

So You Think You Can ... Start a Church?

Have you recently enjoyed any of the reality TV shows that test and eliminate contending dancers, singers, designers, or survivors? Our family has! Recently I found myself wondering ... what would a show look like if the panel of judges was looking for a church planter? I *know* ... it's a silly idea. But does it make you wonder how someone discovers if they'd be effective as a church planter? After all, how *does* a sponsor church or denomination decide to invest significant resources and give away the responsibility to one "winning" candidate?

Dr. Charles Ridley, a highly respected hiring consultant, upon interviewing 100 church planters, determined that 13 key qualities were needed for an individual to be an effective church planter. These qualities needed to be identified by past performance in the candidate. The key principle was: **"Past performance is an effective indicator of immediate future action."** The church planting candidate who demonstrates a high level of effective past experience in the areas represented by these 13 qualities can anticipate a high level of effectiveness as a church planter.

In 1990, when Dave was preparing to start Lake Hills Church in Castaic, he was assessed by Dr. Ridley. He was the youngest candidate who had been recommended at that time. The assessment was very affirming for us both as we started the church.

Several years ago, Dave and I were trained to assess potential church planters using an assessment tool developed by Dr. Ridley. We really enjoy doing the assessments together, and for the past 2½ years, I have been the assessment coordinator for the Missionary Church Western District. Conducting assessments is a great way for us to partner together as missionaries, and now, because of our expanded opportunities to minister together with OC, we're available to serve the whole body of Christ.

This past month we flew to Arizona to assess two church planting couples. As we look to the future, we anticipate more opportunities to help denominations, churches, and church planters by conducting these assessments. Please pray that God will use us to provide objective recommendations, and pray that God would work through these couples to multiply churches that transform America!

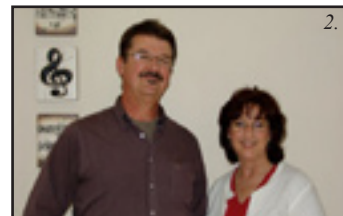
Grace,

Deanne

Still curious about how it works? Here are the 13 qualities identified by Dr. Ridley:

1. Visionizing capacity
2. Intrinsically motivated
3. Creating ownership of ministry
4. Reaching the unchurched
5. Spousal cooperation
6. Relationship building
7. Commitment to growing the church
8. Responsiveness to the community
9. Gifts utilization
10. Flexibility
11. Building cohesive groups
12. Resilience
13. Exercises faith

In the years since this assessment by interview process has been put into action, an effective church planting rate of 85 percent has been established.



1. Sam and Toni – Ventura Cnty, CA
2. Dan and Lynn – Long Beach, CA
3. Travis and Jyll – Providence, R.I.