

PREPARING FOR THE SEMINAR

Using the Spiritual Gifts Kit

The material in *The Complete Spiritual Gifts Kit* can be used in many ways. The basic design is as a guide for a church or Christian ministry to implement a practical way to *discover, develop, and deploy the workers* for the ministry according to their gifts. Individuals may also use the material to guide them if their congregation or Christian ministry does not use a spiritual gifts process to deploy people in ministry.

The instruments in the kit may be used piece by piece or as a whole system. The most effective way is for the congregation or Christian ministry to use the material as a complete system. The goal is not simply to identify spiritual gifts and profile people but to supply laborers for the Lord's harvest. Using this kit as a whole provides a practical and thorough way to accomplish that goal.

This preparation section will provide guidelines for implementing *The Complete Spiritual Gifts Kit* within a congregation or Christian ministry as well as give suggestions for individuals who wish to use the material. When terms such as "pastor," "workers," and "congregation" do not apply to your ministry, please make the adjustments so the interpretation is applicable.

Implementing in a Local Congregation or Christian Ministry

Although the spiritual gifts kit may be used privately, the value of completing the material in a seminar with other people is that it creates a wonderful sense of community. Using the kit in a group setting reinforces the principle that God has given gifts to His Body, the Church, to be used together in that context (Eph. 4:11-16).

The most effective way to begin is to first understand as a leader your own unique gifts and ministry style. For example, many church leaders minister with a combination of diamond and emerald behavior types. By teaming with sapphire types, the leader will complement his or her ability to systematically deploy workers in ministry. (These terms are explained on pages J9 and J10 of the **JEWEL Behavior Type Indicator [BTI]**, notebook pages 125-26.)

Your behavior style may be something other than diamond and emerald. Take the time to understand your own style, and complement your ministry with others who will round out your team.

The following suggestions will help you develop a strong method for deploying the Christian workers in your congregation.

1. Adopt a way to identify the uninvolved. As a church grows, its styles of operation will also grow. In *Ten Steps to Breaking the 200 Barrier*, Bill Sullivan illustrates this point by using Weber's typology of churches. Smaller churches rely on "Traditional Authority" where staffing is "assigned on the basis of precedents" or relationships and traditions. Larger churches rely on "Ratio-

nal-Legal Authority” where “decisions are made on the basis of policy,” a more formal approach (see Bill M. Sullivan, *Ten Steps to Breaking the 200 Barrier: Study Guide for Laity*, 10).

For example, in a smaller congregation of 30 to 40, when you need someone in the nursery, you generally know that “Mary” will do it. As a church gets larger, there are more persons in the congregation whose abilities and willingness for ministry are neither known nor identified. Actually, in all churches, regardless of their size, there are small armies of persons who are uninvolved in ministry. A method to identify and deploy these people needs to be implemented.

2. Be sensitive to the communication style. Sensitivity to the communication network is essential. Communicate this new method of deployment by using the existing communication networks. Usually the smaller the size, the more informal the communication network will be; the larger the size, the more formal it will be. Along with using the existing network, demonstrate both the need and the solution. Have plenty of examples on hand.

3. Know that matching a person with a ministry is church size sensitive. The more ministry candidates available for deployment, the more precision you can exercise in matching persons with ministries. If you have one position and 10 candidates, matching will be different than if you have 10 positions and one candidate. A full discussion of ministry matching is found in the Counselor Training Workshop chapter.

4. Steps in implementation.

Start with the leadership group. Many have found it helpful to conduct the spiritual gifts seminar with the leadership group before conducting a seminar with the congregation. In a local congregation, this group could include the church board and key ministry leaders. In this way, the leaders will understand and support the process from the beginning. There is also the possibility of discovering persons gifted to minister as Interface counselors. See the chapter titled Counselor Training Workshop for guidance in this area.

Develop ministry descriptions. Once you are ready to implement, there are some steps essential for success. If the congregation is to seriously accept this way of deploying ministers, you must be sure that after completing a seminar, you, the church leader, are ready to deploy the participants according to their gifts.

Start by identifying the most needed ministry areas. Since this is a new method, practice by reviewing some of the most common and successful areas of ministry in the church. If someone is excellent in a ministry, use his or her profile as a guide for defining that ministry. Use the procedure outlined in the chapter titled Developing Ministry Descriptions (notebook page 98).

Prepare Interface counselors. The summary interview following a seminar is absolutely essential. The goal is not simply to guide people to know how God has gifted them or to profile people but to deploy people in ministry where they are gifted. The summary interview is essential to effectively involve people in ministry. Without this interview with a trained guide, many may never become involved in ministry. If they do, it could be quite random and haphazard. Take the time to fully acquaint counselors with the instruments and the interview process. Instructions for training counselors are found in the chapter titled Counselor Training Workshop.

Limit the size of the seminar. The number of candidates accepted in each seminar should be limited to the number of interviews the counselors are able to conduct within the two weeks immediately following the seminar. It is better to process fewer people in more seminars and de-

ploy them in ministry than to process many people and for them not to become active ministers for Christ. In this way you will ensure that more people are likely to be satisfactorily deployed.

It is also helpful to conduct a seminar of no less than eight persons. This provides for good interaction that enhances learning, acceptance of the process, and the development of Christian community.

Make summary interview appointments. Prior to the seminar make a master schedule of all interview times available. Then, at the seminar, have all participants schedule interviews when it is most convenient for them. Try to schedule interviews around times the congregation usually meets at the church. During and around Sunday School and midweek hours make excellent interview times. The counselors could also conduct interviews in the homes of the individuals.

The seminar leader, or someone appointed, should follow up on the appointments and encourage the counselors to complete the interview within the two-week time period.

Conduct summary interviews. The summary interview is the heart of the Interface process. The counselor guides the participant through the results of the seminar and works with that person until he or she is satisfactorily involved in ministry.

A Suggested Implementation Schedule for the Leaders

Prior to launching a spiritual gifts seminar, take time to lay a foundation you can build on. Be sure to review the materials and plan the schedule carefully before you begin. Allow plenty of time to inform everyone of the dates. Above all, do not be in a rush to profile your congregation. Again, the goal is not to profile people but to guide them into effective ministries for Christ. Often leaders neglect to prepare spiritual gift counselors and ministry descriptions and as a result fail to involve people in meaningful ministries.

Here is a suggested schedule:

Prior to Week One

- Become personally acquainted with the material in *The Complete Spiritual Gifts Kit*. A good way to do this is to go through it with your spouse and/or with one or two other key leaders in your congregation.
- Follow the directions in the chapters titled the Counselor Training Workshop and Developing Ministry Descriptions. Then, set dates for:
 1. The counselor's introductory Interface Spiritual Gifts Seminar
 2. The summary interview appointment schedule for counselors
 3. The Counselor's Training Workshop
 4. The Interface Spiritual Gifts Seminar for the congregation

Week One and Following

- Recruit potential counselors. Before you recruit, read the instructions and suggestions in the Counselor Training Workshop material.

Week Four

- Conduct a spiritual gifts seminar for the counselors.

Weeks Five and Six

- The seminar leader completes the one-on-one summary interviews with each counselor.

Week Seven

- Develop ministry descriptions.

Week Eight (or when it is scheduled)

- Conduct the Interface Counselor Workshop.

Week Nine (or when it is scheduled)

- Conduct the Interface Spiritual Gifts Seminar for the congregation.

Weeks Ten and Eleven (or week one and two following the seminar)

- Counselors conduct summary interviews. This phase of the counselor's work with the participant is completed when that person is satisfactorily deployed in a meaningful ministry. The week following the participant's interview with that ministry's leader, the counselor should contact both the candidate and the leader to ensure satisfactory placement has taken place.

Personal Implementation

If your local congregation is not using a spiritual gifts system as a basis for deploying persons in ministry, you can apply the benefits of this process to yourself. After you have completed the instruments in this kit and have an understanding of how God has uniquely fitted you for ministry, use that information to accept the ministry opportunities you are most suited for. When you are approached to consider a ministry, use the following procedure.

1. **Ask for a ministry description.** Listen for key words that will tell you if this ministry is mostly a leadership, an intuitive, a facilitative, or an event type of ministry.

2. **Use the LIFE spiritual gift graph.** Read through the instructions in the Developing Ministry Descriptions section of this kit. Pages 100 to 105 provide guidance for identifying key spiritual gifts for ministries.

3. **Plot a *JEWEL* graph for the ministry.** Pages 105 to 110 of the Developing Ministry Description section of this kit provide guidance for identifying and plotting the *JEWEL* graph for a ministry. When you have completed the ministry description sheet, match it with your own profile. Evaluate how strong a match there is between your gifts and those needed for the ministry.

The purpose is not to eliminate yourself from ministry, but to involve yourself in ministry by investing yourself where you are gifted. As you understand yourself and the ministry more clearly, you will be able to volunteer and be at your best.

When You Do Not Fit the Ministry Well

Sometimes you will be in a ministry that requires a gift mix and personal behavior style different from your own. When this happens, here are some things you can do:

1. **Supplement with other people.** Begin by narrowing the ministry description. This option includes doing the portion of the ministry for which you are gifted, and teaming with others whose gifts suit the other portions of the ministry. The Composite Behavior Type Descriptions, beginning on page J11 (notebook page 127) of the ***JEWEL Behavior Type Indicator***, can guide you in this process. (The ***JEWEL Behavior Type Indicator*** is the personal behavior type instrument referred to in *The Complete Spiritual Gifts Kit*.)

2. **Adopt the behavior necessary to be effective in that ministry.** If the behavior gap be-

tween your gifts and energy and the gifts and energy required for the ministry is not too great, you might be able to adapt successfully. Once the gifts necessary for the ministry have been identified, there is a greater possibility of achieving that behavior.

3. Redefine the ministry. Another way to approach personal ministry in the church is to redefine it according to your gifts and personal energy. The objective of the Interface process is for a person to discover how he or she can be most effective in ministry and for the church to deploy God's people in ministry in a way they will be most effective.

4. Find another area of ministry. After reading this section and exploring the other options, finding another area of ministry might be the best alternative. Consider how you can be most effective in ministry for Christ, and use this as your criterion, not how to find an easier way.

If the decision is to switch ministry areas, take the time to do this with fairness and integrity. Even though another ministry area is chosen, the present responsibilities need to be cared for. There should be adequate time taken for discussion between you (the ministry candidate), the ministry team leader, and the pastor. This will allow enough time to find an appropriate replacement for your ministry. You may even be aware of others who could minister effectively in your area, and you might even help to recruit! Pray for wisdom and God's guidance as this choice is exercised.

Using these methods, you will be able to clearly understand the needs of the ministry and explain the gift mix and style you will use to accomplish its objectives. Your pastor and leader might welcome this fresh approach to ministry.

Above all, offer yourself for ministry. Once again, it cannot be overemphasized that the purpose of discovering your gifts is to be involved in ministry in the most effective way possible.

One-on-One Consultations

Another way to complete the seminar is to conduct it one-on-one with a trained counselor and a ministry candidate. When a person is unable to attend the gift seminar and does not feel comfortable completing the instruments on his or her own, link that person up with an Interface counselor. The counselor could then guide the person through the completion of the instruments.