

# ***FirstSteps for Planting a Missional Church***

## ***Coaching Guide #5***

### Community Contacting

One of the marks of a missional church is that it has an outward focus towards the community because they believe that God is on mission and is drawing people towards Himself. Bob Logan recommends that during this early phase, at least 70% of the planter's time needs to be focused on evangelism and new member recruitment.

Networking is one way to express and live out this value no matter what model of planting you are employing. Ray Bakke writes, "Pastors who network their communities, especially in the first year of a pastorate, may end up knowing that community better than any other person. This upfront investment of time should pay rich dividends and provide the opportunity to help people..." (The Expanded Mission of City Center Churches, p 53-4)

#### **Biblical Insights**

- Romans 13:1-7
- I Timothy 2:1-8

#### **Checklist**

- Top ten community leaders identified.
- Community allies discovered.
- Contacting approach and strategy discussed with coach.
- Community service groups identified and evaluated.
- Business cards and website developed.

#### **Reflective Questions**

- What is the best way to make a good first impression in your area?
- Are you praying for your community leaders specifically?
- What community service group could you join?
- How can you begin serving in your area?
- What partnerships can you establish in your community?

#### **Conclusion:**

"Research in the areas of anthropology, sociology and communication underscores the importance of the roles of formal leaders, sponsors and mediators in society. Depending upon the particular societal arrangements that appertain, the newcomer may find it all but impossible to gain acceptance apart from proper approach to such persons. Even in western societies that emphasize egalitarianism, an initial contact with those who fill these roles will usually enhance the missionary cause." David Hesselgrave (*Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*, pg 167)

The respect a church planter gives community leaders will serve them well for years to come. Too many church planters enter a community like an "invader" coming to conquer! But every community has its own expectations of those new to their community, especially those who are going to start a business or new church. The only way we will discover those expectations is by respectfully interacting with its leaders and long term residents.