



GENEVA PUSH

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# FINANCIAL PARTNERS



To explore this topic further, Reach Australia has put together a course on raising financial partnership. This can be accessed in the link in the footnote. The three foundational principles of financial partnership we discuss here are drawn from the first chapter of Rod Irvine's book "Giving Generously".

**Principle 1 - The planting pastor needs to spearhead the raising of resources.** We might feel awkward about it, we may feel we lack the skillset to do it effectively, and we may even feel self-serving, but as the primary vision caster and bible teacher the pastor must be the person to lead in this area. Rod Irvine says *"the fruit of this ministry can often be traced to how much prayer, wisdom, planning and courage have been demonstrated."* That's a hard word, but one we need to hear.

**Principle 2 - If we're going to get people to partner financially, we must share our vision clearly.** The people we speak with need to know that our plant is pursuing our common mission to make disciples. As we help them understand our common vision, we want them to see how they can partner in this work.

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<https://training.churchinabox.online/library/money-matters-for-your-church-43312/about/>

Quote from Irvine, Rod. 2017. Giving Generously: Resourcing local church ministry. Pg 2.: Barton Books.



**Principle 3 - This is not fund-raising, this is faith-raising.** This is a spiritual exercise - for us, as well as those we ask to partner with us. At the heart of this conversation is an invitation for them to participate in what God is doing using the resources he has given them to steward. Something that we must know is that they may have mixed motives. Not everyone is going to be on board with our vision or plan, but may still want to partner. Some will give because they love us, and some will give because they see how our plant is furthering the Gospel. Regardless, as we invite people to partner we must see it as a discipleship moment for people. We're looking for heart change, and this is an opportunity to help people grow - whether it results in them partnering or not. This is a faith-raising exercise, not a fund-raising exercise.

**Here are 9 specific tips for building financial partners as we plant.**

**1. Pray about it regularly.** We need to ask for wisdom, courage and words that people might see what God is doing here, and that they would have generous hearts towards this work.

**2. Set goals.** We should (hopefully) already have a 3-year budget for our church plant which sets out the high-level goals you're going to need to hit. As you move towards launch, it's also helpful to have personal goals we set for how much you're hoping to raise, and by when. These smaller goals will help make the larger goals more attainable.

**3. Build a list of people to approach, and work through that list.** Support raising is often the thing that keeps getting pushed to the bottom of the todo list. Having a list of people we're going to meet with, and breaking that list down into a few people a week, makes the task more manageable.





**4. Keep in mind: this is a relationship, not a transaction.** We are not entering conversations just to get money out of people. We're there to care for them, raise their eyes to what God is doing, and see if they are open to partnering with us. This partnership might be financial, or it might be in prayer. Whichever it is, we need to remember that this is a person to love and care for, and treat them as such.

**5. When we ask, be specific.** When we speak to people, it is helpful to have a figure in mind to put to them. This figure will clarify for them what level of financial support will help our church plant succeed. Generally, particularly for those in our launch team, we want them to give regularly to this church, so give them a figure that supports the financial vision. When we speak with external supporters, they might either commit to give for 1-3 years to help the church plant reach sustainability OR give a one-off gift to help kickstart launch. However people choose to give, you will help them to make a better decision by giving them a clear figure to pray over.

**6. Get them to go away and pray about it.** Some people may answer on the spot, but we shouldn't expect or require them to. Ask them to go away, pray about it, and let them know we will follow them up. It's helpful to give something physical, so we should give them a copy of our prospectus. Our goal is not to manipulate people into giving money, but for them to discern whether they can responsibly give as God prompts them to give generously.



**7. Follow them up.** If we've asked, and given time to think and pray, it's crucial that we follow them up within reasonable time. We flagged this in our conversation, and made it clear that our relationship with them is not dependent on their answer, so they'll be open to, and expecting this phone call. We must put it in our diary, and be sure to call.

**8. Communicate the impact of their support.** We are responsible for helping our partners know what to pray for, and to see the impact of their partnership. If they're captured by the vision, they will seek opportunities to thank God for how he is working. We must regularly communicate to our partners how God is at work in our plant.

**9. Build an ongoing relationship that reflects our thankfulness for their partnership and concern for them in Christ.** This connects points 4 & 8. As we communicate God's work in our church for prayer, we should also create opportunities for our partners to let us know how we can pray for them. This builds a deeper relationship over time, and allows a mutual partnership.

There is much to say on this topic, and it is a key competency church planters and Christian leaders need to build. However at its heart, inviting people to partner financially is not just a competency, but an issue of the heart. **Will we allow others the opportunity to grow in their faith and trust in God by partnering with us in giving generously to his work in our church plant?**





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