

Can We Create A Win-Win Relationship?

*“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.
 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls,
 for he has no one to help him up.”*
 Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Every relationship has the potential to be a win-win connection. When both parties enter into a relationship with an investment mind-set (discussed in the previous lesson), a win-win relationship is often the result. Such a relationship adds value to both parties. If both parties sustain a giving attitude and both are having their needs met, then the relationship can become something truly special. As long as both parties experience consistent wins in areas they value, they develop synergy.

The Synergy Question: Can We Create a Win-Win Relationship?

Synergy can be defined as combined or cooperative action that often increases each other’s effectiveness. Synergy is the result of win-win relationships. The only way to build a positive, long-lasting, synergistic relationship is to make sure everybody wins! The following people principles answer the question, “Can we create a win-win relationship?”

1. The _____ Principle: When We Help Others, We Help Ourselves.

Many people want to make “withdrawals” from their relationships without first making “deposits.” They desire to invest as little as possible in a relationship while receiving a huge return. Such lopsided relationships will never last. On the other hand, those who invest generously in their relationships, often receive more from others than they are able to give. When we add value to people, many desire to add value back to us. A giver’s approach to life is the key: always focus on what you can give to the relationship. Where do you stand on giving to others? There are three kinds of people when it comes to giving:

1. _____ - They receive and never give.
2. _____ - They receive first and then give back.
3. _____ - They give and then receive.

People who invest in others have some things in common. They...

1. Understand that people are of great value.
2. Practice the principle of sowing and reaping.
3. Believe that helping others is pleasing to God.
4. Focus on the investment, not the return.

Biblical Case Study: The Virtuous Wife (Proverbs 31:10-31)

The virtuous wife, described in Proverbs 31, is a beautiful example of a generous giver who faithfully invests in others. Because of her giver’s approach to life, she is called trustworthy, industrious, resourceful, compassionate, and highly respected.

- a. She brings honor to her husband (v.11-12).
- b. She provides for her children (v.15).
- c. She cares for the needy (v.20).
- d. Her words are full of kindness and wisdom (v.26).
- e. She receives honor and respect from her husband, children and others (v.28-31).

Discussion: Do you tend to be a taker, trader or investor? What is your plan for intentionally investing in others?

2. The _____ Principle:
All Things Being Equal, People Will Work with People They Like;
All Things Not Being Equal, They Still Will.

John Maxwell has often said, “People won’t go along with you if they can’t get along with you.” To put it another way, people want to take life’s journey with other people they like and enjoy being around. They prefer to be with true friends. A true friend...

1. Sees you at your worst but never forgets your best.
2. Thinks you are a little bit more wonderful than you really are.
3. Can talk with you for hours or be with you in complete silence.
4. Celebrates your success with you.
5. Tells you the truth at all times.
6. Sticks with you when all others forsake you.

One leader states it this way: *“A true friend is one who hears and understands when you share your deepest feelings. He supports you when you are struggling; he corrects you, gently and with love, when you err; and he forgives you when you fail. A true friend prods you to personal growth, stretches you to your full potential. And most amazing of all, he celebrates your successes as if they were his own.”*

You cannot sustain a deep friendship with everyone. But you can be a friendly, kind, supportive person to everyone you meet. You can treat every person as an individual, not simply a “contact” or a name on a list. There are three keys to this process.

1. Develop _____ about people. Learn as much as possible about different personality types.
2. Develop your _____ skills. Learn how to effectively serve others.
3. Develop your _____ skills. Learn how to listen with understanding and genuine concern for others.

Biblical Case Study: David and His Mighty Men (2 Samuel 8:15-18; 23:8-38; 1 Chronicles 12:1-40)

David had many things going for him: talent, humility, courage and vision. However, one of his greatest qualities, second only to his heart for God, was his ability to build and maintain deep and lasting friendships. The top leaders of his army and his administration were also loyal and trusted friends. Shortly after David defeated Goliath, he found himself on the run from Saul. He was hated and hunted, but everything began to change for David because of his friendship with Jonathan. From that moment on, David’s success was in direct proportion to the friendships he established and the people who surrounded him. Some of his friends were misfits when he first befriended them. Others were strong when they came to David, yet he made all of them even better. David, a “giant killer” as a youth, developed and led them to become giant killers. We see several characteristics in these deep friendships David developed.

1. David _____ them. He invested time and energy in their personal and professional growth.
2. David _____ them. His personal example of devotion to God and to his nation called them to greatness.
3. David _____ them. He trusted them and empowered them to reach their full potential.
4. David’s friends added _____ to him. They served him faithfully.

5. David's friends were _____ to him. They were willing to die for him.

6. David and his friends achieved _____ together.

Discussion: Have you developed any deep and lasting friendships? What do you need to do to develop or strengthen your friendships? Do you agree that true friends are people who bring out the best in you? How do you bring out the best in your friends, and how do they bring out the best in you?

3. The _____ Principle: **Working Together Increases the Odds of Winning Together.**

This principle is crucially important to leaders who desire to make a major difference. Ministry partnerships are often formed in the hearts of spiritually mature men and women who trust each other and desire to make a maximum impact for the Kingdom of God. Ministry partners commit their very best to each other for as long as it takes to accomplish a mutually agreed upon mission. Partnerships take a shared vision from a dream to a reality.

When individuals work together, the likelihood of significant accomplishment is greatly enhanced. The same is true with organizations. Partnerships should be formed for the following reasons:

1. _____ - The greater the effectiveness, the greater the results.
2. _____ - The greater the efficiency, the better the use of resources.
3. _____ - The greater the empowerment, the greater the mobilization of people, gifts and abilities.

There are some key principles in all successful partnerships:

1. Partnerships are about multiplication.
2. Partnerships are built upon trust.
3. Partnerships are formed to accomplish a shared goal or vision.
4. Partnerships always involve a growth process.
5. Partnerships are formed around the strengths of each partner.
6. Partnerships require investment on the part of each partner.
7. Partnerships require commitment, communication, generosity, flexibility and focus on the big picture.

Biblical Case Study: Peter and John (Luke 9:46-50; 22:24-34; Acts 3:1)

It was not unusual for the disciples to argue about which of them would be greatest when Jesus established His Kingdom. Each of them wanted to be "Number One." While all twelve of the disciples participated in these debates, it would seem that Peter and John would have been the most likely to think of themselves as the "greatest." After all, they seem to be the two key leaders in almost every situation, and Jesus is constantly trying to instruct them about genuine servant leadership. It is interesting to note the word "together" in the Acts 3 passage. It is just one word, but seems to have great significance in this situation. Peter and John are actually doing something *together*, and there is no indication that the old rivalry still exists. In the aftermath of Pentecost, Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17 has been answered, at least in the lives of Peter and John.

In the Christian community, partnership does the following:

1. _____ the effectiveness of ministry.
2. _____ the Body of Christ.
3. _____ the motives of leaders.

4. _____ to the world of our oneness in Christ.
5. _____ our commitment to one another.
6. _____ the heart of God.

Discussion: Dream for a moment. How could forming a successful partnership impact your life, family, organization, or church? What strengths do you bring that could add value to a potential partnership?

**4. The _____ Principle:
In Great Relationships, the Joy of Being Together Is Enough.**

Is there anything more rewarding than spending time with someone with whom you have a great relationship? Isn't it true that whenever you have a joyful experience in life, the joy is more than doubled if you can share it with a friend? There are four factors that help to create the right climate for relationships where simply being together is enough:

1. Shared _____ create a bonded relationship that lasts.
2. _____ together creates a committed relationship that grows.
3. Mutual _____ creates a healthy relationship that becomes stronger.
4. Unconditional _____ creates a safe environment for a relationship to deepen.

Biblical Case Study: Jesus and His Church (John 14: 1-23; 15:15)

Our relationship with Christ is the most important of all. Isn't it wonderful to know that He delights in having a relationship with us! He has paid a great price to make this possible, and He wants us to be with Him forever and forever! Think about it:

1. He desires that we spend all eternity with Him (John 14:3).
2. He returned to heaven expressly to prepare a place for us to be with Him (John 14:2).
3. He is the way that we gain entrance into the place He is preparing (John 14 4-6).
4. The Spirit of Christ abides with us now and always (John 14:16, 23).
5. He calls us His friends (John 15:15).

Jesus loves the believers unconditionally and simply wants a relationship with us. We can learn from Jesus' example how to sustain strong relationships.

Discussion: Think about people you know personally who have sustained a good relationship for more than twenty years. (It can be any kind of relationship, such as a married couple, business partners, ministry associates, or friends.) What do they do to keep the relationship strong? What can you learn from them?

Assessment and Application

Assessment: How effective are you at developing win-win relationships?

Application: Think of at least one struggling relationship in your life that needs to become a win-win. What steps can you take to create synergy in this relationship?

Take a few minutes and review your six action items from the "Application" section of each lesson. Pray that the Lord would help you grow as a leader and win with people.