

How to Recruit New Donors  
and  
How to Maintain Donor Relations

There are two ways to get support - the easy way and the hard way. The easy way is simple...LIE. Lie about needs, what you're doing and how desperate you are. Just know that your personal life will be judged by what you tell your donors about needs.

Hence, if you're asking them to give because you're distressed by poverty, make sure you always drive a ready-to-fall-apart car and wear a suit that's shabby and out of style. Everybody is ready to support a charity case. However, once you make yourself pitiable, be prepared to live in a pitiful condition thereafter. For there is a saying in Yiddish which is translated, "A lie will take you a long distance but you can never come back home."

I once talked to a person about their appeal letters and their rather strong appeal throughout their ministry. I knew that this ministry had a surplus of funds. The founder told me that it was necessary to continually prod God's people and remind them of your needs in order to get them to give.

We too have found out that it's important to periodically remind people of how important their gifts are. But if you get those gifts on the basis that a terrible thing will happen if they don't give or that a wonderful thing will happen if they do give, you might unconsciously be manipulating the people who love you the most. After all those who despise you don't contribute to your ministry.

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Our presentations shouldn't be "why you should give to our missionary work." We aren't treasure hunters, we're soul winners. When someone gives a sacrificial gift, it's

important that they know what an example they are and what their gift enables you to do.

Acts 14:21-28 - The Antioch church deputized Paul, he returned to church and reported.

Acts 15:22 - another example of deputizing. Paul and Barnabas deputized, confirming the testimony of a call.

## II Corinthians 8 and 9

- v.2 Those who are poor but have abundant joy, give. Don't bargain' - that's begrudging giving. When Christians give, it should show joy and security. When a new believer gives to a Christian cause it's a good sign.
- v.3-5 First they gave to God, then gave to the work. Giving money was a token of the way they gave themselves.
- v.4 We take on the fellowship when we take up the support of a ministry. Giving makes the donor part of our fellowship.
- v. 7-15 The purpose of giving is to show the sincerity of your love. Through giving we are equalizing, we share the wealth willingly.

- v. 16-24 Giving must be administered properly. Personalize your support. The people were told in advance that they were expected to give.

### Chapter 9:

- v. 1-5 The offering plate is just an opportunity to God's people.

### Philippians 4:

- v.10 Giving was likened with joy.
- v. 11-12 Know how to be abased and to abound. I can do all things through Christ. That applies to getting along and my lifestyle.
- v. 16 Recognized their gift. It was Paul's thank-you note.
- v. 17 Not that he desired the gift, but it was an opportunity for a blessing for the giver.
- v. 18 The giving is often a sacrifice.
- v.19 God will supply all your needs.

Now I'll tell you something strange in building your support. At least one time you want to try to get what the donor feels is a substantially large donation. The reason for that, believe it or not, is that people are more

likely to continue to support something that they put a lot of money into, not for fear of failure but out of a desire for the satisfaction to share your achievements.

We estimated that a sponsorship donation for our friends would be about \$250.00. That would be a substantial amount of their income in a given month. That donation then comes to commemorate the sacrificial act and they are more likely to continue giving regular monthly or quarterly donations after they've made a large donation.

There are some who can give \$500.00 a month or \$1,000.00 a month. In which case, you'd better go after \$10,000.00 as their large donation. Bill Bright does this by phoning up the more generous donors to tell them how much their donation means.

**Integrity.** There are those who can convince themselves of what they need to believe in order to do what they want. All of us have suffered the loss of at least a few supporters who transferred their support to those who exaggerated or dramatized the needs of their ministry more than we felt we could or should. Integrity means that you're obligated to tell people not only what you need but also what you have. If you have sources of income other than through your ministry, i.e., royalties from writings, etc., you tactfully need to let people know. The most ideal situation is where an individual looks to the Lord to provide entirely through one ministry.

You need to recognize that sometimes the gaining of support is a hindrance to ministry. Let me give you a good example. I think of a particular leader of a Messianic congregation who confided in me. So far as the congregation knows, they are giving his whole salary, which would be considered ample, if not generous. But before he started that Messianic congregation, he had several individual supporters who contributed to him in the sense of the fact that they believed that he was doing missionary work in a former ministry, he had asked for support and carried his support into the congregational ministry. Now the problem is that he's never disclosed to his congregation that he has other support coming in. He's hinted at it, he said he gets a few dollars, when in fact the combined income is more than \$80,000.

Now when people give you support and you declare that you need money for your ministry, they have the right to ask about your income and your lifestyle. One must maintain integrity.

Here is the problem. All too often mission leaders will work at gaining support more than they will sork to deserve that support, and we have got to show them the spiritual perspective on gaining and retaining support.

I hate appeal letters - not getting them because receiving an appeal letter is something I can choose to respond to, possibly even be generous and gracious. I hate sending them because it really humbles me to have to ask people, or remind people. I hate sending them because I always get a half-hundred admonitions to trust God, as if I wasn't. Did you ever stop and think that there is no way to answer that admonition?

Which of us will say that we are praying enough, trusting God enough, have enough faith. My pride is disproportionately large but not yet to the "arrogantial" level that I would ever tell a person "I am too praying enough" or "I certainly am trusting God." Now I wish God would provide support by the same means that he fed Elijah. The ravens would fly in my window each bearing treasury bills of appropriate amounts. I want to be supported by miracles, but think of how proud that would make me appear to say "We never send out an appeal letter, we don't need anybody to ever give money to us. We receive the full amount we need everyday by raven express." Then I could say "Nyah! nyah! nyah! God loves me more than He loves you!" but the Lord is not going to let me get away with that.

So we have to send out periodic appeal letters. In a Jews For Jesus mission, every appeal letter must be approved by a Board committee. I am afraid of myself. About six year ago, there was a seriously strong need, and I wrote about that need and I was overwhelmed by the generosity of our supporters, and I knew that I could keep sending out those letters and people would respond as generously and that became a temptation for me, so I bound myself to the Board so that I could not send dramatic statements of need.

This last March, we entered into another crisis that was due largely to increases in program expenses, while the income stayed the same. So I send out another letter stating the need. Patricia Coffey in our Art Department came up with a Hundred Thousand Dollar idea. Originally, I was talking about a music rhythm which was played by an orchestra where we were all doing our part. She re-interpreted it to be a heart beat, and I rewrote

the appeal letter for her idea. The letter peaked last Monday and from the statistics of the response to the appeal letter, we can do a projection that tells us that this one will bring in a hundred thousand dollars more than anticipated. Which brings me to some do's and don'ts with regard to the appeal letter based on needs:

1. Don't exaggerate, but do exemplify, i.e., make examples of what won't happen if you don't have the funds - for example, I immediately cut back on all equipment purchases when I discovered the shortfall at the end of February, three missionaries are waiting to get their vehicles replaced, two branches are waiting to get their computers updated, and I slowed down on the acquisition of property for our Chicago branch and froze hires except for missionaries.

2. Don't send out the appeal letter in the same form that you use for your regular mailings. It has to look different to get opened, oversized or undersized envelopes, unusual colors. In order to get people to open your appeal letter, it must look different and be different.

3. Don't threaten your donors with dire consequences unless they respond - that your ministry will go out of existence in that case. There is no doubt in my mind that if I sent out a well worded appeal letter that said "We will close down Jews For Jesus unless we get \$5,000,000" and continue to send out letters saying how close or how far we were from \$5,000,00, undoubtedly we would get the money, but that is nothing more than spiritual extortion and so far as I am concerned when Oral Roberts said that God would take him home if he didn't raise \$5,000,000, I can see how this was a threat. I am eager and happy to go be with the Lord, if He wants me to go home. That would be no punishment, it would be a reward. The thing about Oral Roberts statement that God would take him if he didn't raise \$5,000,000 was that he made going home to be with God something to be avoided instead of to be coveted. The old saying is true, "Everybody wants go to to Heaven, nobody wants to go soon."

4. Don't behave like your need is the only need. To read the publications of some of your ministries, you would think that your ministry is the only one that existed. Your donors know that there are other ministries, and when you avoid acknowledging them it makes a statement about how you regard yourself in your

own ministry. But remember when you are declaring your own needs there are the needs of many other people and possibly even needs of your donors, which brings me to the next point.

5. Don't make people feel guilty for not giving! Just pray that God will provide through a few. The most stupid appeal letter I ever read said "if everyone getting this letter would only send \$10, the need would be met." They were talking about a \$50,000 need and a 200,000 person mailing list--very bad arithmetic. When you start getting letters from widows and pensioners, apologizing because they can't give, please examine what you have written. You might have made them feel guilty and if you have used the untempered letters provided by a professional fund raiser, you can be sure there was a good amount of guilt conveyed.

6. Avoid slickness. By this I don't mean that we should do a schlock job or be deliberately careless. But some people employ expensive consulting firms who end up telling you: a) communicate more, b) press harder for the donations, c) have projects, d) give premiums, e) develop your communications to a high degree of sophistication.

Of course it's no accident that the people who are your consultants and who give this advice also know the people who will lend their services toward the sophistication of your donor oriented material.

### Project Appeal Letter

The second thing we want to talk about here is a project appeal letter. Actually I enjoy writing project appeal letters telling people of something we propose to do. Beginning with our Y'shua Campaign, we told people about the proposed publication of full page newspaper ads, I estimated that we needed \$150,000. I was excited about the project and sent them a mock-up of that first full page newspaper ad, and, instead of \$150,000 we got \$460,000, by God who caused enthusiasm about the project.

Providentially, the appeal letter went out early enough to enable us to triple the amount of advertising, once we saw the projected response. People love to get behind certain projects. They also like to take on individual people and missionaries as projects. They also like equipment as projects, i.e., a printing press that can turn out tracts, a van that can haul children

to Bible club, plane fare to move a missionary to Israel.

Projects they don't like: Building funds, the purchase of new equipment not directly used in evangelism, i.e., we tried to send out an appeal letter to people to help get a folder/collator machine or an inserter for a print shop. It has to have the words to fire people's imagination and they have to know what a printing press is. It doesn't occur to them that the printing has to be folded and that a sorter frequently costs more than a printing press.

So don't bother people with technicalities. Most of your supporters are renters, so it is hard for them to understand why it is necessary for you to buy a building. Tell them that because of tax advantages, it costs you one-third as much to buy a building as it does to rent a building. Even if the donors could understand, it would just cause responses that ministries get advantages that ordinary people don't. Of special interest to fund-raisers:

- a) Family support
- b) Scholarships
- c) The new and the novel and what has never been tried.
- d) Anything that you can describe with great enthusiasm. Your own enthusiasm is the essential ingredient to make the project work.

What you owe those who support you:

- a. to make their holy intentions count so that their prayer and gift and involvement really do matter in the place that you have told them that it will matter! For example, it isn't ethical to ask for money to distribute tracts and then not distribute tracts or to distribute far less than was provided for. When you invite support for projects, you must fulfill the expectations you have raised.
- b. Your supporters are like your parents. You owe it to them to be honest and to respect their intelligence.
- c. You owe them a measure of satisfaction. Your reward for serving God is generally not monetary,

but in satisfaction. As for me, I was surprised but delighted that God called me to serve Him. I was also pleased that though I stumbled and failed, He still saw fit to use me (sometimes I think God isn't very choosy). Then I have a great deal of satisfaction first of all in seeing other people come to love Him through our ministry, working with a highly dedicated staff and the quality of association with the supporters.

Stop and think. Supporting a mission is not a prime issue for most Christians. The average Christian is content that somehow his or her church carries on all the missionary work necessary that they, in turn support through their donations. The person who chooses to support independent missions or chooses to support a denominational mission to the Jews is definitely a person of a superior intellect - they know the score - that missionary work among the Jews will not get done unless individuals care.

- d. They are spiritually sensitive people. I wouldn't trade five of our supporters for fifty of Billy Graham's supporters because Billy Graham has a people-approved ministry and people gain personal status by their association as supporters.

Everyone who chooses to support a ministry to the Jews has given themselves to a cause that is socially disapproved by the upper level of evangelicals. They are people who are spiritually discerning and we all do well to remember it before we exaggerate our needs. God turns them on and God turns them off and if you don't believe that as mission leaders, just let sin enter your life. No matter how secret it may be, see if it doesn't make a difference in your support.

- e. Your supporters deserve to be recognized for what they do, though the best of them would rather be anonymous. Take some personal action - a post card or a note at the bottom of a form letter. When someone gives me a prayer request, I like to take a post card and say something like "On Wednesday morning, April 5, at 6 a.m., I prayed for your healing. Thank God for the use of all



four of your legs soon." I love to send out those postcards and people love to get them. It makes them feel special. It takes me between four and eight minutes to write a post card, but that's not much time. In these days of computers and pre-programmed answers to questions, people do need to feel they are communicated to as a person and you owe it to them.

- f. Lastly, since you tell your supporters when you have needs, when you have projects that you want them to support, you also ought to tell them when you have enough. I don't know if you do that, but I see when people write in with personal requests because of retirements, financial relapses or increased needs, they can no longer support your ministry. They are the people that I pay most attention to. They need my prayers more. They need to be told that they are not doing something wrong and they need to know that it is going to be all right with you if they can't send in their regular donations. It's wrong for us to want people to support us unless we are willing to accept the fact that we are obliged to treat them in a certain way.

Frankly, for a bit of time, everyone's appeal letters started looking like World Vision and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Assoc. material. It's because those who come up with original ideas that work will keep using those ideas over and over again until they are unwilling to try anything new. You can get the best out of a consultancy firm when they come in and make their presentation to get you to sign up.

## **Foundations for deputation.**

Scriptural principles:

**It is expected that those in full time ministry will be dependent upon God's people for material support.**

*"And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone: for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs."*  
(Philippians 4:15-16)

The apostle Paul expresses his gratitude to the Philippian church for their generous missionary support. At this same time he notes that other churches have not done the same. Paul, one of the first full time Jews for Jesus workers, expected to be supported by these other churches. In fact, the Apostle Paul believed that they had failed in their obligations to him and his missionary band.

**It is expected that God' people wil support those who labor full time in his work.**

*"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,' and 'The laborer is worthy of his wages'." I Timothy 5:17-18.*

The Apostle Paul reminds young Timothy to oversee the financial needs of full-time workers. He indicated that they should receive "double honor," which is further explained by the illustration in verse 8 to mean material substance.

**It is expected that those who labor full time in God's work will ask God's people for financial support.**

*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example; because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you; not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, that you might follow our example." II Thessalonians 3:7-9.*

In this passage, the Apostle Paul acknowledged that he had the right to ask for support from the churches in Thessalonica. In this case he declines this right for the sake of his particular testimony in this city. At certain times in our ministry it is right and proper to be "tentmakers," doing secular work for our ministry needs. The norm, though, is making our needs known to God's people and allowing God to provide through them.

*And whatever house you enter, stay there, and take your leave from there. And as for those who do not receive you, when you depart from that city, shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them. And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you. And stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to*

house. *And whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat what is set before you;*" Luke 9:4-5, 10:6-8.

Jesus instructed his disciples to take the initiative in requesting the support needed for their sustenance. We must not be too proud to ask God's people to support our ministry. Our great and wise God has established this pattern to advance his kingdom.

The pattern throughout the Bible indicates that God calls some to labor full time in the work of his kingdom. Those who accept his calling are to be cared for by his people. The real problem is not raising support, but being worthy by life and deed of the trust expressed by God's people through each gift.

The key passage is Philippians 4:19. Know it, understand it, and memorize it. *And my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in Christ Jesus.*" This is a difficult lesson to learn. Blessed is the ministry who learns this lesson well.

#### Proper Attitudes

Standing on a proper foundation of Scriptural principles will enable you to build good attitudes regarding deputation. The following survey of negative attitudes sometimes held and their positive counter will help clarify what a winning attitude should be.

**Question:** Why should others want to support my ministry?

**Answer:** The purpose of deputation is to present your ministry, it is not a personality contest. Win people for your vision of the work and not to yourselves.

**Question:** If God will provide, why do we have to go through all this effort? Can't we just pray and trust God?

**Answer:** God is responsible for the fruit and the results. We are responsible for the tasks and the effort. This is true of both missionary work and deputation. Pray like it depends on God, then work like it depends on you. Remember God not only ordains the ends, but also the means. Example: God supplied the manna, but the Israelites still had to pick it up.

**Question:** It might cause bad feelings with my friends if I ask for money. Didn't others lose friends when they began asking them for money?

**Answer:** I have never heard of any reports of lost friends, but I have heard of the deepening of

relationships when acquaintances became supporters. This seems to reveal a negative attitude towards your friends. Perhaps they can't dedicate themselves to full time service, but their investment in your ministry will strengthen the bonds of friendship and give you the occasion to communicate more often. If they never give to your work, it's only a presumption that they are actually interested in what you are doing. Essentially, you are asking them to do something that will benefit them that can be done in a tasteful way. Through deputation they can grow closer to you and can grow spiritually thorough involvement with your ministry.

**Question:** Deputation makes my ministry look like it's begging and irresponsible.

**Answer:** Beggars are people who expect something for nothing. You are about to do important, constructive work for which God and His people want you to be supported. Deputation is that part of your ministry whereby you involve others and in this way, you are giving rather than receiving.

**Question:** The whole idea of deputation and the good possibility of my failure is downright frightening.

**Answer:** Indeed it is frightening. It is frightening to be in the ministry. But if we didn't ask our friends to support us, how will we ever ask an unsaved Jewish person to listen to our message? The ministry of deputation is an opportunity to be stretched by God, enabling us to do more and be more for Him. By overcoming this fear rather than running from it, you'll experience growth in the Lord.

**Question:** But most of my friends have not shown an interest in Jewish evangelism until now.

**Answer:** Perhaps they didn't have the occasion, but they know and trust you. If you show that you are moving ahead for the Lord and they can be involved, they will stand with you. Also, they may gain a burden to reach Jewish people for Christ as well.

Deputation will equip you for work in the field as no other experience can. That's why this part of your ministry is so important. You will learn to trust God, love His people and present your ministry in a virtuous manner. The work of deputation is more than raising money. It is training you to present yourself and your ministry; it allows others an opportunity to participate and share in your vision.

Some of our best contacts with non-believing Jewish people have come through Gentile Christians who have learned to trust us through our church presentations and communications.

#### MOTIVATION

So far we have alluded to a number of the reasons for ministries to diligently pursue the ministry of deputation. The following benefits will help you further understand why this ministry is so important.

1. Benefits of deputation for the ministry.
  - a. It will you to present yourself and your ministry.
  - b. It will develop within you an attitude of living by faith.
  - c. It will teach you to give by learning to receive.
  - d. It will help you develop a love for God's church.
  - e. It will teach you humility.
  - f. It will help you understand the place of fund-raising within the scope of deputation.
  - g. It will teach you how to adapt and be flexible in many different situations.
  - h. It will teach you to be a better steward of both your own and the ministry's time and money.

What we must continually remember are the words INVITE THE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR WORK, AND IF THEY RESPOND, INTEGRATE THEM INTO THE FAMILY OF YOUR MINISTRY. Regard them as people who have a place, and that place is not merely to provide prayer and finances, but they must be able to participate, to feel that they're doing something with you, not that they're doing something for you.

Thirdly, inform them. Too much of the mission information is a description about "how wonderful we are." Tell them your hopes, your dreams, your disappointments, and your needs. Instruct them as to how to care, and it's my belief that when we open the line of communication, we should use that line of communication to minister and convey Christian content, which helps raise their level of

committment. All of the above are for recruiting donors and enlisting prayer. I have one word for maintaining it. That is IN TOUCH. Stay in touch with the Lord. Stay in touch with the team of people he has given you to participate. Sometimes a letter or a postcard asking them to check out something does help. Frequently, I ask people if they have a Christian bookstore in their community to check and see if that bookstore is carrying our books. But go through the whole thing all over again. Invite a greater participation, etc.

In the end, the most important thing I would have you to remember is that it's much more difficult to deserve the support that we get than it is to raise it. We can present ourselves as being more deserving than what we are, but ultimately those who actually do the work are those who are going to raise the support.