

Handbook for Spiritual Leadership Training

Correcting Ministry Performance

Trainer's Guide For Long Distance Learning

Week/Session 2 – How Does Your Garden Grow?

Before the Training: Read the first section of the article, *Correcting Ministry Performance, The Fundamentals of Correcting*. For the next session complete or re-read the entire article.

Resources:

- *Communicating Excellence: Correcting Ministry Performance, Practice, Hints and Helps*
- *DiscussionHandout – Session 3 Correcting: Using the Tools –Week/ Session 2 (pdf)*
- *Power Point - Correcting: Using the Tools – Week/Session 2 (pdf or slides)*

Before the Training: You and your SL Learner have read, *Communicating Excellence: Correcting Ministry Performance, Practice, Hints and Helps* (the third section) and your SL Learner has completed the questions in the DiscussionHandout worksheet.

Point of the Exercise: .Whether we are training up our children or discipling others, the gardening metaphor has strong application. Jesus used many agrarian examples as teaching metaphors.



Clarification of Terms

- **Correcting** is a process we go through to assure the expectations for ministry performance are in line with Biblical, ministry and personal standards.
- **Correction** is a form of correcting.
- **Encouragement** is the first step in the correcting process.
- **Encouraging, encourage and encourager** are specific behaviors and roles I exercise in helping assure ministry performance is optimum.

Correcting Tools

Coaching	● Encouragement
	● Exhortation/Spur
	● Correction
Disciplining	● Conviction/Reproof/Refutation
	● Rebuke

Discussion Exercise: Growing Good Fruit—Correcting as Biblical Process

If the process of correcting ministry performance were likened to gardening they are some steps necessary for a good gardener and a good leader to keep the environment healthy and productive.

Coaching

Like gardening, the coaching part of correcting is a form of intentional training. We assume the person we are responsible for has the emotional and skill maturity to self-correct. We pour our time, insight, experience and direction into the team member and they appropriately respond. The tools we use are encouragement, exhortation/spur and correction.

Encouragement

Fertilizer

Encouragement is a lot like fertilizer. Plants don't grow healthy without it and neither do people.

What does the "fertilizer" of encouragement look and sound like?

It's usually a brief contact consisting of praise, acknowledgement. It could be making an observation regarding a team member's effort as a result of spiritual gifting and using talents for God. It could be expressing a belief in the person's ability to do, act or say right things. And, it could be using an appropriate Scripture verse to amplify or verify a behavior.

Encouragement needs to:

- ✓ Be specific
- ✓ Be authentic
- ✓ Remind a person in some way of who they are in Christ.

Who, in your life, has been an encourager? What did you do because of it?

Look at Titus 1:9. When Paul taught Titus, he told him he must "hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that we encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it."

How do you encourage other by sound doctrine?

Describe a time in your life when you didn't get encouragement? What did you do, or not do, because of it?

How do you think you are doing in the area of encouraging feedback to your team(s)? Do you need to ask them?

Exhortation/Spur

Weed/Tend

To keep the plant in a healthy state. In gardening we weed to get rid of competing sources that don't contribute to healthy growth and we need to use insecticides/fungicides or insect repellants as appropriate – so it can be as healthy as it can be. No unnecessary competition and no potentially deadly infestations. And we need to nip unproductive growth in the bud.

What does exhortation/spur look and sound like? Give an example.

It is an intentional conversation with detail combined with an expression of concern for consequences and a specific suggestion for change. An example would be, "Joanna, I need for you to be here on time

because we have a series of meetings planned and we need your input and participation to get the meetings underway.” Unlike encouragement where the effort is to motivate behaviors of the same type, exhortation is often used to help a person work harder, do better or change direction. It is often used to change potentially negative attitudes or behavior.

In order for an exhortation/spur to be effective, it must have the following elements:

- ✓ Specific and detailed
- ✓ A reminder of your authority to speak into their life. If there is not a formal relationship, ask permission to speak into their life
- ✓ Presented with a tone of problem solving not criticism. It is an expression of personal concern for potential negative consequences
- ✓ Stresses the importance of developing a change plan
- ✓ Contains an offer to meet further

But, if I spend all my time just weeding, what do I have? No weeds, but maybe no fruit either because no attention was given to growing fruit, just weeding.

Are you comfortable giving an exhortation/spur? Why might that be?

The writer of Hebrews (10:24) says we are to “consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” How often do you see spurring as a part of discipleship? Why do you think this is?

Correction

Prune

Plants won't grow in the right direction unless there is pruning. If you don't prune there is small fruit or flowers and becomes a weak, spindly bush. Regular pruning is necessary and is for a season.

What are some of the reasons why we don't/won't correct team members?

In order to provide a correction to another person and for it to have any basis of reception I must have authority in order to speak. I need to explain, 1. specifically what actions occurred, 2. what the consequences have been, 3. why that is not acceptable, 4. desire to work out a plan to assure it won't likely happen again. You must continuously ask the question, “What do I want and for whom?”

What would a correction sound like in your own words?

The Greek word for correcting is epanorthosis (setting upright). Can you relate a story of when a correction turned out well? Paul tells Timothy that Scripture is useful for correcting and training in righteousness. Describe an occasion when you used Biblical correction. How did the person receive it?

What, do you think, are essential elements for a correction to be positively received?

Disciplining

No one looks forward to disciplining another ministry team member. Yet we know without discipline we fail those needing a harsh reminder of standards. If a team member has reached this point in ministry performance deterioration their demonstrated lack of emotional and skill maturity is evident. For some or many reasons they are unable to self-correct. The aim of discipline is not punishment; it is to help the team member correct their behavior so that they do what is right and others don't suffer from their immaturity. Harsh does not mean angry, mean, spiteful or demeaning. It simply means providing simple clear direction about what is not right, what right behavior and/or performance looks like and a clear statement of what

must be done if behavior/performance doesn't change. The leader is always ready to provide instruction and promised resources as well as encouragement.

Conviction/Reproof/Refute

Severe Prune

The point in gardening of a severe prune is to remove diseased portions so the diseased portions don't destroy the plant. It's not to punish the plant for failing to produce. Pruning may distort the appearance of the plant for a while, may slow down growth or the fruiting process but is necessary for the plant to survive and thrive.

What actions or behaviors of a ministry team member would constitute grounds for a severe prune?

Paul refuted Peter, his spiritual elder, to his face when Peter came to Antioch to discuss the issue of circumcision. Have you ever had to refute another believer privately or in public? How did it turn out? Would you do it again?

What are some examples of what a conviction/reproof/refute action would look like? What would be the conditions warranting a conviction/reproof/refute with a ministry team member?"

Refer back to the article, Correcting Ministry Performance. The conditions warranting conviction/reproof/refute include the following examples and suggested steps:

- ✓ The ministry team member is either unwilling or unable to change.
- ✓ The team member needs to know in the most unambiguous terms that ministry performance is unacceptable and that if change does not occur, disciplinary action, up to and including termination, is possible.
- ✓ The ministry team member needs also to know what biblical standards of conduct are not being met.
- ✓ The tone of the meeting needs to be serious but it does not need to be severe.
- ✓ The leader's attitude should be that of compassionate concern for the person, realizing that drastic consequences could be on the horizon.
- ✓ The ministry leader needs to be as concerned about why ministry performance hasn't changed as she is about the fact that the performance remains unacceptable. This is a critical meeting and is, perhaps, the last chance to salvage the team member's ministry.

Rebuke

Removal of the plant

There comes a time, unfortunately when a plant simply has to be dug up and removed. As a gardener we do it so it won't infect other plants. Or, if the roots aren't diseased, you cut it back just above the graft and give it a season to restore. If it does, many times the plant is even more robust and healthy than when you planted it.

Why, do you think, many ministries are unable or unwilling to raise themselves up to issue a necessary rebuke to a team member or ministry member?

Isn't removal awfully severe?

What's the consequence of not removing a member deserving rebuke?

What about the person being rebuked? Aren't you going to feel that you failed them?

Is it possible that many issues reaching the level of a required rebuke got there because of a failure to follow through on the previous steps?

There is a two-fold purpose in a rebuke. What are they?

Additional Thoughts on Our Correcting Roles

- **Encourager** – In the ministry, who are the encouragers?
- **Mentor** – Name several mentors you know and explain how the correcting responsibilities are evidenced. Does a mentor have a role in correcting? Where?
- **Coach** – Identify the coaches in the ministry. Why are they qualified to be a coach? How does the ministry encourage, enhance and build coaches? What does a coach do when correcting?
- **Supervisor** – What is the difference between a coach a supervisor? How far do their correcting responsibilities extend?
- **Pastor** – What is the role of correcting reserved for pastor? Is a pastor an encourager? A mentor? A coach? A supervisor?

		Correcting Roles				
	Process	Encourager	Mentor	Coach	Supervisor	Pastor
Coaching Tools	Encouragement	X	X	X	X (Appraisal/ Commendation)	X (Intentional)
	Exhortation/Spur	X	X	X	X (Appraisal)	X (Counseling)
	Correction/		X	X	X (Reprimand)	X (Counseling)
Disciplining Tools	Conviction/ Reproof/ Refute			X	X (Suspension/ demotion, possible dismissal from ministry)	X (Strong warning/ removal from ministry with elders and deacons)
	Rebuke				X (Definite dismissal)	X (Strongest reprimand, potential disfellowship)

Reflection:

- **Encouragement** Read Acts 15:1-35. What happened in vs. 1-29 that prepared the way for such a positive response in Antioch?
- **Exhortation/Spur** Read 1 Thessalonians 2. How does Paul's tone differ from the message delivered in Acts 15? Note in 1 Thess. 17-20 Paul's passion. How would you describe it?
- **Correction** Read 1 Corin. 3 and 4 from the view of an elder in the church of Corinth reading Paul's letter for the first time. How would you feel? How well has Paul made his point? Since he could not be there and bawling them out was only half the remedy, what else did Paul do?
- **Conviction/Reproof/Refute** Read Acts 18:18-27. If you were Apollos and went to Achaia how would you personally have "refuted the Jews in public debate?"

- **Rebuke** Read 1 Corin. 5. The elders of Corinth have been properly and appropriately corrected. Now Paul talks about rebuking a member. If chapters 3 and 4 had not preceded 5 what would have been the likely action of the elders? Would it have been possible without chapters 3 and 4 for the elders to have quickly assumed the self-righteous attitudes of the Sadducees and the Pharisees?