

## Ministry: It's all about relationships!

### Donor Cultivation and Retention

Most staff begin their ministries with this thinking: "We need to secure the monetary resources first so that we can do ministry." Because of that mindset, we often lead with resources. But resources should be the by-product of our ministry. We need to start with relationships. Focusing on developing significant relationships will lead to a solid ministry.

Many times, we think of securing funding as "transactional." We share a need and a donor writes a check. But because fundraising IS ministry, our focus needs to be on building relationships with donors and potential donors and sharing the vision of what can be done. As relationships are established, ministry results and kingdom impact can be shared. In other words, news of what has been done in addition to what can be done. Sharing ministry wins with donors creates excitement and a desire to get involved. Significant relationships are first; solid ministry results are second, and the resources will typically follow.

### Relationships + Results = Resources

#### The "6 I's" of Effective Ministry

The "6 I's" of Effective Ministry will help you build a strong FCA ministry through developing relationships. These six integral principles will provide a solid foundation for a healthy ministry that is about relationships, not events or programs. In ministry, we need to run the right race, not the rat race. The right race is pouring into relationships, and the rat race is running from event to event. Ministry is creating abundant experiences that lead to strong, healthy relationships.

**IDENTIFY** – Where do donors come from? Identify your current donors, lapsed donors, board members, foundations and key people in the community. Have a strategy to come into contact with people who would love to hear your heart, your calling, your vision and what God is doing through the ministry.

**INFORM** – Informing is about communication. It needs to be consistent, concise and compelling. Informing is not information (facts and figures), but instead, life-changing stories of the FCA ministry. Informing is not just updating.

**INSPIRE** – Creating excitement for the ministry will create movement. Good communication updates (data), but great communication inspires (emotion). It creates passion that inspires people to join you IN the ministry. When someone is inspired, they talk to others about the ministry.

**INVOLVE** – Connecting people with the ministry will provide engagement. Going to a camp, visiting a Huddle or a practice are great ways to get plugged in. But we must move them from watching the ministry to doing the ministry. Provide "handle bars" to the ministry so they can grab a hold.



**IMPACT** – As people get a taste of the ministry, they not only see the impact, but feel the impact personally. Impact works two-ways: their life is touched, and they see the impact of the ministry in others. The “WIN” is when donors begin to experience their own FCA stories, and not just hear our stories.

**INVEST** – As we invest in them, they become invested in the ministry. It means that someone is committed enough that they are willing to invest their time, talent, treasure, thoughts and speech to advance the ministry of FCA. This is a never-ending process shown by a continuing circle. When people reach the invest level, then THEY start identifying, informing, inspiring, involving, impacting and investing—so that others can begin the journey as well!

### **Working the plan**

Write down five current donor relationships that you have and identify where each of those relationships are. What “I” they are on?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Develop one action item for each relationship that will help you can move that person to the next “I”.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

