



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS
- Initial Formation for Candidates -

Module 8: "What is Formation?"

sheet 1 [most suitable for Formators]

1. Identity, Role & Mission of a Formator



Our **greatest challenge as formators** will be to create a sense of fraternity for those being formed

IDENTITY

Formators should be—

Spiritually: committed to conversion of life through ongoing formation, good witness, faithful to Franciscan charism, good character, discerning

Psychologically: mature, well-balanced, self-controlled, open to dialogue, of good judgment, able to express what he they have learned

Culturally: know doctrine, understand methodology, can convey information in concrete fashion, good communication skills



What's he looking for?

He's a Secular Franciscan trying to find a formator with some of the requirements!



Human & Psychological Traits

Dialogues & shares [not lectures]
Emotionally honest [knows limits]
Takes personal responsibility
Acceptance of others' spirituality
Tries to understand meaning behind others' words
Stretches beyond own comfort zone
Admits failures/apologises for mistakes
Listens without interrupting or offering solutions
Understands growth is always possible/perfection belongs to God

Catholic Christian Traits

Fully initiated Catholic [all appropriate sacraments to state of life]
Private & liturgical prayerlife
Gospel motivated life
Familiar with Church Documents, Catechism etc
Committed to upbuilding of Church

Secular & Franciscan

Following Francis in: conversion of life, fraternity, Church membership, secular lifestyle, in fellowship with all Franciscan Family
Familiar with: Scripture, Rule, Constitutions, Statutes, Franciscan literature

ROLE

Q. Why 'formator' rather than trainer, teacher, instructor?

A. A formator will have, included in the work of formation, the task of training, teaching, instructing; but above all the formator is the one who helps to bring about the *form* of the thing in question—as the dictionary defines one of the meanings of *form*: "behaviour according to rule or custom". So, 'formation', the task of the formator, is not to inform but to form into.
[refer to leaflet 'What is Formation? - an Introduction' in Additional Resources]

Specifically, the role of a Formator consists of



Calling prospective members to conversion & accompanying them on their spiritual journey
Giving individual attention to each candidate
[aware of unique circumstances & personality]

Allowing love of Christ to guide all said & done in formation

Possessing vivid but realistic vision of the task in hand that outdoes discouragement

Formulating plans that are reasonable & accomplishable; yet willing to evaluate & change direction where necessary

Mission - simple & Scriptural

MISSION

It is the mission of the apostles, St Francis, all evangelisers, all of us, expressed nowhere better than in Matt 28. 19f 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.'

Specifics of *Franciscan Mission*?
= 'Go, repair my Church!' {We have to consider what that means at any given time/in specific situations}

