

stuff you wish they taught in seminary



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## *5 Friends*

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***EVERY EXECUTIVE PASTOR  
SHOULD HAVE ON SPEED DIAL***

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RICH BIRCH

## 5 FRIENDS EVERY EXECUTIVE PASTOR SHOULD HAVE ON SPEED DIAL

Executive Pastors sit in an important role in the local church today. They often find themselves at the intersection of the "organism" of the church community and the "organization" of the business of running the church.

When moments of crisis or concern arise, Executive Pastors need to seek the advice of other community leaders. Now is the time to build these relationships. Could you call the following people today if there was an issue at your church?

- **Human Resources Specialist** // Navigating the complexity of building a staff team to push the mission forward can be a daunting task. Ensuring best practices in human resources can be a lot to figure out. In a moment of crisis with a team member, you need to be able to pick up the phone quickly and get straightforward answers because a timely response is often at the core of building healthy teams.

- **Contract Lawyer** // Finding a lawyer who helps companies sort through contractual obligations can save the church time and money. It also ensures that you don't bind the church to something that could negatively affect the ministry. At their simplest form, contracts are ways for organizations to talk about how they are going to relate to each other; however, they are also tools to extract value out of another entity. Too many churches have made bad deals because no one looked closely at how the relationship was structured in their contracts.

- **Child Protective Services Social Worker** // One of the areas of greatest vulnerability for a church is in the programming we provide for kids and teenagers. Sometimes, through

the course of normal interactions with these young people, flags are raised about home situations that are less than ideal. Ensuring that you have someone you can talk to when any issues come up will give you comfort to serve your community well.

- **Community Police Officer** // What happens when the youth event on Friday night gets a little out of hand and the neighbors call the police? Or how do you deal with the fact that you anticipate twice as many people at Easter this year from a parking and community point of view? Having a police officer on hand to get some advice on dealing with these sorts of situations helps the church be a better corporate citizen and have a better witness too!

- **Executive Pastor at a Larger Church** // We all need to be stretched by people who lead ministries at a higher level than we are. But even more importantly, it's good to have friends who can support us when we have questions. A peer from a larger ministry can provide insight and direction when you feel stuck. Often, they can see problems more clearly and provide quick solutions to help your church get unstuck.



#### 4 Guidelines for How to Win and Influence Leaders to Help Your Church

- **Don't Abuse the Contact** // They are not just around to help you. Build a relationship with them because they are great not because they can be a great help to you.
- **Allow Off-the-Record "Opinions"** // Often, these people can't speak in an official capacity when you ask them a question. Allow them to give you their opinions in a way that protects their professionalism.
- **Network Them** // You are in a spot as a church leader where you have lots of contacts that these leaders might need professionally. Make those connections where it seems appropriate.
- **Always Loop Back to Thank Them** // If people go out of their way to help you with something, make sure you go out of your way to thank them. A handwritten thank-you note is always a winner – and a lost art form.

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