



*My View*

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## FRIENDS AND CHAMPIONS

When I think of the people involved in TIP I think of two groups...our **FRIENDS** and our **CHAMPIONS**. Friends are those who know about TIP, are curious about TIP, think TIP is a good idea and maybe follow us on social media.

Champions are those who are passionate about TIP and take action on our behalf. Champions respond to TIP Calls, help with fundraisers, give money, help us expand the program to other jurisdictions, recruited other champions, and serve as our eyes and ears in the community. Friends think about TIP and are maybe infatuated by what we do. Champions make things happen.

I value both our TIP friends and our TIP champions. Both groups are necessary members of TIP's constituency. We need lots of friends in the community who know about TIP (and who someday may become champions), and we need champions who do the work that needs to be done to fulfill our mission.

The process of developing friends is a fairly straightforward marketing effort using social media and other forms of media. We develop friends by casting a wide net in the community. These "friend finding" efforts are vital to our success.

However, having lots of friends is not enough. In this social media age where the name of the game is to increase "friends" and expand email mailing lists, we need to remember that having lots of people who know and like us isn't enough. Having lots of friends does not yield results. It's nice to have lots of cheerleaders, but we need a team on the field working to help us achieve our goals. We need champions.

For TIP leaders, having TIP friends is just the beginning of achieving results for our organization. TIP Leaders need to be experts at turning our friends into champions. Unless leaders are able to identify champions and nurture them, nothing of value will get done for TIP.

Effective TIP Leaders are **champion developers**. Over the years I've learned the following about developing champions...

- > I spend 90% of my time with champions.

- > I spend 10 % of my time "networking" and" friend finding."

- > I spend 0 % of my time trying to convince naysayers about the value of TIP.

- > I've found that I can't look at a person and determine whether they are a champion. I need to ASK for help with specific projects. Only then will I be able to know if someone is interested in being a friend or a champion.

- > I try not to fall into the trap of "*he is too busy to help*". Most champions are very busy people.

- > I try to be a talent scout so that I can match the talents of champions to what TIP needs to get done. Champions will stay with us if they are using their individual skills and talents to achieve results.

- > I develop champions one person at a time. Potential champions don't emerge as a result of group appeals or group meetings. I need to spend time developing individual relationships with champions.

- > I appreciate, appreciate, appreciate champions. I don't take them for granted.

- > I try to create places and opportunities for friends to catch the TIP passion and become champions. (The TIP Advisory Committee and Heroes Dinners, for example)

- > TIP Volunteers who are our front line responders are by definition champions. I know when I want to get something important done, to ask a TIP Volunteer....Done!

So let's keep on casting a wide net into the community, telling everyone who will listen about TIP. But let's recognize that we will only be a strong and growing organization if we engage and nurture the passionate few...our champions.