paid attention to the previous verse? "A new command I give you; love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

When Jesus says something is new, that warrants our attention. What does it mean to love as Jesus loves? Here are a few things that come to mind:

The Son of God gave up his robe of light and put on pigmented human skin to enter our world. (Ok, he started much smaller as he developed in Mary's womb, but you get the point.) Jesus entered our world to walk among us. We have often taken off our RD hats to enter into each other's world to walk beside each other.

Just before his death, Jesus took off his outer garment, girded himself with a towel and washed his disciples' feet. We are more than willing to join a brother in his region, or in his personal life to serve in whatever way is needed.

He called his disciples friends. I think Greg and I have made it clear that CORE helped us move from teammates and coworkers to friends. Greg is our supervisor, but first he is our friend.

He laid down his life for his brothers. Any one of the RDs is willing to put aside what he is doing and go to the aid of anyone of us. When I faced the difficult task of terminating a pastor, Randy came to spend time with me and joined me in that task. He was a great comfort and source of strength to me during that ordeal.

### **Developing our own CORE groups**

Most of the RDs started their CORE groups with their regional teams, or with lead pastors in the region. Because I was going through transitioning my regional team and that was not yet complete, I chose pastors whose congregations were in some form of transformation, and who I believed could use the information sooner rather than later. I started with the idea this was simply CORE group 1, and there would be others. By the time this book is published, I will be well on my way through another CORE group and one of first pastors I trained will be facilitating other groups. That's multiplication in practice.

The monthly video chats we had with Tom as we facilitated our groups allowed us to share best practices, to learn what was not working, to encourage each other when we hit a stall or even a wall, and to support each other. Because our schedules are different, some of us met with our CORE group twice a month, others once a month. Those who were ahead were able to share even more experiences.

The RDs are far from perfect, we each have our own idiosyncrasies, challenges, strengths and weaknesses. But working together, we are able to draw from each other's strengths, support each other, and learn to love each other as Jesus loves. It's been an amazing journey and I look forward to seeing where God is going to lead us.

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**Tom:** The five RDs are amazing leaders, and we are blessed to have them. When Greg and I conferred on how we could get them to start their own CORE Groups, we also were aware that we should be cautious about overworking these already over-worked people. (*"The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, 'Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw.'"*) (Exodus 5:13.) The plan was to give them the goods, provide some encouragement, and maintain some quality control. One thing I like about GiANT™ is that we are open-handed, with

no “bait-and-switch.” Just as we had promised, the resources (tools, videos, etc.), that were used in our original CORE Group, have continued to be available to those successive groups. This allowed standards to be maintained.

One learning from our first round of multiplication is that we need to work toward a general standard of how CORE Groups will operate. We found that meeting just once per month (as some of the RDs were attempting) wasn’t working as well as we wanted. Given that many pastors in GCI are bi-vocational, we will continue to look for ways that they can experience the life-changing process of CORE while accommodating for the time pressures they encounter. But even at once a month, the CORE Process is working every time it’s tried.

A final thought. Both Greg and Rick mention that these men have become “a band of brothers”, and it’s evidenced by the time they spend together, exploring something, laughing and cutting up. We call this “3<sup>rd</sup> Gear.” Without social time, we never get to true depth with each other. All our influence begins in 3<sup>rd</sup> Gear; it’s where we try each other on, and it gives us the footing from which we can accomplish so much.

I was thinking of the Ken Burns’ PBS documentary “Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery.” In this documentary, historian Stephen Ambrose marvels at what this group of 32 men and one woman did exploring the land west of the Mississippi, and I thought it was emblematic of the journey GCI is on:

Teamwork. This was a family that had come together and formed a team for the exploration of the continent of North America. And they couldn't have done it if they hadn't become a family. Every one of them could recognize a cough in the night and know who it was. They could hear a footstep in the night and know who it was. They knew who liked salt on their meat and who didn't. They knew who's the best shot in the expedition, who was the fastest runner, who was the man who could get a fire going on a rainy day. They knew, because they sat around the campfire, about each other's parents and loved ones. Each other's hopes. And they had come to love each other to the point that they would sell their own lives, gladly, to save a comrade. They had developed a bond; they had become a band of brothers, and together they were able to accomplish feats that we just stand astonished at today when we look back at them. (Quotation supplied courtesy of The American Lives Film Project, Inc., Copyright 1997.)

## Tool Exploration: ENGAGEMENT BELL CURVE

**Tom:** Every team wants to win, but most get so focused on the immediate that they don't get intentional on building their culture. Consequently, many organizations look like the bottom layer of this *Engagement Bell Curve*: training and input goes only toward the top leaders (the 15%), and the rest of the organization gets left behind, with some resentment.



We can't build culture by training just the top leaders; we have to apply good training to as much of the organization as possible. We call that "Inclusive Apprenticeship." This is the culture I see being developed in GCI under Greg's leadership.

If we aim toward transformation – transformation that is reinforced with a common leadership language – we have a chance to change the culture. In this case, we began to realize we have a chance to bring GCI into its greatest days of impactful ministry.

In GiANT™ we're more about leader transformation and experiences than we are about "training" per se. So, as Greg and Rick mention, we've taken baby steps to multiply transformation. We can't give what we don't possess, so it was necessary that the US Regional Directors (and others) take a year to work on their own transformation, allowing the Holy Spirit to do his work. And with that underway we work to multiply.

## Questions for Reflection

- How will you prevent your team from being all work and no play?
- Identify 2-3 activities you could add that would deepen relationships with teammates.
- What is your plan for multiplying training and development for your top-tier leaders?
- What is your plan for multiplying training and development for your front-line managers?
- What will your story be?

## 9 Putting It All Together

**G**reg: When I think about winning (as ENTJs do), I think about the Flat Rock Wolverines Junior Varsity Football program. Over the span of three seasons, my Wolverines had a record of 20 wins and 1 loss. I was a linebacker on this squad and my coach, Mac Cumbo, was one of the best motivational coaches I have ever known.

Coach Cumbo had various ways of preparing us as a team. At the end of each practice we ran sprints up a small hill. Coach Cumbo told us that this extra effort meant that we would still be going strong in the fourth quarter when the other team was fading. He used the slogan, “Fatigue makes cowards of us all.” (Little did I know that he took this out of Coach Vince Lombardi’s repertoire of quotes.)

Coach Cumbo also used music to keep our spirits high. He put together a mash-up of songs on a cassette tape that we would listen to on the long bus drives. I recall “I Shot the Sherriff” by Eric Clapton, “Delta Dawn” by Tanya Tucker, and there was one particular song he insisted playing on game days. The game-day song was “Let’s Put It All Together” by the Stylistics. The title speaks clearly to the performance Coach Cumbo expected from the team. And for 20 games out 21, we did put it all together.

In concluding this book, *A Giant Step Forward: Toward an Emerging Culture of Liberation: The Next Chapter for Grace Communion International*, I want to share a few thoughts as I take that deep plunge into presidential service. It is my hope that these concluding thoughts wrap it up and put it all together.

### **Yoked to Jesus and One Another**

Our leaders have been aware that they are yoked together with Jesus, actively participating with him. The Lord invites us to be joined with him shoulder to shoulder, and the yoke is light and non-burdensome because Jesus is the one bearing the weight. This reliance and participation with Jesus is paramount to entering ministry in the proper context – and the only context in which to thrive, to be sustained, and be involved in a ministry that endures beyond this age. I take great confidence and comfort in knowing Jesus is beside me, pulling for me and with me.

The magical experience the CORE Group helped us discover is that just as we are joined shoulder to shoulder with Jesus, we are also shoulder to shoulder with one another. The apostle Paul uses the word “yokefellow” in his letter to the church at Philippi as he describes his relationship to a fellow worker (Phil. 4:3, KJV). It is a powerful metaphor using the example of two oxen joined together by a wooden yoke, and then pulling together as one to plow the row. This accurately describes the deep partnerships that I have come to share with my fellow GCI leaders, and I have also witnessed how they share similar relationships with one another.

Not only are the top leaders better molded into a REAL Team, there are numerous REAL Teams being formed throughout the organization and galvanizing us for the sake of the gospel. This is the forward direction we hope to sustain because it fits very well with the vision of “Healthy Church.”

### **Liberating Leadership Summarized**

Leadership is about “Who You Are,” then “What You Do.” Below you will see a check list that helps me focus on CORE values and CORE actions that keep me in the lane of being a Liberator.

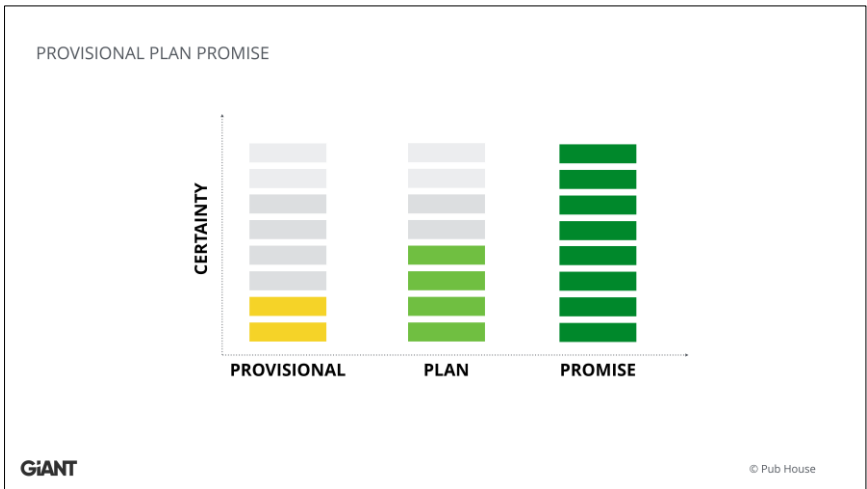
Who You Are	What You Do
Beloved Child of God	Stay close to him in every stage and facet of life
Humble	Build REAL Teams
Authentic	Know Your Team
Intentional	Serve Your Team
Relational	Invest in Others
Liberator	Liberate Others

Along with the list above, it is crucial to remain teachable and be a “life-long” learner. The ability to properly see the reality of your circumstances and to appropriately work from there is essential if you hope to build a culture of Liberation. (Tom will most likely share about how “reality is our friend” – he likes to say this, and does so often.)

### **Do No Harm**

You may be familiar with the Hippocratic Oath, which is paraphrased in the short, “Do no harm.” I adhere to that as a Doctor of Christian ministry. As the new GCI President, I am keenly aware of what I don’t want to do. I don’t want to be misunderstood, nor make promises that I

cannot deliver. GiANT™'s *Provisional Plan Promise* tool has become one that I wield more than any other. I have become vigilant in setting the context for meetings and work-related conversations.



The *Provisional* stage is the dreaming, blue-sky stage. We are just kicking around ideas.

The *Planning* stage means that ideas are beginning to gel and we are moving from the “what if” to “what could be?” These plans still have to be examined and pass through the careful lens of the Guardians.

The *Promise* stage is a certain plan that will be executed. It is supported by agreement, proper resourcing, and then especially bathed in prayer.

## The Long Game

It takes the long path of persistence and patience to get to where you hope to arrive. Our desired future is an international fellowship of Healthy Churches. Presently we find ourselves building out from the first CORE Group. The newly found brotherhood with the RDs is a good starting place. The trust, the likeability, respect, and confidence they exude toward one another is what we want to develop at all levels of the church. The Rds have stepped boldly into their collective Pioneer voice to push out CORE groups to the next layer of leaders. This is a much-needed movement of multiplication, and even more importantly, a move toward establishing the culture of Liberation.

Let’s document the progress so far with the CORE process. In 2016 GCI began the process with nine leaders. Six of the nine leaders formed new CORE groups for 2017. The number of leaders being impacted went



from nine to 36+. The multiplication of the GCI High Support, High Challenge liberating leaders increased by four times that year. Hallelujah!

One of the 2017 CORE groups included several key leaders from the Home Office (primarily administrators who represent the Guardian voice). In the midst of the group were two of our Development Team leaders who serve in the field. I cannot overemphasize how important it is to have your administrators and key leaders familiar with the language and concepts; otherwise they find themselves feeling like tourists in a foreign country whose citizens speak very little English.

Also in 2017 Tom presented a plenary session and two workshops at the GCI Denominational Conference with 1,000 ministers from across the globe. This was a great introduction for our international leaders, and it was appropriately a “soft introduction.”

As I write, we are in the middle of 2019 and the expansion continues. We have officially launched our first International CORE group. We have a combination of Canadian, Caribbean, and Latin American leaders in this pilot group. We also decided to place a couple of our veteran US leaders in the mix to provide extra support for Tom because we hope this will be the first of many international groups to follow.

Two of our Development Team leaders have started their own CORE groups. This has great promise in that they are working with a number of Millennials. Working through this cross-generationally has enormous potential.

Building this new culture of “High Support, High Challenge, Grace Always” requires relentless broadcasting of concepts packaged in a common language, and for a global-wide audience it takes intentionally focused work to tell the story over and over again in fresh ways. I rejoice over the advent of our new, young media team. Not only does this new crew have a great handle on communication styles for their generation, they are all “sold-out” GCI members who are passionate about what is stirring in the fellowship. They were one of the newly formed CORE Groups in 2018. It feels like the tipping point is within our grasp.

It is obvious to me that the Holy Spirit has been guiding this entire process. I find myself amazed and dumbfounded as I document all the layers of what has been happening with us and to us in the past few years. I wish that I was smart enough to have laid out such a wise and complex plan, but I am content to be a thankful recipient of God’s amazing grace. We shall keep trusting our incredible Triune God for direction in 2018 and beyond. He does not disappoint!

## Conclusion

This book may appear to be a documentary to how we in GCI have been dedicated to pursuing and building the culture of High Support, High Challenge, Grace Always, and all the work that has gone into making this a reality. However, the ultimate truth is that this is a documentary to the good work that Jesus has begun in us and is faithfully accomplishing. How stupefying and inspiring is it that the Lord would redeem the wayward Worldwide Church of God and turn us into an International Communion of Grace, and all to his glory. There are not enough superlatives in the English language to praise and thank our most high God.

As President, I will continue to aspire to be a leader worth following. The old expression says that if you think you are a leader then look around to see if anybody is following you. It turns out that I have a wonderful band of brothers and sisters in Grace Communion International and I have great conviction that our Lord Jesus Christ has amazing plans for our fellowship. So, I am all in, and the issue of winning is already resolved in Jesus! In other words, I'm ready!

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**Rick:** One final thought. Greg makes the point that the team must be yoked to Jesus and to each other. The most important part, of course, is to be yoked to Jesus. As I've shared my experience in CORE with a few others, some react by saying, "Yes, but you were all friends to begin with." That's not the reality. We all knew each other, two of the original CORE members were good friends, I would have referred to a couple of others as friends, but I really didn't know much about them and they knew little about me. The rest were coworkers that I had met, maybe shared a meal at a conference, but our relationship was strictly work related. We were an eclectic group of people brought together through our desire to preach the gospel, be a part of the transformation toward building healthy churches and because of our love and support of Greg.

You may start with a team you know little about, but I have good news for you. If I think our group was a bit eclectic, imagine what Jesus started with. Let's look at John 13:34-35 again in light of the 12 disciples.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this will everyone know you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35).

Without Jesus, this command would have been one of the most difficult commands for them to follow. I say this because of who the disciples were.

The disciples are often referred to as saints – because that’s what they became in Jesus – but they started as 12 ordinary men from very different backgrounds. We don’t know the background of all of them, but we know four (and up to a possible seven) were fisherman by trade, one was a tax collector and one was a former religious zealot. The others we aren’t sure of, but we can assume at least a couple of them were craftsmen or tradesmen. Twelve men whose only commonality was Jesus – and that was more than enough.

Jesus knew their faults; he even knew Judas would betray him, yet he chose the men just as they were. In the end all forsook him, giving the impression that all the teaching and training had been forgotten or ignored. Still, he didn’t give up on them.

Interesting to consider Matthew – the tax collector, and Simon the Zealot.

Their political backgrounds couldn’t have been more different. Matthew, because he was the former tax collector, was considered one of the most despicable people in Israel before Jesus called him. He worked for the Roman government to extort taxes from his own people. The Jews especially hated tax collectors because they believed taxes (tithes) should only be paid to God. Tax collectors weren’t hated because of their beliefs, but because most of them had the reputation of extortion. Many Jews regarded them as criminals. To make matters worse, many knew at least part of the tax money went to pay for the Roman occupation army – the very army from whom the Jews were hoping and praying the Messiah would liberate them.

The lesser known of the two Simons is called "the Zealot" in Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13. Though the New Testament says little about Simon, Zealots were fanatical Jewish Nationalists who had an irrational hatred of Romans, and sometimes took that hatred to an extreme. They particularly hated anyone who dared to compromise with Rome – like tax collectors.

The fact that Jesus called both of these men to be part of his twelve is a wonderful example. Simon became a man of faith who loved the disciples, including Matthew. Matthew gave up his former ways and was accepted by the other disciples. The fishermen, the zealot, the tax collector and the tradesmen were not a typical group you would see sharing a meal. Yet for many months, they went through training with Jesus and emerged at the end to be the New Testament apostles.

Many were familiar with the former careers of the disciples. Many likely wondered what kind of man Jesus was – who could work with such an eclectic group. Many likely wondered if the men would stay together – perhaps they wondered themselves. But Jesus gave them a new command, a command that would bind these men together and make an example for all to follow. This new command would make it clear that different people from different backgrounds can come together as a team “if they have love for one another.” It was love for each other that defined them as disciples.

Please don't be discouraged if you begin with a team that seems as different as night and day. With God all things are possible, including putting together a team that can change your church, your organization and your community. Your team members can be Liberators – leaders worth following.

Greg, Tom and I will join with you in prayer as you put your team together. We recommend GiANT Worldwide™ material without hesitation. We know the Holy Spirit led us to this CORE training as he prepares us for the next generation of GCI. The CORE tools and training helped us start on that path to be the leaders we want to be, and we are only beginning to multiply. They can help you as well. I'll close with the words we often say at the end of our meetings, “Thank you, Holy Spirit, we are ready for more.”

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**Tom:** Greg was goading me into saying, in print, “Reality is our friend.” So there you have it. What Greg doesn't know is that I picked that phrase up from a Guardian Voice I used to work for. He would often say that phrase when I would go off dreaming about the future, without regard for present conditions. He seemed to slow me down. One day, in some sort of planning session, he said it again: “Reality is our friend.” I was a bit exasperated when I responded playfully, “Yes, Reality is our friend. But it's not our only friend.” In other words, leaders don't allow their vision to shrink to the level of reality.

But GCI is getting some things right, and we are all privileged to be in this place of next steps.

We have many solid “leading indicators” right now, referred to by Greg earlier in this chapter. I firmly believe this will result in outstanding “lagging indicators” such as conversions, baptisms, and the planting of new congregations. As Rick reminds us, let's pray toward that end. And like Greg and Rick, I'm ready!

## Epilogue

**Greg:** In GCI we are just getting started. We have integrated many of the valuable teachings and principles learned through GiANT™’s resources. And equally important, we have picked up on their style of making concepts clear and comprehensible by using infographics.

Our next project is to create a “GCI Toolkit” packed full of several GiANT™ tools plus our own unique inventions. We are personalizing our journey with a guidebook to equip our pastors with tools to continue taking healthy steps forward.

We are seeking to build our emerging culture of “*High Support, High Challenge – Grace Always*” with common vocabulary and accompanying tools that can serve us well as we navigate the waters ahead. This book is paramount to the first phase of bringing clarity and understanding to the culture we are building through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The second phase is a major shift in how our pastors learn to lead the “Team Based, Pastor Led” model. We view this as parallel to how Jesus worked intimately with his disciples. We trust that this shift will help our 900 churches across the world to prioritize the work of the church and to experience both qualitative and quantitative growth.

By developing a shared language and shared ministry tools we expect to see better ministry practices and ultimately a fulfilled vision of healthy church. As this experiment continues, we are hoping for metrics that mark this grand venture as a success.

Given my age and current good health I may have a decade ahead of me to fully dedicate my focus and energy to helping GCI become the very best expression of church that we can be.

## Appendix

### Chapter 1

## Tool Exploration: THE LIBERATOR'S INTENT

**Rick:** Every leader will face situations where attention needs to be drawn to a person's behavior, attitude, mistake, or approach toward others. Because it is the Liberator's intent to always "fight for the highest possible good in the lives of those we lead," the way we bring attention to "Learning Opportunities" for others is vital.

GiANT™ often refers to this as "Bringing Challenge," and admittedly, it is not always easy to do. In my experience, I've done this incorrectly more than I've done it correctly. This is one reason in GCI we've modified GiANT™'s *Support Challenge Matrix* and developed our mantra of High Support, High Challenge, Grace Always.

Let me share a personal example. In 2017 Greg wrote an email message to the RDs with several ideas. Not recognizing that his message was provisional, I called him out. Not only did I call him out, I did so in a "reply all" message. To his credit, Greg responded to all of us and apologized for not making it clear that his message was provisional. Then privately he said to me, "Rick, I appreciate the points you made, and you were correct, but I felt like you were 'Calling me out' rather than 'Calling me up.'"

He was correct. What I should have done was either send him a private message for clarification, or even better, phone him. In either case, he



would have known I was “For him” as the illustration shows. Instead, my response indicated I was “Against him.” Rather than seeking collaboration, my response could have led to conflict.

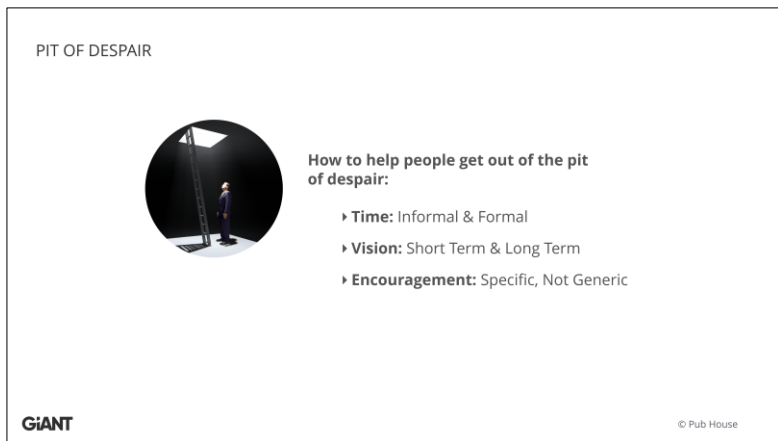
I should have sent a private message seeking clarification. Then if I felt it was necessary to bring a challenge, rather than say, “I need to bring a challenge,” I would ask, “Greg, may I bring you a challenge?” By doing so, I am getting Greg’s permission to bring something to his attention. By the language I am using, he knows I am for him, that I want to empower him, and that I want to work with him toward becoming Liberators. I quickly apologized, and we moved forward.

Challenges need to be made; we do want the greatest good for those we lead. When Liberators learn to “Call Up” rather than “Call Out,” others know you are for them. This tool doesn’t guarantee others will respond the way you desire, but they can never say you are not for them and want them to grow in leadership.

Chapter 4

## Tool Exploration: PIT OF DESPAIR

**Rick:** Mentoring takes time. As we move those we are training around the *Developing Others* square (what we sometimes refer to as the *Apprenticeship Square*), it's easy to get impatient or to have unrealistic expectations. We might find ourselves thinking: Why isn't she getting this? Why is it so difficult for him to understand this simple concept? I need her to take the lead, I don't have time for all this training. I've showed him how to do this three times now, he shouldn't be making the same mistakes.



If we zoom into the bottom right corner of the *Developing Others* tool we see the *Pit of Despair*. As people move from Unconscious Incompetence to Conscious Incompetence, they are in a learning free-fall. It's easy to get discouraged. "This is too much, I can't do it!" "I'm just not smart enough to learn this." The "I am not..." thoughts can lead to discouragement, and if not checked, they can let the person we are trying to train fall into the *Pit of Despair*.

When someone falls into this pit, they see no way out, even though a ladder is present. When this happens to someone, they are not a lost cause. But they need another leader to come alongside and provide a ladder out of that pit. We say, "the leader (meaning mentor) is the ladder."

Notice three ways to build that ladder – time, vision, encouragement.

There is another ladder. Sometimes the challenge is beyond the capabilities of the person. The ladder also enables us to admit that we cannot be omniscient – we have to accept that in some areas of our life, we will be incompetent, and



## A Giant Step Forward

that's OK. It is better to spend our time on areas where we can use the talents God has given us, and not despair about the talents we don't have.

**Time:** Impatience is one of the biggest pitfalls in developing others. Every person is different and learns in different ways. Sometimes leaders act as if they are in a sprint rather than a marathon. Training good leaders takes time. How much time? As much as is needed.

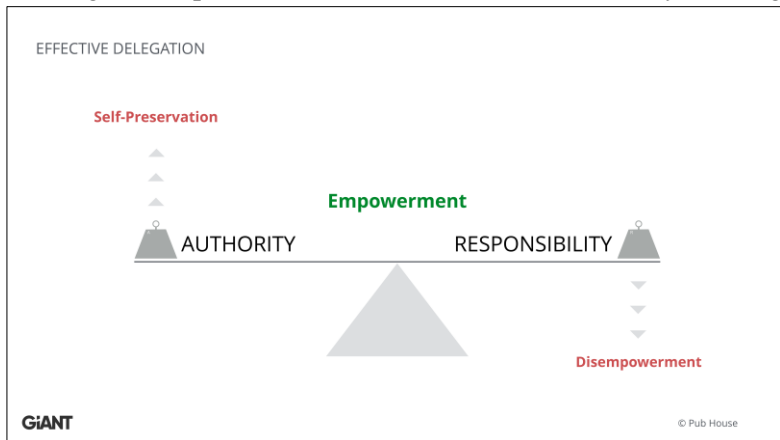
**Vision:** It's important to keep sharing the vision. When you share the long-term vision, you are sharing why it is you are teaching and training. And when you give short-term vision, you are providing stepping stones toward learning.

**Encouragement:** The key word here is "specific" encouragement. Point out what has been learned. Be specific about the growth you see. Not, "Good job!" Rather, "You're really improving when it comes to bringing challenge." Remind them training takes time, and while some concepts and ideas can be grasped quickly, others take time. Don't let them fall into a pattern of comparison or competition with others who might learn faster. Mentoring is not about how quickly someone is trained – it's about how thoroughly and effectively someone is trained.

Providing these three "ladders" enables your mentee to climb out of the Consciously Incompetent *Pit of Despair* and move into Conscious Competence, where they begin to gain confidence in their abilities.

## Tool Exploration: EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

**Rick:** Several years ago I was asked to be a District Pastor – over a much smaller group of pastors than a Regional Director. The idea of the district pastor was not a bad idea. The district pastor was to be an extension of Church Administration, serving as a liaison (of sorts) between the Home Office and a group of pastors. District pastors were asked to set up several meetings a year with the pastors in their district, providing a safe small-group environment where pastors could share best practices, as well as their questions, their challenges, and their frustrations. District pastors were told they were part of the Church Administration team, and were given a level of responsibility, but they weren't given clear instructions on their expectations, and they were given no authority. (I came into the role late in the game; expectations were made clearer when the system began.)



The Effective Delegation tool shows the need for balance between the authority you've been given, and the responsibility you've been given. It serves as a lesson for us who are leading others. Generally speaking, we are all at our best when authority and responsibility are in balance.

I was given a good deal of responsibility. I was told to remind the pastors to complete their reports, to make sure they were fulfilling their education requirements, to pass along information from the Home Office and make sure members were aware of local and denominational events, and to make sure congregational financials were in order. I also received pastors' monthly reports detailing their sermon topics, and I was to give advice, counsel, or support as needed. It sounded doable, until I had to call a pastor and my authority was questioned. I quickly realized I had been

given a lot of responsibility with no authority. I felt foolish and completely disempowered. I'd been asked to do something I wasn't given the authority to do. None of us like to be disempowered.

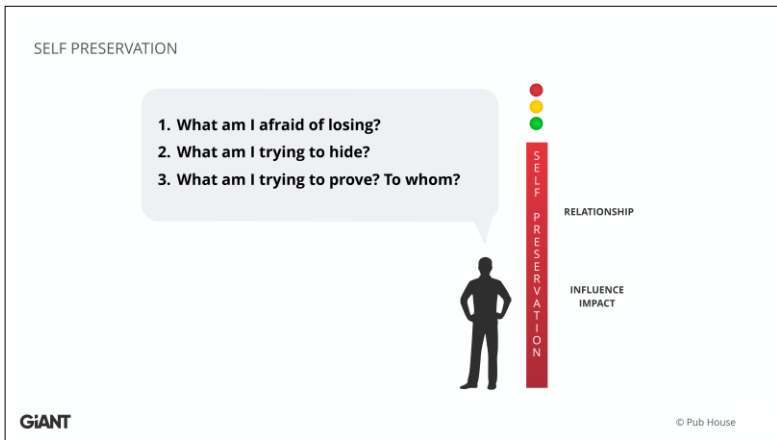
The other side of this balance is when you are given authority, but you have no real responsibility. That happens sometimes in life. Someone (maybe the owner's son) is given a title, or a corner office, or the entitled assumption that they are the heir apparent. They come and go as they please, and they boss others around without any responsibility for outcomes. It can be controlling, micromanaging, and self-preserving. None of us like to work with others who have tons of authority but little responsibility for the result.

A Liberator gives and clearly details both authority and responsibility. We want to empower leaders to fulfill the responsibilities given to them. This is what leads to a strong team.

Chapter 5

## Tool Exploration: SELF PRESERVATION

**Rick:** During one of our CORE sessions with Tom, I was sharing a situation that required me to confront a couple pastors and bring challenge to them. I had mentioned the situation in previous sessions, so this time Tom asked me what was preventing me from moving forward. He pulled out the *Self Preservation* tool and asked, “Rick, what are you afraid of losing?” I paused and responded, “Right now we have a relationship, though it is strained. I’m afraid of losing what we have.” He dug deeper and said, “What is your real fear here?” I had to admit, I wanted to be liked, and the confrontation that was needed had potential to make them dislike me.



As I shared my thoughts, I felt a bit foolish. I’m a grown man, why do I care if someone likes me or not? But Tom responded by saying, “Well said. That’s what prevents many of us from moving forward; our desire to be liked gets in the way of our need to bring challenge. You are in the midst of self-preservation.”

During our year together, Tom brought out this tool often as one or more of the Regional Directors or Greg faced challenges. Most of us came to see part of our motivation was trying to prove our worth to someone else – often someone who was no longer part of the organization. This is a waste of energy and resources. Spending time and energy trying to prove something that doesn’t need proven is exhausting, and never fulfilling.

Another question is “What am I trying to hide?” In the case of the Regional Directors, we were all trying to hide that we are not capable of

doing the job we were asked to do. We were trying to hide our perceived inadequacies. The job is bigger than any of us can do, but it's not bigger than God can do in and through us. Greg and the RDs often use this tool as we are training leaders or when we are helping pastors face situations in their congregations.

A final thought: self-preservation is not just a wall we build that prevents us from real relationship and from making an impactful influence on others. It is also a wall others build that prevents us from truly helping them. Building the wall helps avoid being transparent and entering into deep relationships where true influence can take place.

What is your area of self-preservation? Where do you see the wall being built among those you serve?

**Greg:** These are the questions where it gets real. As Rick admitted that he wants to be liked, my admission is that I desire to be successful. In chapter 3, I shared that ENTJs want to win – whether in sports, card games, or in building and growing a church.

In the annual planning meeting with the RDs and the rest of the Church Administration team, I took the risk of being vulnerable and shared my answers to these three penetrating questions. It was my answer to question #3 that got everyone's attention. When I confessed that I am trying to prove that our reformed, dwindling church can come back from the brink and Herbert Armstrong is the person to whom I want to prove this, everybody looked up. I believe Herbert wants GCI to herald the gospel and see the Lord add new members daily. I, like Rick, felt foolish and self-conscious in sharing this tidbit of information. It is in the vulnerability of truthful moments that self-awareness takes root, and sharing these insights with others brings self-liberation. My closest friends and work associates can know my weakness and pettiness, and not only accept me, but embrace me more and allow me space to influence their lives.

This experience lines up precisely with what the apostle Paul experienced in his relationship with Jesus.

But he said to me, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*" Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Chapter 6

## Tool Exploration: TEAM BASED PASTOR LED

Believing that the role of the pastor is to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:13), we work with our pastors to engage, equip, empower, and encourage their ministry leaders. Notice the progressive nature of this model. Engagement involves getting to know the leaders – building chemistry and trust. Equipping involves the journey around the apprentice square (whether done by the pastor or another veteran ministry leader), and it may include specialized training. The newly vetted leader needs to be given a place and space to lead, and then provided ongoing encouragement.

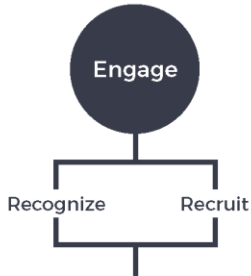
Paul talked about faith, hope and love in 1 Corinthians 13:13. We ask our pastors to equip and empower ministry leaders to build Team Based ministries on these three venues. We've expanded each venue for teams to have a better understanding of how Team Based Pastor Led works.



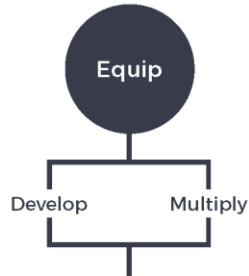
LEADER OF LEADERS  
PASTOR



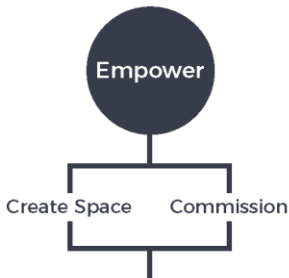
HEALTHY  
PASTOR



A pastor creates an environment of recruiting by modeling a pattern of recognizing and inviting others into the ministries of the church.



In equipping, the pastor must differentiate between ministry workers and ministry leaders. She or he must focus on developing ministry leaders.



In empowering leaders, a pastor must create ministry spaces for new leaders. Don't recruit and develop without making room for the apprentice to lead.



The pastor must understand that leaders are mainly volunteers and ministry can become difficult and the pastor needs to be attentive and encouraging.

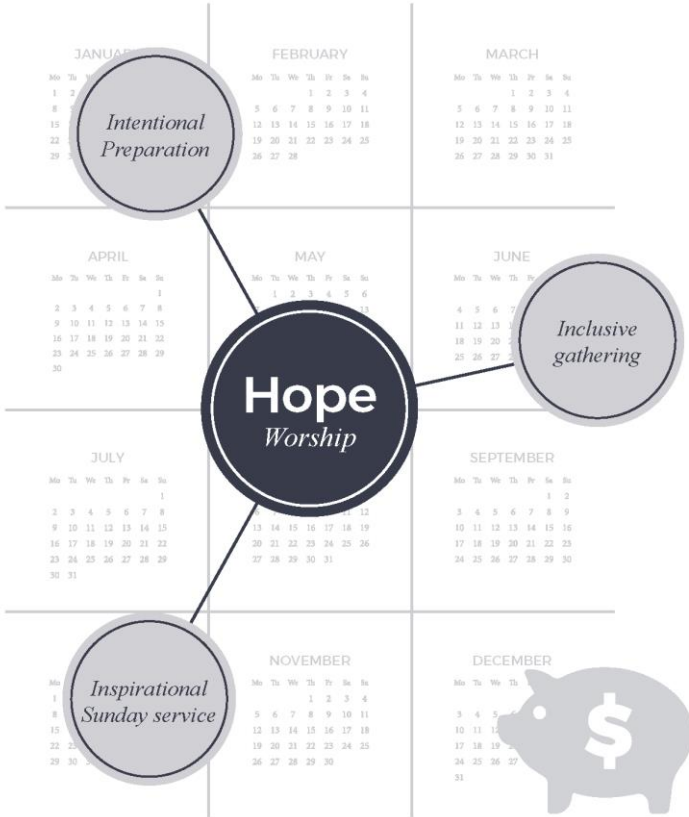


HEALTHY MINISTRY IS  
TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

HEALTHY MINISTRY IS  
TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

HEALTHY

# HOPE VENUE

Worship is our response inside of Christ's perfect response. We participate in the objective reality of Christ's vicarious life of faith, prayer, worship, thanksgiving and self-offering to the Father. Jesus is our eternal High Priest who sweeps us up into divine worship.



The calling on the ministry to inspire and bring hope to the congregation on Sunday morning. Under the guidance of a capable lead pastor and able ministry team the healthy church clearly knows their purpose for when and why they meet - to commune with Jesus.

## PROCESS



**Looks like:**

- Worship and Assimilation that are communicating, coordinating, holding planning meetings, and working well together.
- Are we using the RCL?
- Do our outreach events connect to a worship event?

**Contextualize:**

- Are there clear roles and expectations for team members?
- Do the giftings and skills of your leaders match their roles?
- Can they consistently maintain the week-to-week flow?

**Looks like:**

- Intentionally welcoming, well-coordinated ministries with clear next steps to discipleship: Greeters, ushers, Children's Ministry, New Member classes. Spaces for fellowship and developing new relationship.

**Contextualize:**

- Are guests able to meaningfully follow the service without confusion?
- Does the content of our service spark conversations?
- Do we make physical accommodations? (Mother's room, wheelchair access, etc.)

**Looks like:**

- Our service celebrates the nature and presence of our triune God and is interactive with congregational response.
- For instance:**
- Praise, confession, dedication, responsive reading, giving, scripture reading.

**Contextualize:**

- Do guests feel welcome?
- Would a guest be able to participate in our service?
- Is our preaching scripture-based and applicable to the lives of our congregation?

### Reflect

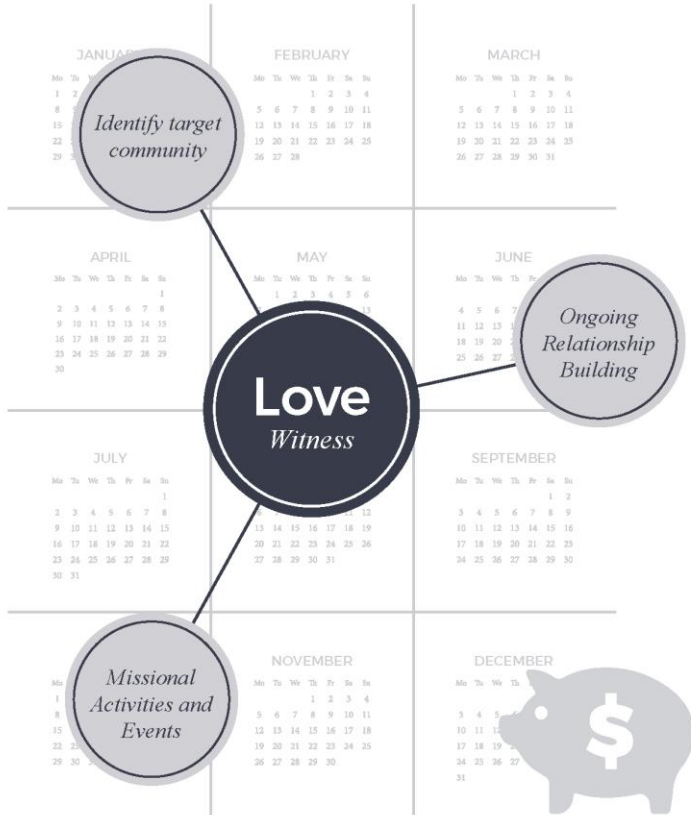
*Involving God's words to us and our words to God.*

*Do we provide space for fellowship?*

*Does our service encourage participation?*

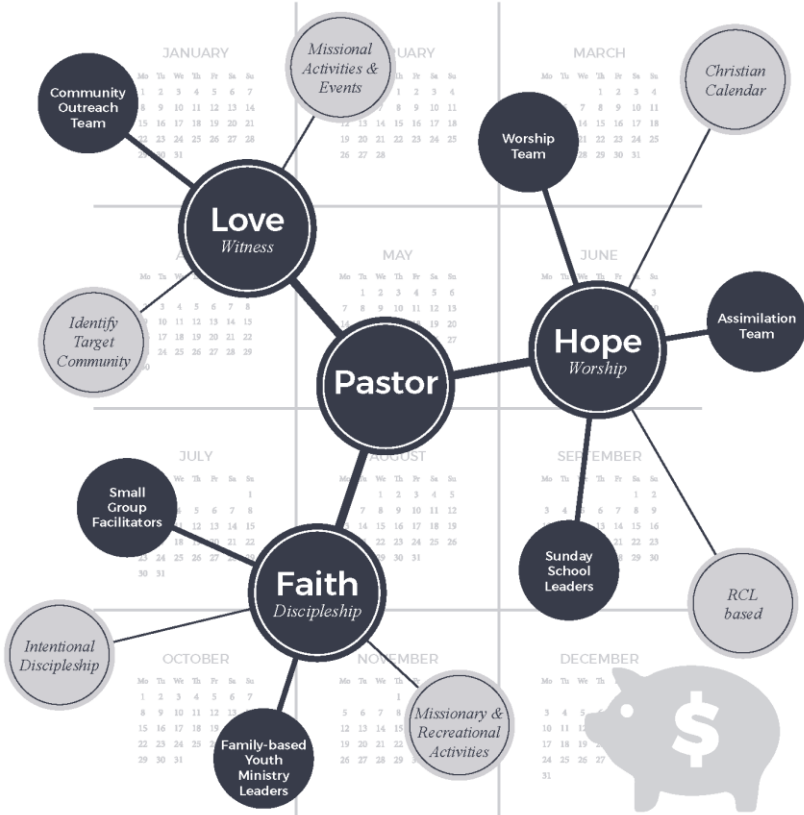
*Is our assimilation ministry that is equipped and engaged?*

HEALTHY MINISTRY IS  
TEAM BASED



PASTOR LED

HEALTHY MINISTRY IS  
TEAM BASED

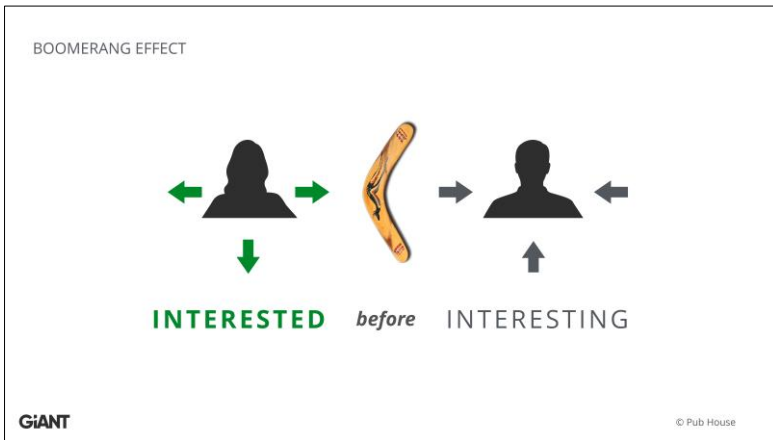


PASTOR LED

## Tool Exploration: BOOMERANG EFFECT

**Rick:** One of the most effective ways of influencing others is by listening to them. This may seem strange, but let's be honest, leaders have a tendency to be the center of conversations. We often feel we need to provide the answer, take the lead, or offer some counsel in a conversation. The truth is, many times people simply want to be heard, and we can make our greatest impact and influence by simply listening. Listening is an important key to building relationship, and it helps avoid misunderstandings and causing offense.

Some have a difficult time listening, others may appear to listen, but they quickly take over the conversation. Perhaps you've noticed that some people have the uncanny "ability" of always turning the conversation back to themselves. When you are sharing a story, they respond by sharing a similar story about themselves. This is called auto-biographical listening, and it is common – especially among extroverts. Auto-biographical listening gives the impression you are not really interested in what the other person is saying. Most don't even realize they are doing this.



GiANT™'s tool *Boomerang Effect* reminds us to listen, to show interest in what others are saying without any motive or other intent. Before telling your story, no matter how interesting it might be, hit the brakes and go a few questions deep with what the other person is saying. If the other person is telling you about their recent trip to Hawaii, refuse to tell them about your trip to Hawaii until you've asked a number of questions and gone deeper. The greatest impact you can make on others is to show interest in

them. This gives them value. When we don't listen, we come across as not interested.

Notice that it says "Interested *BEFORE* Interesting". If you are Interested long enough, you'll eventually have your chance to be Interesting. It's a learned behavior that helps us increase our influence with others.

Also, notice the boomerang? When we think we have to take the lead, give an answer, or provide counsel, it is perceived that we are not interested. Further, if we practice auto-biographical listening, we are perceived as someone who does not care.

May I bring you a leadership challenge? Listen to those you lead. Show you are interested in who they are, as well as in what they have to say. The result will lead you to being a better and more interesting leader.

Scriptural References for Tools

- 1) Engagement Bell Curve:
  - a. James 2:8-9 – If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.
- 2) Know Yourself to Lead Yourself:
  - a. Romans 12:2 – Do not be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.
- 3) CORE Process:
  - a. Romans 12:2 – Do not be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.
- 4) Support and Challenge Matrix:
  - a. Jesus’ leadership style– High Support (Love) / High Challenge (Truth).
  - b. Matthew 7:12 – So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.
- 5) The Liberator:
  - a. Ephesians 4:15-16 – Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
  - b. Luke 4:18 (Isaiah 61:1) – The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.
- 6) 5 Voices:
  - a. Loosely based on Ephesians 4:11-12 – And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and



## A Giant Step Forward

teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

7) 5 Gears:

- a. Philippians 2:3-4 – Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

8) The Influence Model:

- a. Matthew 10 – Impact Strategy (serving People of Peace).
- b. Matthew 22:39 – You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

9) Self-Preservation:

- a. 2 Timothy 1:7 – for God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power and love and self-control.

10) Go to the Source:

- a. Matthew 18:15-17 – If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

11) Coaching Triangle:

- a. 1 Corinthians 11:1 – be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

12) Interested before Interesting:

- a. Philippians 2:3-4.