



 The logo for 'The Compass' features a large, stylized yellow compass rose with a white needle pointing upwards. The needle has a yellow flame-like tip. The letter 'C' is positioned to the left of the compass, and the letters 'THE COMPASS' are written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font to the right. Below the main title, the subtitle 'A TOOL FOR DISCIPLERS' is written in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font.
 

# THE COMPASS

A TOOL FOR DISCIPLERS

## The Five E's of Leadership Development

When our Lord commanded us to go and make disciples, He was implicitly calling us to develop leaders. When He told the disciples to, “Teach [the new disciples] to obey everything I have commanded you,” He was including, of course, the command to make disciples. Paul is slightly more explicit when he says in 2 Timothy 2:2, “The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witness entrust to reliable men who will be qualified to teach others.” When we set out to make disciples then, we must not be content when they are merely walking with Christ on their own. Rather we must press on to impart to them the skills that will enable them to lead others to do the same.

You then, must be thinking about developing your men or women into leaders. Not everyone will have the same capacities for leadership: God equips some to lead tens, others hundreds or thousands. Regardless of their basic wiring, you can help your disciple to grow in leadership.

In Cru, we often use a particular grid to think about leadership development. There are five broad steps you can think through as you develop leaders.

The first is exposure. All that means is that you need to make sure they can see a living breathing version of leadership done right. Oftentimes, it will be you they see, but not always. Lead your Bible study well, so they will have a model to follow. Take them out sharing; let them watch how you do it. Bring them to church with you so that they can watch the way your pastor leads his church. If there is a skill you lack, that you still want them to catch, find a substitute teacher. Bill Hybels of Willow Creek is a fantastic vision caster. Buy a video tape, and with your disciple, watch how he does it. Whoever the model is in any specific instance, make sure they have a real picture of leadership in action, not just theories.

That's not to knock on theory. There is a place for education, which is actually the second step. This is where you intentionally explain how you lead in a certain instance. In a lot of ways, it's where you take them behind the scenes to see how to do what you do. You might sit down with them and talk through how to manage a group discussion where one person is dominating and no one else is speaking at all. Maybe you'll explain a great illustration to use when sharing the Gospel. Perhaps you'll teach them how to resolve conflict. Many of the lessons in The Compass fit under the broad heading of education. It's the classroom part of learning and it's critical.

Step three focuses on the environment. What I mean by this is, you need to create a place where they can grow as a leader, ask stupid questions without being made to feel stupid, screw up royally, and generally live without fear of failure. As I write this, my little boy Max is just learning to walk. He falls constantly, and constantly hears our applause and approval, because my wife and I are thrilled with his attempts and progress. His environment is one of great safety, and he feels no embarrassment. You need to create that same safe place for your disciple. Let them screw up, even when it matters. Respond to their questions, be available. Make sure they always know you are cheering for them.

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# The Five E's of Leadership Development

Fourth, you want to give them genuine experience leading. This flows out of the environment you are creating. When you go out sharing, have them initiate the conversation or share their testimony. After they've seen you do something, let them do it themselves. Sure, you'd do it better than they will, but so what. Give them the opportunity to try, fail, learn from mistakes, and grow. Let them lead Bible study one week. Create an opportunity for them to speak at Cru. Put them in charge of an outreach in your dorm. Just get them out there where they can really lead.

Fifth and finally, you've got to evaluate them and share your feedback. This doesn't need to erase the safe environment you are creating. You can be kind, and helpful, and encouraging, while you are offering real thoughts on improvement. If you don't do this, you are really not doing them any favors, since they miss out on opportunities for growth.

If appropriate, take notes while they are leading. Observe what they do well, and things they missed. At the earliest opportunity (like while you can still remember what happened) sit down privately and go over your notes. Start with the good stuff, but don't be afraid to share something they could do differently. I know that's really hard, but do it anyway. They'd probably rather do a good job, than think they are doing a good job. You can help them grow.

Exposure. Education. Environment. Experience. Evaluation.

If you can hit each one in the right balance, they'll love you for it. Make it happen.

†End



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