



## **Is Good Communication Vital to Successful Ministry?**

What is Good Communication?

Put most simply, good communication is public relations. A solid PR plan builds trusting relationships between your church and various people groups in the community. These groups are called publics, and they exist both inside and outside of your church.

Publics within the four walls of your church may include: men's and women's ministries, children's groups, youth group, single and young adult ministries, widows and widowers and senior adults. While these internal groups are usually targeted by churches, publics outside the four walls of the church must not be overlooked. Your community has numerous publics in need of the gospel message, and your church has the power to reach those publics. They include groups from other faiths, those who never attend church, professionals and the unemployed, just to name a few.

When it comes to public relations and good communication, one size does not fit all. While every public needs to be reached for Christ, they may not all be reached by a single method. There are four basic steps in establishing an active public relations program.

1. **Determine Your Local Publics.** Each church is located in a community with unique demographic and geographic needs. It is important to determine the specific publics in existence around your church.
2. **Examine Your Ministries.** What existing ministries would be of interest to specific publics in your community? Do any new ministries need to be established to effectively reach your publics?
3. **Plan Your Efforts and establish a realistic timeline.** Determine which publics you are equipped to reach now, and which will need to wait for the training of church members and development of ministries. Next, plan what methods you will use to promote these ministries. Some examples include radio and television ads, Web and e-mail promotion, flyers, bumper stickers, door to door, giveaways and word of mouth.
4. **Execute Your Program.** Carry out your plans. As you begin to build bridges between a targeted public and your church with positive relationships, you will open doors to share Christ with that public.

Following are two examples of churches that established successful ministries in their community using good public relations.

1. One church became aware that a growing number of families in their city were going hungry. The church developed a feeding ministry led by trained laypeople from the congregation and began serving an average of 100 meals every Saturday. Over time, relationships have been built and many have come to Christ.
2. Another church identified a large number of underprivileged children with inadequate supervision. The pastor capitalized on his former training as a police officer to partner with Amber Alert on setting up a catalog of photos and data of the children. The information was placed on USB devices and given to parents to

present to police in case a child ever went missing. Over 200 local children were involved in this outreach.

In summary, good communication builds relational bridges with various groups, or publics, through a good PR plan. To establish a good public relations program, identify your unique publics, both in and out of the church; list your ministries and ministry leaders; plan precisely how you will reach targeted publics; and finally, carry out your plans. You can bring an effective public relations program to your own church and reach your publics with the message of Christ.