

AUGUST TOOL

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"Moving the kingdom forward in refreshing ways."

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TYPES OF GIVERS EXERCISE

Not every giver is the same. All of us are in different stages of life and unique places in our spiritual journeys. Learning to disciple a giver from where they are to what is next unlocks confidence in both the teacher and learner.

Here are some thoughts as you begin this exercise:

- (1) The tithe is neither the beginning nor the end of a donor's journey. When it becomes the primary focused message it can actually serve to limit personal growth opportunities. A beginning giver could feel guilt and shame while an experienced giver can go unchallenged.
- (2) Think about other natural models where we show grace and patience in our conversations. We would not speak to a preschooler and successful business leader in the same way. Nor would we force someone to be baptized or embrace membership before they are ready. Rather we walk alongside people in patient ways all the time self-monitoring the information we share for the benefit of the listener.
- (3) **Once we name the different types of givers you are leading we will be able to create programming that is most appropriate for all staff leaders not just the lead pastor.**
- (4) You can even measure the different types of givers in your ChMS (Church Management Software) to help you focus where you desire to see growth.
- (5) The **Giving Heroes Exercise** is intended to be more expansive and inspirational. The **Types of Givers Exercise** is to help with program planning.

Here is a list of different Types of Givers to get you started: My words are intended to be descriptive and simple. You can rename them as you like and by all means add new ones. Your final list should contain three to five different types of givers. I attempted to integrate **Giving Heroes** just by way of illustration in terms of how they might work together.

Beginning Giver

First Time Giver

(Gives 1-6 times in a year)

Sample Giving Hero The Boy with the fishes and loaves (John 6:1-14)

Consistent Giver Growing the Spiritual Discipline of Giving

(Gives 10-12 times a year)

Sample Giving Hero Cornelius (Acts 10:1-2)

Percentage Giver Tithing

(Designate an appropriate amount.)

Sample Giving Hero Abraham and Jacob (Genesis 14:20; Genesis 28:22)

Expanding Giver Above and Beyond Givers

(Gives undesignated and designated gifts during a year.)

Sample Giving Hero Barnabas (Acts 4:34-36)

Extravagant Giver Passionate Giver exercising the Spiritual Gift of Generosity

(Could designate transformative givers by either the amount of times or the actual dollar amount given during a year.)

Sample Giving Hero Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10); The Widow (Luke 21:1-4)

Other words you may consider: Emerging, Experienced, Tithing, Disciplined, Habitual, Priority, Spontaneous, Growing, or utilize your **Giving Hero** list as illustrated above.

Here are some applications for your Types of Givers:

- (1) **Each type of giver can be measured inside your ChMS system.** Oftentimes there are ready made reports or you can create custom reports. However, you must enter the data correctly on the front end to be able to retrieve helpful information on the back end.
- (2) **Examples of data you may find important to track.**
 - **First Time Donors** - This could be a child, young adult, new member, or mature middle-age marketplace leader. New donors do not necessarily indicate age, spiritual maturity, or income level.
 - **Number of Gifts Annually** - How many times does someone give in a year? This is where you can learn the power of consistency. It is not uncommon that a person's giving amount greatly increases once they exceed 10 gifts made annually.
 - **Transformative Gifts** is a term used to describe larger gifts. While only being a small percentage of your donor population key donors can easily donate 50% or more of your annual offerings. A gift threshold could be \$10,000 and higher annually. While these are wonderful to receive they can also create volatility and vulnerability if your donor base is not widely diverse among all segments.
 - **Creating Custom Gift Ranges** for the different types of givers. For instance, a Beginning Giver may be designated with an annual giving range of \$1-\$999. This type of measurement will help you see the depth and width of your donor base.
 - **Lapsed Donors** - This would indicate when someone has stopped giving over a period of time which is usually an indicator of a life circumstance that warrants pastoral care.

(3) Once you name and begin to measure the different types of givers and other important data points it can affect programming in a very personal way. Here are some examples.

- If you find that 70% of your givers are in the Beginning category, would you embrace a year of focused planning in areas that increased both engagement and discipleship helping people move into consistency?
- Would you benefit from a Vision Report periodically throughout the year to your key donors who enjoy Above and Beyond Giving?
- There are different levels of church involvement that may indicate engagement and generosity. People often move from guest to regular attendance to member to small group attendance to volunteer to leader to high stakes champion. Would you create special steps or events along the way to cheer each stage forward? For instance, Volunteerism can be a gateway to greater levels of engagement. This would require program planning that is strategically tackling issues like recruitment, training, celebrating, retaining, and developing.
- What would you do if you learned that 80% of your gifts were coming from a small handful of families?
- What if the majority of your giving arrives from those ages 60 and older?

(4) Name the rooms/ministry activities most populated by your different types of givers so you can tailor your message, next steps, and opportunities. For instance, the worship service is probably your biggest population of Nongivers and Beginning Givers. While a Leadership Team gathering or Elders meeting is more likely representative of Expanding or Extravagant Givers. Words of affirmation, critical information, and future opportunities can now be tailored to the audience.

(5) Create a sermon and small group series with practical growth steps for each type of giver. Give them a variety of applications to choose from allowing them to declare where they currently are and how far they want to grow in a given year. Remember to be affirmative and actionable. One giver is not better than another. For instance, an Extravagant Giver may step back into a Beginning Giver mindset if they experience a job transition or retire. Life circumstances and stages can cause us to flow in between each type from year to year.