

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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We are to be **God bearers**: people want to **connect with God** and **experience God's presence** AND they want to feel that they **belong** and that **what they do matters**.

Leadership: Do not be afraid to lead, people want competent leaders.

Pray for a vision/ picture of God's future. Dream and imagine it – specifically. Know what you want; God works in and through your heart and your desires.

Be decisive – know what you think and then be able to articulate it succinctly (practice on someone to see if they “get it”) – so that others can understand it, remember it and even repeat it to others.

Innovative people and most unique ideas are going to be more out of step with what people are used to. So it is even more important that you can communicate / articulate your perspective and ideas.

Pastors

Work as a Team – you cannot go it alone. Collaborate, unity - no such thing as a divided congregation when there is a supportive & united board.

Have an all day retreat twice a year – seek a common vision – review ministry, staffing and programs.

Leader is like a point guard on a basketball team – sets up the play, sees who is free and in a good position. Can sometimes take a fast break, but generally the other teammates take the shot and get the glory. But these “assists” are counted, as are rebounds when one person misses their shot and another scores. Don't give up just because one person missed.

Commend and encourage what is going well – assets. Affirm what is - Gratitude is the quickest way.

Empower and equip members to the maximum capacity so that you have the time to do new things like engaging the community. Engage leaders in conversations about the community.

Go out into the community every week and talk with one person who is not a member of the church about your ministry – what is going on, the challenges, the joys – and ask if they have any response. Take a church council member with you sometimes.

Ask good questions of the leaders/ church council like:

- How do you think we could connect with the community in new ways?
- Is there anything we could be doing differently?
- What can we let go so that we have more time for our stated priorities?
- How do you all think I should be spending my time? What do you think are priorities for my time?
- Ask for feedback – how do you think things are going?

Concerns about strong leadership: 1) Is the pastor as committed as I am? 2) How can we prevent a strong leader from becoming a dictator – need checks and balances. Be transparent with the Church Council, and listen to their advice.

Pastor needs to be accountable for what he / she is doing. A monthly report to the church council is good for everyone; including the pastor to reflect on his/ her own time and efforts.

Decide the priorities of the Pastor together and then leaders back the pastor up if people complain.

Set manageable goals with a timeframe and review progress

Priorities e.g. there is no point spending 15 hours a week on sermon preparation if you are “preaching to the choir” so to speak – go out into the community, brave it and preach what you discover

Create a culture of ongoing review and evaluation of each ministry and event

Leadership development through didactic preaching – how did Jesus lead, how did disciples follow, how did they reach out into the community, how did the church grow?

Reflect upon the mission of the church often. “Stand on the balcony” intentional vision & reflection

Find a coach or another Pastor to check in with regularly – articulate own plans, accountability – how did it go? What worked? What didn’t go so well? What would you do differently?

Lay Leaders – Church Council

Be clear about the role of the council – expectations. Set them together – how much they are to do the doing, empower others, let go of how it’s done, how much they are to approve. Have a philosophy of how new initiatives can take place – streamline or allow people’s gifts.

Be clear about each leader’s **Responsibility, Authority and Accountability.**

Responsibility includes the scope of the role – parameters, role e.g. stewardship education but not fund raising.

Authority to convene meetings, speak at church council meeting (even if you are not a member you can present or write a letter to be discussed), budget, decisions you can make on your own.

Accountability – to whom are you accountable e.g. church council, pastor, president, chairperson. Set up a regular time for check- in. The one to whom the person is accountable - this is not micro-management, create a relationship of trust: What are your goals? How do you plan to accomplish them? What help / support do you need? When do you hope to have it done? How did it go? What went well/ did not go well? What do you think you will do differently next time?

Goals Set SMART goals – specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (have a timeframe).

Many people can share a common goal – but how to get there is the challenge. Develop a consensus on priorities and methodology (ways of doing things). Most disagreements are in the details. Same direction is easy, it is difficult for people to be on the same route.

Ask good questions and spend time diagnosing the problems.

Vision of the future – know what you want. Dream and imagine it – specifically.

Put issues of concern to the local community on the agenda of your meetings – know your community demographics and use them for meetings, what have you read in the newspaper, is there any way the church can respond...

Ask for input from your friends and colleagues – do they have an impression of your church, how do they think your church could serve the community better.

Congregation members

Remember it is necessary to take new paths, affirm the efforts of the leaders and encourage (not criticize) when things did not go well, give specific feedback.

It is much easier to criticize than lead. If you have a complaint be sure you have another idea to share.

Give 90% positive feedback first then the one thing that you think could be done differently

Pray daily for your pastor and leaders and for the ministries of the church, and that God will make your church and ministries thrive and serve God's purposes

Share your ideas / thoughts with the leaders – not politicking just your insights and reflections

Listen to your community – needs, trends... and report what you know/ hear to your leadership

Pray – seek Jesus' power, guidance and direction.

Leadership in general:

"God's call to any of us is usually not my idea, persistent and impossible". (Elizabeth O'Conner, Church of the Savior, Washington DC)

Establish a *Transformational ministry team* as a constant way to generate new ideas. Be intentional. Develop a Ministry/ Mission Plan.

Create a culture of innovation and adventure.

Empower others by equipping them for ministry inside and outside the church. People want skills, and need training – there needs to be an intentional time to know what to do and practice doing it.

Team building and training. Develop relationships of trust, finding common ground, and what they are passionate about, and understanding where people are coming from. Listen – just like we do with people we love – our children or spouse or parents. They have a story. Have a visioning meeting once a month where you share your hopes and fears and ideas, in an informal setting.

Learn how to make changes:

Test the waters with a cross section of people– informally if you have a new idea, share it and see how people respond – agree? Interested? Resist – pay attention – they will give you a clue to potential flaws in the idea. Don't be discouraged. Know what to expect of others.

Present first drafts not proposals – even if leaders agree with the proposal, the more strongly a pastor presents it, the more they will put up a fight. (That's why some of the best ideas are most resisted). Sometimes it is just the presenter that is being opposed. If another person said it – it may be received positively. Or it can be the way it is presented.

Find out who are the strong supporters. Most people will not adopt a new idea unless they know that respected people are for it. If you go public with a new idea and people are surprised and react – few people ever back down once they've opposed something publicly.

When information is presented too close to a decision-making process, people see it as lobbying.

Seek permission not buy in at first – are they ok with trying an “experiment”. “I'll let you try it” – can get it going faster, and the stakes are not so high, if fail.

Let dying programs die – can't do it all, stewardship of time and energy. Courage to evaluate what is working and what is worth the time and resources. “Planned abandonment”. We are not a “historical preservation society”

New ideas need to be repeated - don't cover the issue once and move on.

1. Exposure – aha, exciting
2. Help people be familiar enough to be able to say “I already know that” - don't be put off by people who say that – since most never get to.
3. Applying it.