

Systems for . . .

Leading the New Church

“If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously.” (Romans 12:8)

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Getting Started

Using this Module

The LaunchTicket coaching system *Leading the New Church* module is a tool designed to enhance the effectiveness of your church for the glory of God. From the outset (and throughout the resource), we want to repeatedly encourage you to lay all of your planning before God and seek His wisdom and guidance. Nothing in this module can substitute for the crucial task of submitting yourself to the direction of Jesus Christ. Although the purpose of this module is to help you become an effective and powerful leader of your new church, we firmly believe that prayerful submission to God is critical every step of the way.

This *Leading the New Church* module covers a great deal of information, which is broken down into topical sections in the module. Each section has one or more “Implementation Tasks” associated with it to help you put what you learn into immediate action and create and/or implement your own leadership system.

Because of the quantity of information covered in this program, it is important that you pace your learning to absorb and implement as much of each topic as possible. We recommend the following system to help you achieve the maximum benefit from this program:

1. Scan this entire module to gain an overview of its content and specific relevancy to the needs of your situation.
2. Discuss your implementation priorities with your coach.
3. Read the material and complete the implementation tasks assigned by your coach.
4. E-mail or fax each completed implementation task to your coach.
5. Be prepared to discuss your progress and questions related to each task during your next coaching session.

Your LaunchTicket coach is a critical part of this experience and is committed to helping you apply each task to your specific needs. If you have any questions while going through this program, don't hesitate to call for assistance.

Introduction to Leading the New Church

Module Objectives

At the completion of this module you will be able to:

- ◆ Identify your default leadership style and learn to adapt it to maximize your influence.
- ◆ Understand the reasons most churches stay small and what must be done to overcome the crucial growth barriers.
- ◆ Implement time management and organization systems that focus your time on the most important priorities and improve your productivity.
- ◆ Learn to identify and appropriately deal with people whose agenda is different from your own.
- ◆ Understand your role as the primary vision caster and the embodiment of the dream.

Purpose of the Leading the New Church Module

Everything rises and falls on leadership. E-v-e-r-y-t-h-i-n-g. This is not a cliché; it is rock solid reality. Place the right leader in the most daunting situation and he or she will find a way for the cause to prevail. Settle the wrong person into the most favorable climate and the project flounders and often fails. For some reason, God has chosen to work through human beings. He said in Matthew 18, “I will build my church,” but He consistently pours out His miraculous intervention through the life of someone who is fully committed and spiritually gifted as a leader.

You have signed on to be the founding pastor of a church that never stops making an ever larger impact for God. If this new church achieves that dream and ends up making a significant difference in its community, it will be because God was able to use you as His human instrument to make it happen. If it doesn't happen, you can be assured that the weak link was not God! A leader should always be aware of the fact that he himself, not history or fate, is responsible for his actions. In the context of planting a church, you must be willing to accept the fact that God has chosen you to accept the sometimes-heavy mantle of leadership.

“The Church, the bride of Christ, upon which the eternal destiny of the world depends, will flourish or falter largely on the basis of how we lead.” Bill Hybels

Let's briefly tackle the age-old question: *Are leaders made or born?* There are two categories of people when it comes to leadership: those who have the seed or potential for leadership, and those who don't. The last category consists of

people who probably wouldn't lead if they lived for a thousand years, read every book, attended every seminar, and hung out with effective leaders. They don't have the desire, energy, knowledge, or character to lead. They can be members of the church and even serve somewhere, but they will always serve on a team as opposed to leading the team.

The first category of people – probably the larger group – consists of those who have the potential to become effective leaders. The capability is there. They may already be leading well, or their potential may lie untapped, but when the right circumstances converge, they become difference makers.

But look at the accomplishments of Winston Churchill, Rudy Giuliani, or Bill Hybels, someone insists. Weren't they just born to lead? Maybe so. We would include them in the first category above as having the seed of leadership – only more fully developed than in most people's lives.

Most of us were not born to lead, but God has implanted in us the seed or potential of leadership. We can seize the initiative and decide to become an exceptional leader ourselves. So are leaders made or born? The answer is *Yes*. Some leaders are made; others are born. If you're a born leader, thank God. If you're not, so be it. Decide to *become* a leader.

In the *Outreach & Assimilation* module, we identified several foundational realities of a church that continually expands its influence.

1. They are led by godly, visionary leaders.
2. They have a DNA of "invest and invite."
3. They offer compelling weekend experiences.
4. They create and maintain the systems to facilitate an ever-expanding ministry.

All of these ingredients must be in place in order for the church to continually grow. None of them is optional; three out of four is not sufficient. Like the wheels on your car, you won't get very far until all are in place and spinning properly. This learning module will focus on godly, visionary leader because without that, the other realities will always be reduced to wishful thinking.

Before you move on to your next step in planting your church, accept the fact that the buck stops with you. If you are clear on your call, if you know it is *God's* idea for you to plant this church, you can know that He is eager to bless you. Accept that fact, surrender it to Him, and lean into the future. Then make an obstinate commitment that you will pay the price to become the very best leader possible, within the gifts God has bestowed.

Question: Why did Paul tell the Christians in Rome, "If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously" (Romans 12:8)? What's the big deal? Answer: Because eternity is at stake for hundreds, maybe thousands of people. Heroic Christian leaders throughout redemptive history have always looked at their work for God through the prism of eternity. They realized that if they led well, lost people would be found, broken lives would be healed, rebellious hearts would be softened, and hopeless lives would be transformed.

They responded to God's call because they embraced the honor of partnering with God in redeeming the world.

Got it? Are you willing? If so, seize the future with a humble and audacious heart.

Section 1: Situational Leadership

No two leaders are the same. They may share common views, maybe they feel a passion for the same causes, or they may have roughly the same information, but each leader is unique. Like the proverbial snowflakes, each person who steps out and answers God's call is wired up in his or her own way.

Consider Saul and David in the Valley of Elah. The Philistine giant, Goliath, blabbed on and on about how great he was, and he dared someone to take him on. David volunteered and began dressing for the stand off. It took only moments for him to realize that while Saul's armor fit the king like a suit from Men's Wearhouse, it made no sense for him to use it. His best shot wasn't sweating behind a ton of steel and dragging a too-heavy sword, it was a howling stone flung from a sling with end-of-the-world fury.

Let's suppose that Saul had conjured up the nerve to trust God and confront Goliath. Would God have used him? Would Saul have been the winner? Of course. But would Saul have gathered five rocks out the creek bed and used a sling? Not a chance. He would have donned his own armor and fought with the weapons he knew best. And that makes the point: God is not limited to a person's personality, natural talents or physical makeup. When God calls a man or a woman to do something great, He is willing to act. Your part is to find out how you're wired up, to determine whether you fight best using a slingshot or a sword.

To become a powerful leader, your leadership must grow out of three, interrelated core principles.

1. Understanding the way God made you. Your blend of spiritual gifts and your personality are unlike any other person's on God's green earth.
2. Recognizing the God-given blend of those you will be leading. People do not think alike any more than they look alike.
3. Being aware of their readiness for ministry impact. Some people are motivated and skilled, while others are one but not the other. Still others are neither.

What Are My Strengths?

Leadership starts with who you are. You are unique. God made you just the way you are and He is proud of His handiwork. You may think of a great leader like Gandhi and wish you had his skill, knowledge, persistence, and courage. But God has implanted into your life exactly the personality and mix of spiritual gifts that, if fully surrendered to Him and passionately developed, will make the impact that He envisions. And you can bet the farm on the fact that His vision is larger than yours.

"If your vision is for a year, plant wheat. If your vision is for ten years, plant trees. If your vision is for a lifetime, plant people." Chinese Proverb

Hopefully you have already submitted to (endured? survived? enjoyed?) a process that affirmed your leadership potential in the light of planting and leading a new church. That can happen in several ways, but one is the four-day Founding Pastor Assessment. As part of that process, candidates take a self-assessment test called “Leading From Your Strengths.” If you have already taken it, you were probably amazed at how the test pinpointed your leadership default position. You may have felt as if someone had followed you around with a video camera for a few months. (If you have not taken the test, LaunchTicket strongly recommends that you arrange to take it. See www.ministryinsights.com or call the Mission Catalyst office.)

The test is taken online. It’s simple and you’ll enjoy it. Within a few moments, you will receive a 28 page report that includes two sections. First is a detailed analysis of your unique strengths and style in a clear, concise format. You will understand:

- a. A general overview of your personality as it relates to leadership;
- b. What you bring to the team;
- c. The best – and worst – ways for people to communicate with you;
- d. How you should communicate with persons of varying personalities and leadership styles;
- e. Your ideal environment for maximum effectiveness;
- f. What motivates you;
- g. Your keys to leading at an optimal level;
- h. Your potential areas for improvement;
- i. How you view yourself and how others perceive you.

The second section of the test provides additional insights for further reflection and includes your core and adapted styles in graph form. You will read a series of one-word descriptors that explain who you are, how you solve problems and meet challenges, how you influence others, how you respond to the pace of the environment, and how you relate to rules and procedures set by others. You’ll discover an overview of your core and adapted leadership style in the following areas:

- a. Decisiveness/Results oriented;
- b. Sense of urgency;
- c. Vision for the future;
- d. Motivating others;
- e. Self-confidence;
- f. Interaction with others;
- g. Listening;
- h. Follow-up and follow-through;
- i. Consistency;
- j. Paperwork;
- k. Attention to detail;
- l. Following policy.

The test is based on four personality traits or tendencies. As you review the report, you will come to understand your own unique mix and intensity of these traits. They are described with four letters (L,O,G,B) that are short for Lion, Otter, Golden Retriever, and Beaver. Your leadership picture will be painted from the personality or tendency of these animals. Your core leadership score is comprised of a number between 1 & 100 in each area.

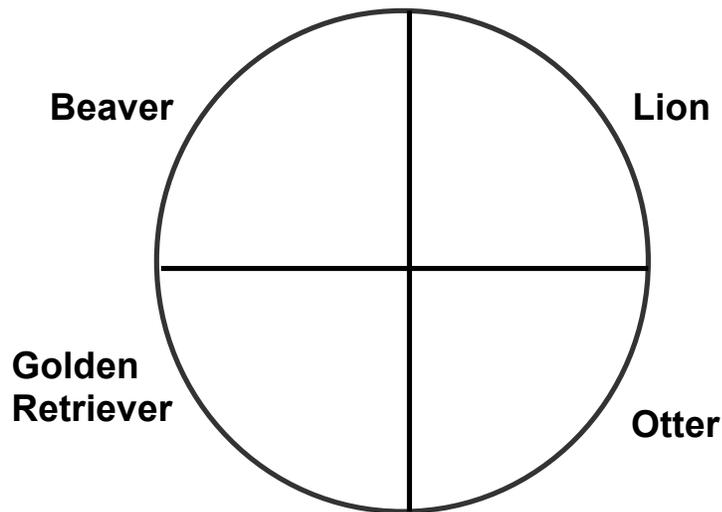
A Lion, for example, tends to be strong and assertive. He is often the boss, or he soon will be. Lions are decisive and can be impatient with whatever obstacle has the audacity to stand in the way.

An Otter loves to party. She is energized by hanging out with groups of people and talking with just about anyone. Otters like change and are fast-paced and spontaneous. They are usually quite creative and non-detail oriented. They don't mind spending money, but if you ask them to balance the checkbook, they would prefer to just switch banks!

A Golden Retriever is steady. He reeks with compassion and wants everyone to feel close and connected. He has a hard time saying 'no' if doing so will hurt someone's feelings. Retrievers can be so soft on people that they are sometimes too soft on problems. They tend to move slowly and make decisions after a good bit of reflection.

A Beaver is analytical. She intuitively looks after important details that others may have overlooked. When she starts a task, she wants to finish it before starting something else. Beavers prefer a systematic way of doing things with a slow, steady pace that produces long-term solutions and results.

What kind of leader makes decisions quickly and likes change? A lion? A golden retriever? A beaver? An otter? Which personality and gift mix is ideally suited for planting a church in unfavorable circumstances? How about favorable? Is your default position to be task-oriented or people-oriented? Consider the following grid.



Leaders

who score high

in Lion or Beaver (the top half of the circle) tend to be task-oriented, while the default position for Otters and Golden Retrievers is to be people-oriented. That doesn't mean that Lions or Beavers don't care about people, or that they necessarily walk over them. It does mean that the way they are wired up is to get the job done! Otters and Golden Retrievers can accomplish a lot, but they need to be deliberate and intentional to make it happen.

If your planting environment is unfavorable, if the resources are few and the odds are stacked against you, you will do best with strong Lion and/or Beaver scores (the top half of the circle). Otters and Golden Retrievers are at their best when working in favorable circumstances.

Now divide the circle from top to bottom. If your dominant scores are on the right side, (Lion and Otter), you tend to move more quickly. You make decisions before some people even grasp the issues. You expect progress to happen yesterday. Your mind is wide open to change. Beavers and Golden Retrievers are slower to move because it takes time for the Beaver to analyze everything and the Golden Retriever tries to get everyone on board.

As we mentioned before, there is no "ideal" or "perfect" personality and gift mix. You are who you are. But as you identify your leanings and your natural strengths, develop them as best you can, and surrender them to God's sovereignty, the giants that stand in the way will be destroyed – either by David's slingshot or Saul's sword.

"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain if it is in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58

Take Action!

*Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 1:
Discovering Your Leadership Strengths.*

What Are the Strengths of Others?

What is the difference between checkers and chess? Yes, chess is more complicated and requires more strategy. But that doesn't explain the essence of the difference. Why, precisely, is chess more difficult?

The key difference between checkers and chess is this: In checkers the pieces all move the same way whereas in chess all the pieces move differently. If you want to excel at the game of chess, you have to learn how each piece moves and then incorporate these unique moves into your overall plan of attack.

The same is true for leading people. Mediocre leaders play checkers with their people. They assume (or hope) that their staff is motivated by the same things, driven by the same goals, desire the same kind of relationships, and learn in

roughly the same way. Great leaders, on the other hand, know the truth: Each person is unique. Great leaders, therefore, discover what is unique about each person and capitalize on it. “Great managing is about *release*. It is about constantly tweaking the world so that the unique contribution, the unique needs, the unique style of each employee can be given free rein” (Marcus Buckingham, *The One Thing You Need to Know*, p. 84). John Maxwell likes to say, “He who thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following, is only taking a walk.” Any leader that does not consider the uniqueness of the followers will be leading a very small number of people.

Even as your own personality and style are unique, so is everyone else’s. A wise leader values diversity, not of vision or purpose, but of personality and background. Consider the 12 disciples; they were certainly not photo copies of one another. Peter was quick to step out of the boat; Thomas was slow to believe. Philip valued relationships while James was a “son of thunder.” If we had access to their *Leading From Your Strengths* scores, we would notice a kaleidoscope of Beavers, Lions, Otters and Golden Retriever. They were gifted individually, but no one person’s gifts were sufficient to accomplish the gospel commission. Together, they became a powerful force for Christ. Their unique but unified gifts were so foundational to the mission of the church that God has engraved their names on the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:14).

Some leaders who play checkers (as opposed to chess) build a team of people just like themselves. If they are outgoing and love to hang around people, they tend to collect people who are outgoing and are energized by hanging out with people. If they are driven and secure, they feel safe when surrounded by similar people.

Paul, the apostle, warns us of this in 1 Corinthians 12:17. “If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? If the whole body were an ear, how would you smell?” God has designed the church to work best when people with varying gifts, personalities and points of view come together in an interdependent relationship. They agree on the mission, the vision is clear, but they all contribute to the health and growth of Christ’s body by uniquely living out who God made them to be.

As soon as you can, arrange for your conception team members to take the *Leading From Your Strengths* test. Gather the results and discuss each person’s traits and tendencies, their strengths and style. In future meetings, when differences of opinions arise, remind the team of their differences. When adding staff to the church or appointing new leaders, consider the scores. Lead with an awareness of your own unique wiring, lead with a sensitivity to your team, and you’re on your way to life-changing impact in the church and beyond.

Are They Ready to Follow?

If you've taken the test, you have a pretty good handle on your default position when it comes to leadership. If your conception team members have taken the test, you've had fun plotting each person's scores on the *Ministry Insights Wheel* and discussed how one gift complements the next. You begin to dream about what your church could become if everyone lived out their spiritual giftedness. But a larger question looms: *What if someone is gifted, but they aren't ready for action?*

Consider the following situational leadership grid, adapted from Hersey and Blanchard.

	Low Skill	High Skill
High Motivation	<i>Need Training</i>	<i>Need Affirmation</i>
Low Motivation	<i>Need High Support</i>	<i>Need Vision</i>

Everyone who serves in your church can be plotted on the grid. When a person is highly motivated and highly skilled, for example, the best thing you can do is clarify the "win" and turn them loose. All they need from you is to stay out of their way and to affirm them once in a while. To do otherwise is discouraging and demotivating. If someone agrees to serve who is not motivated and has no idea what to do, you'd better be aware of that so you can lead them accordingly.

Imagine that your weekend experiences leader is high in motivation and highly skilled while your outreach leader is motivated but has no idea what to do. What would be the consequences of treating them the same? Transformational leadership requires that you are fully aware of each person's quadrant and that you provide exactly what they need to be effective. Leaders who treat everyone the same make a huge mistake.

In summary, your leadership must grow out of three, interrelated core principles.

1. Understanding the way God made you.
2. Recognizing the God-given blend of those you will be leading.
3. Being aware of each person's readiness for ministry impact.

Take Action!

*Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 2:
Leading Others.*

Take Action!

Implementation Task 1: Discovering Your Leadership Strengths

Review the following segment of Section 1 in this module:

◆ *What Are My Leadership Strengths?*

1. As the lead pastor, take the “Leading from Your Strengths” test.
2. Discuss the four personality traits or tendencies (lion, otter, beaver, golden retriever) with your conception team.
3. Review your scores and highlights with your team to help them understand how God wired you. The more thorough you are, the better they will grasp the concepts and appreciate who you are.
4. Urge the group to give you counsel for becoming a more effective leader.
5. Pray together that God will use your unique gift and personality mix to lead your church wisely and boldly.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 2: Leading Others

Review the following segments of Section 1 in this module:

- ◆ *What Are the Strengths of Others?*
 - ◆ *Are They Ready to Follow?*
1. Arrange for each conception team member to take the “Leading From Your Strengths” test. If you have already chosen your four team leaders (see Pre-launch Matrix at the end of this module), make sure each of them takes the test as well. (See www.ministryinsights.com.)
 2. Create a Ministry Insights wheel with each person’s core style plotted on the wheel. (*The wheel is near the end of the 28-page printout.*)
 3. Discuss the mix of people that God has brought together to lead this church. What are the implications of your diversity? What strengths do you see? What challenges are likely to arise?
 4. Draw the situational leadership grid on a flip chart page. List each conception team member and ministry team leader. Ask them to suggest where they see themselves on the grid.
 5. Agree on how the lead pastor and each team leader can help others achieve their potential.

Section 2: Casting the Vision

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Prov. 29:18). One of the essential tasks of the lead pastor is to cast a compelling vision. If he (or she) does it well, the church is energized, it stays focused on the main thing, and it moves toward greatness. If he doesn’t, the church drifts or turns inward and the dream never sees the light of day.

Vision originates with God. He sees the people of your city. He knows their hearts and exactly what they need. He called you to plant a church to reach them. Nothing can be more important than discerning God’s vision, embracing it as your own, then using every conceivable means to infect others. Once you as the lead pastor accept that call, it’s up to you to cast it.

Let’s define vision. According to www.dictionary.com, vision is:

- ◆ Unusual competence in discernment or perception; intelligent foresight.
- ◆ The manner in which one sees or conceives of something.
- ◆ A mental image produced by the imagination.

In the context of building a church that never stops making an ever-larger impact, we will define vision as “A clear mental picture of what could be, fueled by the conviction that it should be.” Are you clear on what God envisions for your church? Does that mental picture fire you up? Can you describe it in a way that excites other people and infects them with the conviction that it must become reality, regardless of the cost?

Suppose someone asked you to describe the vision for your life ten years from now. Chances are you could paint a fairly clear picture. You could outline a financial profile, you could describe where you hope to be relationally, and you’d have a pretty good handle on what you expect will be true about your professional life. In other words, you are able to project yourself into the future and imagine what life could be like. That’s vision. Your task as lead pastor is to do that for your church.

Here are a few rules for vision casting:

1. It’s up to you. You can delegate the accounting. Someone else can lead worship or set up the chairs, but you must cast the vision. No church has ever hired a “pastor of vision casting.” Churches hire the lead pastor who embodies, defines and spreads the vision. If you don’t do it, it does not happen. End of discussion.
2. You have to make it clear. One of the worst mistakes a leader can make is to assume that everyone understands the vision. If you have not clearly stated the vision, your team members do not understand it.
3. It’s never “done”. Rick Warren asserts that members lose the vision every 26 days. Find a way to cast the vision every time you meet with someone from your church. In every meeting, in every conversation.

Every day from now until you see the Lord. Wear them out and wear them down. Say it so frequently that when you start the sentence, they finish it.

4. God-sized visions take time. Most people overestimate what they can do in one year and underestimate what they can do in 10 or 20 years. To reach big goals, you have to plan for the long haul. As lead pastor, you must make a commitment to stay in your town for many years. A mushroom can grow to maturity in 12 hours while an oak tree takes 60 years. Which are you growing?
5. Vision ignores the evidence. A God-ordained vision will often appear to be impossible. But if it is, in fact, a vision from God, the evidence doesn't matter. "We live by faith," Paul insists, "not by sight." In the church, it's so much easier to live by sight. If the path ahead is clear, we'll move in that direction. If it isn't, we're timid, anxious, even terrified. Remember the 12 spies who scouted out the promised land? Ten of them looked at the evidence while the others looked at God.

There may be times when you are the only person who believes that the vision will happen. Maybe you're not even sure yourself. But keep in mind that the way you relate to the vision will be mirrored by your followers. If you allow yourself to speak discouraging words, those words will spread, the challenges will be exaggerated, and the vision will expire. In the moments when it seems that you've hit an unmovable brick wall, find a quiet place and spend some serious time with God. He will reignite your spirit, lead you through the tough times, and set in motion just what you need to accomplish the vision He birthed in your heart.

6. Vision has its price. A vision worth pursuing demands sacrifice and risk. You will constantly be haunted by the fear that it may not actually happen. The only chance of it coming to pass is to launch out as if you were absolutely assured of the outcome. It's like skydiving. You can't "sort of" parachute. You either stay in the plane or you leap out. And once you jump, there is no turning back.

David's commitment to attacking Goliath was not tentative. He knew that in a matter of minutes, either he would be dead or Goliath would be dead. There would be no rematch the day after tomorrow. If things didn't go well, he couldn't retreat. God could not bless until David moved forward as if he was absolutely convinced of the outcome. He seized his sling, picked up a few stones, and moved forward in faith. As the leader of the church, move ahead as if you are absolutely assured of the outcome.

7. You will be criticized. Name a leader who accomplished something great who wasn't criticized. When Nehemiah led the building of Jerusalem's wall, Sanballat and his buddies tried everything to discourage him. They urged him to meet them in the plain of Ono where they intended to bump him off. I love his reply, "O no," Nehemiah said, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down" (Neh. 6:3).

People with less than pure motives often question the motives of others. Since their own actions are laced with selfish ambition, they assume yours are as well. They take note of your zeal and assume the worst. The clearer your vision, the more criticism you will likely receive. Take the criticism to God, maintain a Christ-like spirit, and move ahead. "Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass" (1 Thess. 5:24). What God has determined to be, will be.

"Great spirits have always encountered opposition from mediocre minds." Albert Einstein

Bi-Focal Vision

If you're over 50 years old, you understand bi-focal vision. If you didn't need glasses when you were younger, you likely use them now for reading. If you've always used glasses, your latest prescription is designed with double correction: the top of the lens brings the long view into focus; the lower part allows you to look up close. When casting vision, the lead pastor is an optician. He designs the lens that keep the church focused on the long-term dream, and he lays out the short-term steps to get there.

The Long-Term Dream – What is the big picture? Why did you step out and start this church? What promptings led you to take the risk and pay the price? What is the purpose of the church? What does God want your church to become? What would happen if all of your resources were focused on reaching more and more of the lost? What if your team persistently pursued that dream for ten years or even twenty?

You should be able to answer those questions in your sleep. When you talk on the phone to a ministry leader or sit down over coffee with a prospective member, the vision should burst naturally from your heart and roll off your tongue. If it does, it will stick in other people's hearts, bring them excitement and hope, and keep the church locked onto what it's all about: people finding Jesus and going to heaven.

Never underestimate your church's vulnerability to drift. Without constant vision casting, you're a heartbeat away from turning inward, from the majority of your members believing that the real reason the church is here is to meet their own needs. Inattention to the long-term dream allows attenders to slide into a default position that prioritizes themselves and their needs over the salvation of the lost.

Historically, vision drift has happened a million times. Joshua tried to prevent it by building an altar of 12 stones as a reminder to future generations of God's mighty acts. Yet as soon as Joshua died, "another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord, nor what he had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10).

The sect of the Pharisees was founded 200 years before Christ as a protest against the infiltration of pagan customs; their aim was to preserve the integrity of God's Word and the Mosaic law. By the time Jesus appeared, they had drifted so severely that they entirely missed the point and became an impediment to those who were seeking God. Jesus labeled them "hypocrites," "blind," "whitewashed tombs," and "snakes."

The Galatians drifted theologically. "I am astonished," Paul wrote, "that you are so quickly deserting the One who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6).

Even the church in Jerusalem turned inward by failing to go beyond its own borders with the gospel. God Himself remedied the situation by permitting persecution and thus scattering the believers throughout the world. (See Acts 8:1.)

Arnold Cook, author of "Historical Drift," purports that organizations don't drift; only their leaders do. Effective leaders in today's world know that it is up to them, with God's strength and guidance, to keep the church from drifting. Without much prayer, consistent vision, and wise strategic plans, the church will turn inward, the hearts of the people will drift, and the vision will suffocate in its own malaise.

The Short-Term Steps – Imagine a quarterback in the huddle. "Snap the ball on the count of 3," he barks at his teammates. "Let's get a first down, or maybe even a touchdown."

"What's the play?" the wide receiver wants to know.

"Don't worry about the play. Just go for it!" the quarterback sets his jaw and looks determined.

What is about to happen? Chaos. The players may be competent, their goal may be clear (to score a touchdown), but no one knows how to get there. Their energies, talents, and best intentions are destined for defeat.

As you already know, you have to keep the long-term vision clear. You have to protect the church from falling away from its original purpose. But someone needs to call the play, to identify the steps the church will follow to get from point A to point B.

Down the road a year or two, you will work with your leadership team (currently your conception team) and your Ministry Advantage coach to determine your plays. But for now, during pre-launch, your steps are simple. You will spend virtually all of your time on outreach, weekend experiences and building ministry teams – and you'll create the systems to support them.

In section 3 of the *Strategic Planning and Implementation* module, you identified the gauges, or critical success factors, that you will watch during pre-launch. These are the five things that, if done well, will create a healthy DNA, build momentum, and prepare your church for grand opening. During this season of

your church, this is your playbook. You will focus on (1) Investing, (2) Compelling Weekend Experiences, (3) Grand Opening Ministry Teams, (4) Increasing Attendance, and (5) Church Finances.

Who would you guess is the point person for keeping the church focused on the gauges? Where does the buck stop? The correct answer is You. If you are the lead pastor, don't scatter your resources. Don't start a bus ministry, launch a discipleship track, or create a radio program. Instead, insist that everyone on the team puts all of his or her eggs in the baskets labeled *Investing, Weekend Experiences, Ministry Teams, Increasing Attendance, and Church Finances*.

*"A clear vision, along with the courage to follow through, dramatically increases your chances of coming to the end of your life, looking back with a deep, abiding satisfaction, and thinking, I did it. I succeeded. I finished well. My life counted."
Andy Stanley*

Take Action!

*Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 3:
Keeping the Vision Fresh.*

The Leadership Pyramid

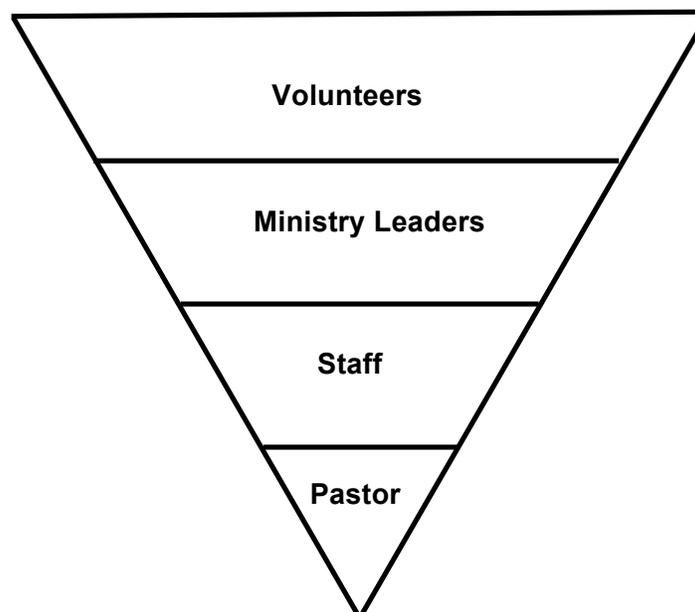
Maybe you've seen the Willow Creek drama about Pastor Howitzer. Whether interviewing prospective members or dealing with his unfortunate secretary, he proudly points to a flow chart that depicts how his church is organized. It consists of two boxes. At the top is a huge box boldly labeled, "ME." Beneath it is a smaller box that says in timid letters, "Everyone Else." A military camp is less autocratic.

You're the lead pastor. The big kahuna. The grand pooba. That means that you're at the top and everyone is underneath you, right? Well, it actually depends. In some circumstances, yes. In others, not at all. Here is the deal: If you get this right, your church is healthy and people gladly follow. If you don't get this right, your church will end up like Pastor Howitzer's – on life support and fading fast.



When does the pastor occupy the top position in the pyramid? In these circumstances:

1. When discovering or creating the vision. The lead pastor is responsible to gain the vision from God and to reduce the dream to word pictures that explain it clearly.
2. When casting the vision. The lead pastor is the point person for communicating the vision so that others understand it and welcome it as their own.
3. When creating the climate and the context for the vision to become reality. The lead pastor is the architect of the environment that encourages and facilitates the fulfillment of the vision.



Once the vision has been cast and the climate is created, the pyramid flips upside down. No longer is Pastor Howitzer the “boss,” his task is now to serve the staff, ministry leaders and volunteers. They are the front-line workers, the heroes, the persons without which the dream will evaporate. The pastor accepts the mantle of servant leader and does everything he can to empower and release the spiritual gifts and talents of the people.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 4: The Leadership Pyramid.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 3: Keeping the Vision Fresh

Review the following segment of Section 2 in this module:

◆ *Casting the Vision*

1. Listen to the audio tape, “How to Cast a Compelling Vision.” Prepare a half-page summary of the presentation and discuss it with your conception team. (*The tape is one of the Defining Moments series and is available from the Mission Catalyst office or from www.willowcreek.com.*)
2. Discuss with your team: What is the big-picture vision of our church?
3. Ask each person to answer the following questions:
 - ◆ Why did we step out and start this church?
 - ◆ What promptings led us to take the risk?
 - ◆ What is the purpose of the church?
 - ◆ What does God want our church to become?
 - ◆ What would happen if all of our resources were focused on reaching the lost?
 - ◆ What if we persistently pursued that dream for ten years or even twenty?
4. Agree on some specific steps you will take to assure that your answers today will be the same next year, and ten years from now.
5. What are the short-term steps we will take during pre-launch to move toward fulfillment of the big-picture vision? (Hint: They should have everything to do with your five gauges. See the *Strategic Planning and Implementation* module, Section 3.)

Take Action!

Implementation Task 4: The Leadership Pyramid

Review the following segment of Section 2 in this module:

◆ *The Leadership Pyramid*

1. As a conception team, read the section “The Leadership Pyramid.” Discuss the implications.
2. Evaluate the lead pastor on how effectively he leads from the top of the pyramid.
 - ◆ Discovering or creating the vision.
 - ◆ Casting the vision.
 - ◆ Creating the environment so the vision can become reality.
3. How does he do when leading from the bottom?
 - ◆ Supporting the staff, ministry leaders and volunteers.

Section 3: Avoiding the Landmines

If you were the evil one, what would you think of new churches springing up that passionately prioritize lost people? The question isn't hard to answer. He hates you, is determined to make your life as miserable as possible, and will throw every obstacle he can think of in your way. If God would let him, he would destroy you, your family and your church. That's a fact. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," Paul reminds us, "but against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

It's also a fact that God is with you and that He is infinitely more powerful than any evil force. "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Jesus promised that He would never leave you, and He pledged to give you all of His heavenly power (Matthew 28:18). You have *positively* no reason to be intimidated by any force of darkness. Satan is defeated. Case closed.

Having gotten that straight, the wise leader needs to be aware. When he understands what all-too-often derails a church plant, he has a tremendous advantage. He keeps his eyes peeled, he plans ahead, and he can often avoid – or at least minimize – the fallout.

Compare what you're doing to war (which is actually biblical!). The evil one knows that he cannot defeat you as long as you stay close to Jesus and you stay the course. So he tries to demoralize you. When an enemy realizes that the battle is too hot and they cannot win straight up, they scatter landmines in fields, near roads, and on bridges. They expect to lose, so their goal becomes to demoralize their opponent. By their very nature, landmines are concealed. They wait in stealthy silence for someone to take a single misstep, then they explode with horrific consequences.

The temptation is intense for church planters to wander off the pathway of Biblical principles and proven wisdom. The result is often great damage to the church, the pastor's family, members of the launch team, or all of the above. Avoiding landmines is serious business. Knowing what others have learned by experience will help you as you navigate through the early days of your church.

Pain-in-the-Neck People

In his exceptional book, "Starting a New Church," Ralph Moore lists nine questions that a prospective church planter should ask before starting the job. Number eight is: "Can you hold your own under fire?" Here are his comments about one of the most effective tools in the enemy's arsenal:

"A new church can be a magnet that attracts disgruntled Christians who have a history of conflict in other churches. My observations over the years tell me that more new churches fold from an inability to confront disruptive people than from any other cause" (p. 37).

Read that paragraph again, especially the last sentence. You will be miserable as a founding pastor – and you will most likely fail – until you realize that Pastor Ralph is correct, and you learn to confront in love. You will have people on your team who are spiritually and emotionally healthy, wonderfully committed to God, and sold out to reaching the lost. But mixed among them will be pain-in-the-neck people who have appointed themselves as experts in leadership or church planting. They know better than you do how to lead. They are not shy about giving advice, but they'll rarely take it. Beware of these vision hijackers.

Here is the other side of that coin: Some “pain-in-the-neck” people are actually a blessing. As lead pastor, be cautious not to create a climate in which everyone is forced to agree with you on everything. There will be occasions when someone tells you something you really don't want to hear, but you're a lot better off for having heard it. Tune your antennae to this question: Is this person constructive or destructive? Is this person's spirit positive or harmful? Don't hastily discount someone who might be able to help you.

Having said that, you can hang this on a hook somewhere inside your mind: The time will come when you will have to lovingly and firmly draw lines of demarcation. When you do, some people will leave. That's just the way it is.

Not everyone has the emotional courage to lovingly and firmly confront a trouble maker. Even those who do find it to be an extremely unpleasant task. No matter how wisely and sensitively you approach it, confrontation almost always results in fallout of some kind. That's life. (God lost one-third of the angels when there was conflict in heaven.) So you have to choose: will you try to ignore the problem and watch the slow demise of your dream, or will you confront the disruptive person and save the church? Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” He did not say, “Blessed are the peace keepers.” There is a vast difference.

A few words of advice. Discuss the possibility of this problem with your conception team *before* the needs arises. When it happens, gain as much support as you can from others on your team. If you need it, solicit the advice and support of an outside person such as an accountability partner, your coach, or a counselor. But do not ignore the situation!

Ten More Landmines

There are many ways to mess up a church. As the months roll by, you might discover some that you had never heard of. But here are some of the “biggies.”

1. Moving past the pre-launch phase too quickly. If failing to confront dysfunctional people is the number one reason new churches fold, this is number two. Almost all church plants fail here. Most will burn out the launch team and the church plant will fail. Others survive infancy, but rarely grow out of it. You have the chance to become a welcome exception to the rule.
2. Agenda disharmony among the launch team. When you have a vision, you have a vision. When you have two visions, you have di-vision. Agenda

harmony is vital. An effective lead pastor gains the initial vision from God, then establishes a conception team comprised of a diversity of people with a common heart. The pastor and the conception team seek God's wisdom, converse about the issues, and make the decisions. If someone doesn't like it, listen long enough to hear if they have a point of view you need, then stay the course. Bill Cosby once said, "I don't know the key to success, but I know that the key to failure is trying to please everyone." You can't, so listen carefully, discuss the issues thoroughly, pray for wisdom and move ahead.

3. Rushing people into influential leadership. Choose the people who will have the most influence in the church the same way you would choose a spouse: slowly, cautiously, and with much prayer. Do not set up any formal decision-making entities until after grand opening. During pre-launch, the conception team is an advisory board to the pastor. This allows everyone to see who will have a positive, long-term influence on the church and who should serve in another capacity or not at all. The same goes for your four ministry team leaders (weekend experiences, outreach, operations, pre-adult). Consider their positions temporary until after grand opening.
4. Trying to do too many things at once. Light is important, but not that powerful, until it is focused. Direct the sunlight through a magnifying glass and you can ignite a leaf. Focus it further through a laser beam and you can cut through steel. The temptation will be nearly overwhelming to do a hundred things, to offer this new ministry or that new program. During pre-launch, you will be exponentially more effective if you stay focused on the eleven critical tasks. (See *the Pre-launch Matrix at the end of this module.*)
5. Lack of a support system and accountability. Businesses that start with several persons (as opposed to one individual) are much more likely to succeed. Don't allow yourself to feel isolated or alone. Discouragement rarely affects anyone who is surrounded with support. Set up a system to keep in touch with another founding pastor or two on a regular basis. If you lead well and value relationships, the people who serve in your church will support you. If you're married, your spouse should be your biggest cheerleader. Your LaunchTicket coach is professionally trained and personally invested in your success, so make your weekly appointments a high priority and learn all you can from his counsel.
6. Turning inward. The odds on this one are definitely stacked against you. Why? Several reasons. First, it just happens. The natural inertia of a church is toward losing its focus on reaching the lost. Second, virtually no one in your launch team has ever belonged to a church that never stops making an ever-larger impact. Without ever meaning to, many of them will begin to expect the church to serve their needs and the needs of their children instead of remaining focused on the lost. Third, it's easier to serve the saints and it requires much less sacrifice. As lead pastor, you must constantly guard against this tendency. It will creep up on you with unrelenting zeal.
7. Unrealistic expectations. Starting a new church requires emotional toughness because you will often face disappointment. Attendance was low during a couple of weeks in the summer. You expected an exemption from

agenda disharmony but it reared its ugly head just when you least expected it. No pain-in-the-neck people would want to come here, would they? *Ouch!* They appeared from somewhere. People promised to serve who let you down. You must go into the project aware that it will be tough. What should you expect? Ongoing challenges, but overall progress toward building a church that adds one victory on top of the next.

8. Sin in leadership. When this one happens, it hurts too deeply for words. Lives are ruined. Hopes are crushed. Lost people remain separated from Christ. Some words of counsel: First, make sure that you live a holy life. Make a non-negotiable commitment that you yourself will walk authentically with God. Second, appeal often to your leaders to do the same. Set the climate of full and joyful obedience to God. Do everything you can to protect your church from meltdown through a moral embarrassment to the cause.
9. Burned out lead pastor and spouse. Every church needs a banner hanging in a prominent place that reads: *The pastor and his wife are not omnipresent*. Be clear on your priorities, work hard and smart, and keep first things first. You are responsible for your calendar, your physical health, your emotional wellness, and your walk with God. Keep control of your schedule (don't let others put a guilt trip on you to fit their agenda), and monitor your pace. You may work harder during the pre-launch season than you will afterwards. But remember that ministry is a marathon, not a 100 yard dash.
10. Meeting in the wrong facility. Your body has a lot to do with your own self-worth and identity. So the building has a lot to do with the self-worth and effectiveness of the congregation. Remember that unchurched people will not drive "down" to church, but they will gladly drive "up". Translated: they will gladly attend a church that looks nicer than their own home, but they will not attend a church that looks shabbier. Do whatever it takes to meet in a place that makes you proud.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 5: Church Planting Landmines.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 5: Church Planting Landmines

Review the following segment of Section 3 in this module:

◆ *Avoiding the Landmines*

Ralph Moore says, “A new church can be a magnet that attracts disgruntled Christians who have a history of conflict in other churches. My observations over the years tell me that more new churches fold from an inability to confront disruptive people than from any other cause.”

1. As a conception team, discuss Moore’s statement.
2. Reflect on the difference between a destructive pain-in-the-neck person and one who is actually a blessing.
3. When a destructive pain-in-the-neck person shows up in our church, what process will we use to handle it?
4. Discuss the ten additional landmines. As a group, fill out the chart below.
5. What’s our strategy to deal with the landmines that receive a high score?

Ten Additional Landmines	
How likely this is to be a problem in our new church?	
<i>Use a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (very likely).</i>	
1. Moving past the pre-launch phase too quickly.	_____
2. Agenda disharmony among the launch team.	_____
3. Rushing people into influential leadership.	_____
4. Trying to do too many things at once.	_____
5. Lack of a support system and accountability.	_____
6. Turning inward.	_____
7. Unrealistic expectations.	_____
8. Sin in leadership.	_____
9. Burned out lead pastor and spouse.	_____
10. Meeting in the wrong facility.	_____

Section 4: Time Management

Pastors who make a difference are in control of their schedule. They are focused and disciplined. They understand that they must be deliberate about the way they spend their time or the random flow of circumstances - or some well-meaning person – will determine it for them. Part of leading others well is to first lead yourself.

Peter Drucker said, “Time is the scarcest resource, and unless it is managed nothing else can be managed.” Managing time effectively has to do with working smarter rather than harder. As a pastor you don’t get paid for how many hours you put in. Your reward is the productive result of those hours. If the time you invest in your church isn’t producing results, that time is wasted.

As a church planter, you need to start looking at your time from a different perspective. For you, time management begins with understanding that your most important role is no longer to “do” the ministry that needs to be done. Instead, it’s to see that your vision for the church is achieved, whether through your own efforts or the efforts of others.

Pre-launch is a crazy time. Everything seems urgent, almost an emergency. When you look at the Year One Calendar and think of everything that has to be done, you wish you had 30 hours in a day and 10 days in a week. If only you were omnipresent! Before you freak out, keep in mind that others have done this before, and with the right mindset, support and tools, you can too.

Time Traps

Mistakes in time management tend to fall into three categories, any one of which will derail your vision.

1. Living a life that’s out of whack – Starting a new church is hard work. If you’re not convinced of that yet, just wait! You will likely work harder than you ever have in your life. But don’t even think about planting unless you make first things first. God, your family, and your health come first. So grab your Day Runner, take out your pen and write in time for all three.

God – Unless the Lord builds the house, you will labor in vain. Select a regular place and a daily time to open your Bible and your heart, and to commune with God. Do not neglect this time. Do not rationalize *I’ll talk with God as I’m driving to that appointment so I don’t need to actually sit down somewhere, read my Bible, and pray.* If an unusual situation precludes your quiet time with God, that’s OK. But make it a firm habit to hang out with God each and every day.

Family – After God, your time belongs to your family. As you build your weekly calendar, block out a date with your spouse and time with your children. If you have kids at home, take advantage of the chance to enjoy them and to share wholesome recreation and fun. Go camping, attend a ball

game, work on a model airplane, visit IMAX, or whatever makes your children's heart beat fast.

Health – Care for your physical and mental health. You can look high and low and you'll rarely find a highly-successful person who does not give high priority to his or her health. Find an activity that (a) you enjoy, (b) fits your budget, and (c) increases your pulse rate and lung activity – and do it no fewer than three times a week. You need to be a *person* if you're going to be a pastor. As one wise person suggested: divert daily, withdraw weekly, abandon annually.

Pastor Wayne Cordeiro, senior pastor of New Life Church in Hawaii, is one of the most successful pastors anywhere. He is in his mid-50s, but has more energy than most teenagers. Is he a freak of nature or is there another explanation? Pastor Wayne believes that his body is God's temple and that He can use him best when he's healthy. Wayne has two non-negotiable rules for himself and his staff. First, exercise at least five days a week. Second, hit the sack no later than 10:00 p.m. Whether or not you choose these rules, you must do whatever you can to live at optimum health.

2. Working hard, but not smart – We all know people who seem to be a blur of human lightning, but they accomplish very little. They knock themselves out to stay busy, but their priorities are upside down or their life is so random that much of their motion is wasted. One way to understand it is to think about the transmission on your automobile. If you never shift out of first gear, you can slam the pedal to the metal and not much happens. The engine is racing, but the scenery barely creeps by.

Once you block out time on your calendar for God, family, and health, do the same for the different aspects of your work. During the early days, plan to spend a lot of time investing in people. One of your goals is to do 20 investing contacts a week. (See the *Outreach & Assimilation* module.) If you are the primary teacher for weekend experiences, write Message Prep in your schedule. Give yourself some time for reading, planning, your weekly coaching call, and conception team meetings. Leave your schedule free for lunch or breakfast with prospective attenders or team members.

3. Being lazy or allowing yourself to be distracted – Some church planters are working bi-vocationally to plant the church while others are able to focus on the ministry full-time. In either case, you can carve this one out on a slab of granite: *Lazy church planters end up in U-Haul territory*. Do you need that interpreted? If you do not work hard, God will not bless your church. People will not follow a lazy "leader." You will wonder why a brilliant mission statement and a scintillating website wasn't enough, and you'll be renting a U-Haul to move your family out of town because your church has failed.

Minimize the time you spend in front of the computer. Unless you're preparing a message or updating your website, don't fritter away the hours surfing the internet. Limit your TV time. Whatever you do, don't get hooked on soap operas, sports or anything that takes your time away from God, family, health and ministry. If you play golf, make sure you think through how

many days each month you will play, and stick to the plan. Remember: successful leaders are focused and disciplined.

Analyzing Your Current Use of Time

When you went through the *Strategic Planning and Implementation* module you formulated an overall mission statement for your church. You also identified five critical success factors designed to help you achieve your mission. You must now ask yourself whether you're spending your time in a way that will most efficiently and effectively accomplish your mission and purpose. The first step toward answering this question is analyzing how you're currently using your time.

A time analysis will help you make sure your daily activities are in line with your objectives and that you're using your time in the most efficient and effective manner possible. To conduct a time analysis, you need to record exactly how you spend your time in a typical week. Create a time analysis worksheet on a legal pad, in your Day Runner, or however it works best for you. Keep a record of all your activities each day for one week. Be as specific as you can, preferably breaking it down into 15-minute increments. At the end of a week, go through your worksheet and summarize all activities you engaged in and how much time was devoted to each.

"The things which matter the most must never be at the mercy of the things which matter the least." Goethe

Once you've done that, go through your summary of activities and write beside each one which strategic goals or objectives each activity helped you accomplish. This exercise can be extremely revealing. You may find that some of your activities don't relate in any way to your overall objectives. Or you may find that you have important strategic objectives that have few or no activities taking place to accomplish them.

Recognizing how your time is currently spent is the first step in spending your time more wisely. When you know your priorities and what's important to the long-term success of your church, you will make better decisions on how you spend your time. Recognizing the time wasters that have crept into your schedule is the first step to eliminating them.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 6: Analyzing Your Time Use.

Creating Your Master Priority List

To help set your daily priorities, you should first create a master *to-do* list. The concept of a master list is simple: write down everything that you know you have to do, should do, or would like to do. Put everything on the list, whether it's urgent or not, but be especially sure that the tasks required to accomplish your mission and goals are on the list.

Once you've completed your list, go through it and prioritize each item. A *to-do* list without taking the time to prioritize the relative importance of each activity is useless. Make sure you aren't just prioritizing based on what is urgent, but rather on what is most important to accomplish your long-term vision. Your prioritized master list serves as your guide for all-further scheduling of your time.

As you accomplish each task, cross the item off the list. Once a week (or more often), review your list and identify any items that were not completed. Also identify any new items that should be added and make a new master list.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 7: Creating Your Master Priority List.

Top Ten Time Wasters

Steve Sjogren, founding pastor of Vineyard Community Church, Cincinnati, lists the Top 10 Time Wasters for Church Planters in his book, "Community of Kindness." Here is the list:

1. Lack of a daily written plan.
2. Lack of deadlines. You have to give yourself some deadlines or you will just wander.
3. Depression. It comes from being alone too much. Being with people on the weekend only isn't going to get it done.
4. Pity parties.
5. Overly needy people. You are not gifted or skilled to help these people beyond the application of an emotional bandage, so don't try to function as something you're not.
6. Computers and new technology. These can be a great help, but they can also be tremendous time wasters. These can sap hours out of your life.
7. TV. Enough said.
8. Busywork. Paperwork and other minutiae that doesn't make any difference in your forward progress.
9. Worrying about the past. Concern about what people think about you, what people from school think about you and how you are being perceived by the denomination.

10. Worrying about the future. Concern over what may or may not be happening and if you will succeed or not. This can absorb unlimited amounts of energy.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 8: Top Ten Time Wasters.

Balanced?

The debate rages on: can you plant a church and live a balanced life? One pastor gives one answer and the next disagrees. Some pastors (not successful pastors, however) use being “balanced” as an excuse for being lazy. They always have time to play, baby-sit the computer, or veg out in front of the television, but their commitment to actual ministry is inconsistent and weak. We believe that the debate could be resolved by clearly defining “balanced.”

As mentioned above, make God, your family and your health a high priority. Once that is settled, accept the fact that launching a church requires a lot of time and a lot of hard work. If you are a full time planter (you are not working a job to support your family), don’t shoot for forty hours of work per week. Conception team members and other who serve in the church work full-time jobs, and you expect them to do investing, show up at meetings, and serve in a ministry. They will do whatever you model for them.

You have 168 hours every week. Put first things first, work hard, work smart, and people on your team will do the same. Whenever possible, combine activities such as investing and exercise, prayer and exercise, or meals and investing. View the first 12-18 months of your planting project as a season that will require a lot of hard work and many long days. Pace yourself to survive that season, then do an evaluation and see if the time is right to shift gears to a more moderate pace.

Block Scheduling

Early in your project, you will need to sketch out a basic, weekly schedule. There will obviously be times when you deviate from it, but without a written schedule as a starting point and a strong dose of self-discipline, you will tend to squander your time. You’ll come to the end of a week and say to yourself, *Where did the time go? Why did I accomplish so little this week?*

Don’t just wing it; you need to write it down. Take the time to create a work week chart that keeps you focused on the main thing. The most functional way of organizing each day is to schedule in blocks of one to three hours. Don’t think in 15 or 30 minute increments; think in blocks of at least one hour. Below is a sample schedule followed by a blank work week chart.

Take Action!

*Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 9:
Creating the Work Week Chart.*

Work Week Chart

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00 am		Personal Worship, Prayer, Bible Study					
7:00		Exercise, Grooming, Breakfast					
8:00							
9:00	Day	Message Preparation					
10:00							Church
11:00	Off	Administrivia					
12:00		Lunch – Acct.	Lunch – Family or Investing				
1:00 pm		Partner					
2:00		Meeting Prep	Prof. Improv.	Meeting Prep	Prof. Improv.	Week-end Prep	
3:00		Coaching Call		Investing		Week-end Prep	Group Investing +/or Fellowship
4:00		Administrivia			Admin		
5:00	Bridge						
6:00	Event (1x/mo)	Dinner w/ Family	Dinner Investing		Dinner w/ Family		
7:00				Conception Team Meeting			
8:00		Ministry Team Meeting	Investing		Investing		
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

Using blocks of one hour or longer, fill out the chart to represent a normal work week. Post a copy where you will see it each day. Make exceptions only when doing so will make you a better spouse, parent or leader. Update it as necessary. Run it by your coach for his input. Give him permission to hold you accountable.

Work Week Chart

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00 am							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00 pm							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

Using blocks of one hour or longer, fill out the chart to represent a normal work week. Post a copy where you will see it each day. Make exceptions only when doing so will make you a better spouse, parent or leader. Update it as necessary. Run it by your coach for his input. Give him permission to hold you accountable.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 8: Top Ten Time Wasters

Review the following segment of Section 4 in this module:

◆ *Top Ten Time Wasters*

1. Consider Steve Sjogren's Top 10 Time Wasters.

Rate yourself on each of the items using the following scale:

1 = Not even a temptation; 5 = This is my weakness

1. Lack of a daily written plan. _____
2. Lack of deadlines. _____
3. Depression. _____
4. Pity parties. _____
5. Overly needy people. _____
6. Computers and new technology. _____
7. TV. _____
8. Busywork. _____
9. Worrying about the past. _____
10. Worrying about the future. _____

2. Discuss a plan with your spouse (if you are married) and your coach to turn your weaknesses into strengths.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 9: Creating the Work Week Chart

Review the following segment of Section 4 in this module:

◆ *Block Scheduling*

1. With your spouse (if you are married), create your work week chart for a typical week. Start by looking at the journal of your last seven days and your master priority list, then plan each day using 1-3 hour blocks. You may be as specific as you like, but be sure to include time for:
 - ◆ God
 - ◆ Family
 - ◆ Exercise and recreation
 - ◆ Day off
 - ◆ Investing
 - ◆ Message preparation
 - ◆ Conception team meetings
 - ◆ Coaching call
 - ◆ Professional Improvement
 - ◆ Administrivia
 - ◆ Other _____
2. Indicate which entries are flexible and which are not (e.g. message preparation can be different for weeks when you are not preaching).
3. Ask your conception team for their suggestions.
4. Give a copy to your coach. Ask him for advice and give him permission to hold you accountable.
5. Be ready to adjust it as necessary so it becomes a tool to assist you, not a straight jacket to restrict you.

Section 5: Large Church Culture

Only a handful of churches ever achieve what you have set out to do: create a church that never stops making an ever-larger impact for the kingdom. Lyle Schaller, in his book, “The Very Large Church,” says, “The normative size for a worshipping community in American Protestantism is approximately 35-40 at worship. When a congregation exceeds that number, the natural, normal, and predictable institutional pressures begin to work in the direction of reducing that number” (p. 28). In other words, your work is cut out for you!

Your Impact Model

If you lead well, God blesses, and the church grows, you and your leaders will need to determine your impact model. Your building will become too small. You’ll need to add staff to prevent plateau or your own meltdown. The way decisions are made will change. Your schedule will look vastly different than it did during the pre-launch season; you won’t even be aware of many of the things that go on in the church. The sheer scope of numbers will change everything.

Here are the options for your impact model: (1) you can continue to grow larger on one site; (2) you can become a multi-site church; or (3) you can recurrently plant daughter congregations. (Another possibility, of course, is a combination of these three.) Is there a “correct” model to the exclusion of the others? No. God will lead one congregation one way and yours in a different direction. The common thread that all churches of significance share is that the church never stops making an ever-larger impact in the community.

Why does it happen so seldom? The answers are myriad and could fill several pages. Schaller’s comments above are a start. But you can bank on this: You as lead pastor must (a) understand the unique realities of the large church culture, (b) create the DNA and environment of on-going growth, and (c) inspire, teach and lead the congregation to join you in paying the price.

Not every church will achieve this ideal, even when the main leader gets it and is willing to pay the price. But one thing is for sure, it very rarely happens without a clear understanding of what it takes. The large church culture is distinct from the small church culture in five areas: lead pastor, staff members, orientation, weekend experiences, and organization.

Lead Pastor

1. The lead pastor is exceptionally high in integrity, vision and leadership skills. Everyone is confident that the pastor walks closely with God. The pastor reeks with unquenchable vision and shares it constantly. He reads books, attends seminars, and hangs out with other successful leaders to constantly improve his leadership capacity.
2. The lead pastor is an excellent teacher/preacher/communicator. People get in their cars at the end of the service and say, “That was excellent. I’m coming back for more next week!” When the churches moves to team

teaching, each of the communicators must excel. The only possible exception to this rule is when the primary weekend teaching is done via video. (See the *Weekend Experiences* module, Section 2.)

3. The lead pastor feels called to this church and city and is firmly committed to a long tenure as leader of the church. John Knox declared, "Give me Scotland or I die!" The pastor is convinced that God placed him here and he can't imagine investing his life anywhere else for at least a dozen years.
4. The senior pastor functions as a rancher as opposed to a shepherd. He cares about the sheep, but he knows that he cannot personally serve them all. He creates a structure that leverages his limited time by releasing the spiritual gifts of others. He knows when and how to say 'No' – with enthusiasm!
5. Most lead pastors of large churches served previously on the staff of a large church. This gives the pastor a huge advantage because he has already been immersed in large church culture. His thinking and leadership flow naturally out of an environment that he understands and desires to replicate.

Staff Members

1. Staff members are delighted to serve within their giftedness and do not aspire to be the lead pastor. They are secure as part of a team that is making a difference. If the Spirit leans on them to become a senior leader, they take a call or plant a church, but they never attempt a coup d'etat.
2. Staff members are loyal to the lead pastor and delighted to work with one another. They value team chemistry. They honestly enjoy working together. They know that good chemistry – or the lack thereof – is the difference between having fun and dreading their job. They are aware that highly-effective staff teams love and respect one another.
3. Staff members are delighted to embrace the church's core ethos. They are proud of the mission, vision, core values, and discipleship outcomes of the church. They're intrinsically motivated to help the church reach its maximum redemptive potential.
4. The staff members are committed to a long tenure at the church as long as they are contributing to the growth of the church.
5. Staff members tend to be specialists in some area of ministry as opposed to generalists. They were hired because they filled a niche – or they created one that moved the church to its next level.

Orientation

1. Prayer is foundational to all that happens in the church. Leaders lead as wisely and astutely as they can, but everyone acknowledges that without constant dependence on God, their efforts are in vain.
2. The church is irrevocably mission-focused. Those who have committed to Christ are possessed with a relentless desire to live evangelistically. This culture of outreach permeates everything they do including their personal priorities and those of the church at large.
3. Virtually everyone agrees that it cannot be a goal to know everybody in the church. In fact, if you know everyone who attends the church (at least for very long), you are not fulfilling the vision. The highest value is not to know everyone but to consistently lead as many people as possible to know Jesus. When you attend a professional sports event, your expectations are realistic: that you will know the people you came with and maybe meet a few more. The same is true for a church that is growing.
4. Leaders plan and make decisions based on the perception that there is an abundance of resources. They first determine God's vision for their church and their city, then they respond to that calling in faith that God is able and He is eager to bless. They don't permit the current lack of money to stall their mission.
5. Leaders are prepared to take appropriate risks. They believe that God blesses people and churches that walk by faith, not by sight. Abraham took a risk when he left the security of Ur, and God could not use him until he did.
6. The leaders are future-oriented, driven by their conviction that they are called to create the future, not respond to it.
7. They are on the conservative end of the theological spectrum. They believe that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and they live and teach accordingly. They are unapologetic about their conviction that the Bible accurately represents God's intervention in history.
8. They have high expectations of their members. Following Jesus is not a matter of mental assent. It involves discovery of His radical teachings and an all-out effort to live the way He desires. Church leaders assume that full devotion to Christ and His cause is normal for a believer.
9. The church carries its denominational label lightly, if it is affiliated. On several occasions, Jesus told His disciples not to reveal who He was. He was not trying to hide something nor was He ashamed of Himself. He wanted people to judge Him by His actions, not by the sometimes-skewed reputation that preceded Him. Church leaders today realize that they will reach more people if they do the same.

Weekend Experiences

1. The church offers multiple service times because (a) the unchurched expect choices, and (b) those serving in a children's ministry can attend a worship experience on the same day they serve.
2. The weekend experiences can be described as excellent, energetic, joyful and relevant.
3. The teaching is transformational and is presented with internal passion.
4. The sermons are done in series; a stand-alone sermon is the exception.
5. The use of technology exceeds what people expect. In most people's experience, churches are way behind the technology curve. The opposite is true in churches that are reaching the lost.
6. Guests are allowed to be anonymous as long as they choose to be anonymous. There are plenty of ways to take a next step, and those ways are clear. But there is never any pressure to sign anything, say anything, or give anything. A guest is free to attend a social event, visit a small group, or serve on a ministry team whenever he or she feels ready.
7. The children's events are exceptional. The kids describe it as fun; the parents insist that it is biblically sound and they must be confident that the environment is clean and safe.

Organization

1. Most of the large churches were started by a team instead of a single individual or couple. Doing so allowed them to bypass the small church stage quickly, or maybe even entirely.
2. Decisions are made by a small leadership team, not by democratic process. When leaders take a decision to the entire membership, they risk lowering the vision to the level of the person who has the least amount of faith.
3. They have a YES permission system. The leaders see their role as empowering and releasing others as opposed to controlling everything.
4. They add staff proactively to sustain growth and to capitalize on future potential.
5. They are staff directed and board protected. The lead pastor, with his advisory board, sets the overall direction of the church and the board protects the staff from criticism and from those who insist on a different vision.
6. Their system of ministry teams and small groups provides the intimacy of a small church while retaining the advantages of a large church. Large

churches have mastered the art of connecting people with one another in groups of 50 or fewer.

7. The church creates and utilizes systems for every task and ministry.

Systems Design

Pastors and leaders of large, growing churches fully understand the power of systems. By way of example, consider Community Christian Church (CCC) in Naperville, Illinois. As of late 2006, they had 20 weekend experiences on eight campuses every week with around 4,500 people attending. How on earth do they organize everything? Can anyone even count the thousands of details that need to be cared for every single day, and especially on the weekend?

CCC started as a small church in 1989. As it grew, it put in place systems to facilitate how every detail would be handled. Those systems maximize the efforts of every staff member and volunteer. As the church grows, the systems evolve with it. If the leaders at CCC had not created systems very early in their history, they would have remained a small church. The audacious vision, the earnest prayers, the hours of investing, and the great teaching would have been squandered.

People think in generalities, but they live in specifics. A documented system tells you **what** needs to be done, **why** it needs to be done, **how** it should be done, **when** it should be done, **who** will do it, and **how** success will be measured.

Here is another way to look at it: Putting in place the right systems brings the following benefits:

- ◆ You don't have to spend as much time training and retraining leaders.
- ◆ You have written standards by which to measure progress and performance.
- ◆ More time is invested in priorities instead of firefighting.
- ◆ The people who serve will be more enthusiastic, committed and competent.
- ◆ Your ministry results will be more consistent.
- ◆ The people who serve are more likely to innovate and improve.
- ◆ Systems prevent barriers from coming between ministries.
- ◆ The people who serve are more likely to make reality-based decisions.

Here is the unvarnished truth: If your church is to make an ever-increasing impact in the community, you must (a) understand systems, (b) create the specific systems that fit your church, (c) review the systems in place and revise them as the church grows and circumstances change. In some of the critical areas of church life, LaunchTicket has done the work for you. If you sense the need to setting up systems in additional areas, your coach will assist you. Just ask. Now grab the other modules and review these examples:

- ◆ Income Handling Process (*Module 1, Section 6*)

- ◆ Guest Path System (*Module 3, Section 4*)
- ◆ Launch Team Path System (*Module 3, Section 4*)
- ◆ People Up Front Process (*Module 4, Section 2*)
- ◆ Set-up and Take-down (*Module 4, Section 3*)

Check out the grid below to see, in visual form, the impact of systems design.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 10: Large Church Culture.

Systems Design

Undocumented

Documented

Fully Functioning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Short-term or inconsistent results ◆ Non-expanding involvement ◆ Chaotic or no improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Long-term and consistent results ◆ Expanding involvement ◆ Well-orchestrated improvements
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Non Functioning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Poor results ◆ Low motivation ◆ Decreasing Involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Problems quickly identified ◆ Improvements quickly implemented ◆ Quick resolution
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Take Action!

Implementation Task 10: Large Church Culture

Review the following segment of Section 5 in this module:

◆ *Large Church Culture*

1. As a conception team, read this section together in its entirety.
2. Discuss your current thinking regarding your impact model. As God grows the church, will you:
 - ◆ Continue to grow on one campus?
 - ◆ Become a multi-site church?
 - ◆ Give birth to daughter churches?
3. As you read each point under the sections titled *lead pastor, staff members, orientation, weekend experiences, and organization*, ask each person to respond with one of the following:
 - ◆ “Duh! I already knew that. Doesn’t everyone?”
 - ◆ “Aha! I hadn’t thought of that before, but it sure makes sense.”
 - ◆ “We’d better keep our eyes peeled for this one!”
4. Discuss the importance of systems design including the systems design grid. Then fill in the following chart:

<u>Systems We Need</u>	<u>Already have it, or need to create it?</u>	<u>Date to begin using</u>
Income Handling Process	_____	_____
Guest Path System	_____	_____
Launch Team Path System	_____	_____
People Up Front Process	_____	_____
Set-up and Take-down	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

Section 6: Moral Authority

Albert Schweitzer could have been reading the Bible when he said, “Example is not the main thing in influencing others, it is the only thing.” As the person who started the church, you have a position: lead pastor. But do you have influence? There is a difference.

Your influence is far more critical to the success of your vision than your position. People really don't care what your title is; they know you were self-appointed. They want to know: *Is it wise to follow this person?* Specifically, they ask three questions, and until they can answer 'yes' to all three, they will not follow: (1) Can we trust you? (2) Do you know where you are going? and (3) Can you get us there? Position is optional. Influence is essential.

Let's define moral authority. *Moral authority is the credibility you earn by walking your talk. It is the relationship other people see between what you say and what you do, between who you claim to be and who you are. Moral authority is the critical, non-negotiable can't-be-without ingredient of sustained influence. It reveals itself through alignment between conviction and action, belief and behavior. It is the alignment between a person's convictions and his behavior that makes his life persuasive.*

Both the Pharisees and Jesus claimed to behave in ways that were consistent with Scripture. Who was most influential? Who was best able to lead with moral authority? Easy answer: Jesus. His behavior flowed from a heart of compassion and love, while the Pharisees stood smugly and pounced gleefully on every unholy act. The Pharisees were pompous, self-righteous, and holier-than-thou. Jesus' way of life, by contrast, was so attractive that those who longed for God pressed around Him. True moral authority quietly surges from the life of one who craves the best for others.

Especially in the Christian realm, people will not allow themselves to be influenced by those who lack moral authority. Inconsistency between what is said and what is done inflicts a mortal wound on a leader's influence. For this reason, moral authority is fragile. People will grant it to you tentatively; they want to assume the best about you. The longer your behavior is aligned with your rhetoric, the stronger the trust. But it can be lost in a moment. And once it is lost, it is nearly impossible to restore.

Think about your parents. Are they (or were they) leaders worth following? Did they give you reason to respect them? When you think of their influence, do you feel proud that they are your parents? If so, it is because you perceive consistency or alignment between what they say and what they do. Your respect for them has little to do with financial situation, their university degree, their job title or their social accomplishments. It has everything to do with their moral authority.

God has given you a vision to build and lead a church that never stops making an ever-larger impact on the community. Those words roll easily off the tongue, but you have to admit that it's an audacious vision. Your only chance of that

vision becoming real is to (a) devote all of your prayers and efforts to leading courageously and wisely, and (b) becoming a person worth respecting, and protecting that moral standing at all costs.

This is why we strongly recommend that the lead pastor does not handle church money. This is why it is unconditionally non-negotiable that you remain sexually pure. This is why you must keep your word, and maintain integrity with your personal finances. Jesus said, "He who is faithful in small things can be trusted in bigger things" (Matt. 25:21). A single violation almost always drains the morale and implodes the dream.

Moral authority is the result of a commitment to do what's right, regardless of the situation or the consequences. The day will come when you will be faced with a set of circumstances that on the surface will seem to dictate that you compromise ethically or even morally for the sake of seeing your vision through to completion. Some of your friends may urge you to press on at any cost.

The Bible is full of examples. Abraham finally had a son after all those years and God said, "Kill him." *Excuse me? I thought You were planning to make a great nation of me through the lineage of my son!* Abraham's dilemma was: Do I obey God, or do what appears to be best for the completion of the vision?

How about David standing in the shadows of the cave in Engeddi looking at Saul? God had promised David the throne. Saul had become evil. This was David's chance-of-a-lifetime to bump off the king and move into the palace himself. His friends urged him on. But it was against the law of God to kill the king. So David peered through the darkness pondering the question every visionary will face sooner or later: Is my ultimate allegiance to God or to the vision?

What's the point? You must maintain your moral authority at all costs. You must be willing to abandon the vision if that is what is necessary to maintain your moral authority. Vision is important, but it is always secondary to obedience to God. And here is the cool part: Just as God intervened on behalf of Abraham and David, if your vision truly came from Him, He will intervene.

The Ingredients of Moral Authority

Developing and maintaining moral authority requires three things: character, sacrifice and time.

1. Character – Character is simply the decision to do what is right as defined by God. The issue here is surrender. To be a man or woman of God requires you to surrender to God's standards, values and principles. Character requires you to continue in a state of surrender when God's law makes sense and when it doesn't. It assumes that you will abide by His Word when it benefits you and when it seems to set you back. Men and women of character do the right thing even when doing right delays or dismantles their visions. Godly character is the foundation of leadership.

2. **Sacrifice** – By its very nature, a vision requires resources that are not readily available. The man or woman who champions a vision must step up to the plate and demonstrate a willingness to sacrifice in order to deliver. Your own personal sacrifice is the clearest demonstration that you are committed to the dream.

If you want to take the temperature of the church, put the thermometer in the pastor's mouth. Here's what that means: People will not invest more in a vision than the one who originally cast it. If you expect others to devote themselves sacrificially, you must lead the way. Words alone are cheap. They do little to move the hearts and inspire a person to action. But once you demonstrate your commitment by personal sacrifice for the sake of the cause, your potential for influence escalates considerably. People can disagree with a position, but they have a hard time disagreeing with a conviction lived out.

3. **Time** – Moral authority is not achieved overnight. It cannot be manufactured at will. As mentioned before, people who get fired up about your vision will assume you deserve to be trusted, but that trust is superficial at first. Their radar is tuned for evidence either that they assumed correctly or that it's time to bail.

Moral authority is developed over time through a proper response to circumstances, usually circumstances over which you have no control. You can submit yourself to exercises, disciples, and accountability partners all of which strengthen your character. But deep moral authority can only be achieved when your character is put to the test. Your response to those unexpected circumstances will determine your moral authority.

Mother Teresa's moral authority required a lifetime. It didn't emerge from a single act of kindness to the poor in Calcutta. It was acquired through the consistent manner – over virtually her entire adult life – in which she demonstrated selfless service to those who were in desperate need. You will face plenty of opportunities to demonstrate that you walk your talk. Each time you publicly demonstrate alignment between the two, you become more credible, more believable, more worthy of trust. Your leadership, your vision, your influence becomes compelling. Your consistent, joyful walk with God brings a smile to His face and releases His immeasurable blessings into your life.

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 11: Maintaining Moral Authority.

Accountability

“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Prov. 27:17). God did not intend for Christ followers to live independent lives. Fifty-eight passages in the New Testament use “one another” language (e.g. Encourage one another. Love one another. Wash one another’s feet. Greet one another with a holy kiss. Live in harmony with one another). Believers are stronger when they walk with Christ together, when they uphold and support one another, when they pour themselves into the life of a brother or a sister. “Confess your sins to each other,” James exhorts, “and pray for each other” (James 5:16).

Especially as senior leader of a new church, it is vital that you invite someone into your life to hold you accountable, to ask the tough questions, to monitor your spiritual temperature. The temptations are too strong, the stakes are too high for you to try and go it alone. All too many leaders have drifted, gradually at first, and no one detected the outcome until it was too late.

As soon as you can, find someone you love and trust. Tell him of your desire to live a life that honors God and ask if he will serve you as accountability partner. Determine to protect yourself spiritually from the efforts of the evil one to derail your life and ministry. Setting in motion an accountability process has benefits beyond shielding you from sin; it multiplies the confidence of your fellow leaders in you as a man or woman of God, and it inspires them to be spiritually accountable as well.

It’s really simple; here are the parameters:

- ◆ Choose a person of the same gender.
- ◆ Give him or her permission to ask you questions and pledge to be honest.
- ◆ Gain his or her agreement to hold your conversations in confidence.
- ◆ Set a monthly appointment to talk either in person or on the phone.
- ◆ Pray for each other.
- ◆ Ask your accountability partner to give a one-sentence “spiritual report card” to your board of elders each month.

Here are the questions. You and your accountability partner can add to the list.

1. In what specific ways has God blessed you since our last meeting? What have you learned that makes you a better follower of Christ?
2. Have you properly prioritized investing by spending time with lost people? How recently have you shared the gospel with someone?
3. Have you consistently spent time with God since our last meeting? Are you reading the Bible daily?
4. Have you remained angry with someone or secretly wished for someone’s misfortune? Have you damaged another person by your words either behind their back or face-to-face?
5. Have you been exposed to sexually alluring material or allowed your mind to entertain inappropriate sexual thoughts?
6. Have you given into any addictive behavior since our last meeting?

7. Have you been honoring, understanding and generous in your family relationships?
8. Have you lacked truthfulness in your words or financial dealings?
9. Have you been completely honest with me?

Take Action!

Turn to the end of this section and complete Implementation Task 12: Spiritual Accountability.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 11: Maintaining Moral Authority

Review the following segment of Section 6 in this module:

◆ *Moral Authority*

Moral authority is defined as the credibility you earn by walking your talk. It is the relationship other people see between what you say and what you do, between who you claim to be and who you are. Moral authority is the critical, non-negotiable can't-be-without ingredient of sustained influence. It reveals itself through alignment between conviction and action, belief and behavior. It is the alignment between a person's convictions and his behavior that makes his life persuasive.

1. Alone with God, ask yourself these questions:
 - ◆ Are there inconsistencies between what I say and what I do?
 - ◆ In light of my strengths and weaknesses, where is the greatest potential for inconsistency?
 - ◆ Is there an area in which I have lost or damaged my moral authority?
2. With your spouse (if you are married), review these same questions.
3. If necessary, outline the steps you will take to rebuild an area that has been compromised. Devise a plan to implement the steps.
4. Review this entire section with your conception team. Share with them your commitment to be a leader of integrity and moral authority.

Take Action!

Implementation Task 12: Spiritual Accountability

Review the following segment of Section 6 in this module:

◆ *Accountability*

1. As lead pastor, initiate the setting up of an accountability partner. Follow these parameters:
 - ◆ Choose a person of the same gender.
 - ◆ Give him or her permission to ask you questions and pledge to be honest.
 - ◆ Gain his or her agreement to hold your conversations in confidence.
 - ◆ Set a monthly appointment to talk either in person or on the phone.
 - ◆ Pray for each other.
 - ◆ Ask your accountability partner to give a one-sentence “spiritual report card” to your board of elders each month.
2. If possible, select a regular time each month for your accountability meeting. Make yourself responsible to see that the meeting happens each month.
3. Discuss the following questions with your accountability partner and decide if you will use the questions as they are or a revised version.

Accountability Questions

- ◆ In what specific ways has God blessed you since our last meeting? What have you learned that makes you a better follower of Christ?
- ◆ Have you properly prioritized investing by spending time with lost people? How recently have you shared the gospel with someone?
- ◆ Have you consistently spent time with God since our last meeting? Are you reading the Bible daily?
- ◆ Have you remained angry with someone or secretly wished for someone’s misfortune? Have you damaged another person by your words either behind their back or face-to-face?
- ◆ Have you been exposed to sexually alluring material or allowed your mind to entertain inappropriate sexual thoughts?
- ◆ Have you given into any addictive behavior since our last meeting?
- ◆ Have you been honoring, understanding and generous in your family relationships?
- ◆ Have you lacked truthfulness in your words or financial dealings?
- ◆ Have you been completely honest with me?

Pre-launch Matrix

In order to have an effective grand opening, eleven critical tasks must happen well. Having grand opening teams in place that perform these tasks with excellence is one of the five gauges you will watch to determine if you are ready for grand opening.

As the church enters the pre-launch phase, its leaders must decide when each of the tasks will begin and who is responsible for it. Sometime during the early months of pre-launch, you will begin to measure the readiness of each task for grand opening. For now, you must set a target date for each task to begin to happen, and you will add the names of those responsible for each team and task as that person comes on board.

Area / Task	Area Leader	Task Leader	Team Members
Weekend Experience			
<i>Programming</i>			
<i>Music</i>			
<i>Tech</i>			
<i>Set-up & take-down</i>			
<i>Impressions</i>			
Outreach			
<i>Bridge events</i>			
<i>Marketing</i>			
Operations			
<i>Data management</i>			
<i>Financial systems</i>			
KidZone			
<i>Programming</i>			
<i>Impressions</i>			

How Big Is Your Vision?

by Rick Warren

Over the years, I've learned that – contrary to popular opinion – the bigger the vision, the easier it is to reach that vision, and, ultimately, the size of your vision should be determined by the size of God.

How big do you think God is? The issue is not who do you think you are, but who do you think God is? In your dreams for your ministry, don't limit yourself by saying, "What can I do?" Instead ask, "What can God do in this place?"

Determining the size of your vision

When determining the size of your vision you need to keep three factors in mind. The first factor is the ultimate population of your ministry area. Obviously, if a church planter is going to start a new church, he doesn't plan a church of 2,000 in a town that only has 500 people in it. Be pragmatic.

I tell people: Go get a map of your community, draw a circle that would include approximately 15 minutes' driving distance to your church and find out how many people are in that area. Then you say, "Ultimately, we want to try to reach everybody. We know we can't reach everybody. But we assume the responsibility for reaching everybody. We pray that other churches will reach people, but we want to assume responsibility for that."

A lifetime investment

The second factor is a question only you can answer: How long do you intend to stay there? There's an old saying: Inch by inch, anything is a cinch.

Most of us overestimate what we can do in one year and underestimate what we can do in 10 years or 20 years. The trouble with most goal setting is we set our goals too low and try to accomplish them too soon.

Instead, we need to set big goals, huge goals, enormous goals, but plan on plenty of time in getting there. I tell everyone who comes on staff with us, "We don't expect a miracle overnight. Let's build." We're not interested in building a mushroom. We're interested in building an oak tree. A mushroom takes 12 hours to grow; an oak tree takes 60 years. But an oak tree is going to last.

“If you have a vision to grow a large church reaching people from across the spectrum, you'll have to change the way you think.”

Rick Warren

“Instead, we need to set big goals, huge goals, enormous goals, but plan on plenty of time in getting there.”

Rick Warren

To reach big goals, you have to plan for the long haul in ministry. There are lots of flash-in-the-pan churches. There are churches that have grown larger than our church in a shorter amount of time. There was a church once near Saddleback Church that started with 1,200 people within the first month, but a year later the church was dead. It didn't build the structure. It didn't build the roots. It didn't build all the other factors. Everything rises or falls on leadership.

So how long will you stay there? If you don't plan on staying someplace for the long haul, don't go there. You must plan for time. Persistence is the key in reaching a large goal. Conversely, the size of your goal will be determined by how much of your life you plan to spend in reaching it.

Vision and your giftedness

The third factor for determining the size of your vision is a frank appraisal of your own gifts. The Bible makes very clear that there are one-talent people and five-talent people and ten-talent people.

Some pastors will never have more than 150 in their church because they insist on doing everything themselves. They do all the prayers, all the visitation, all the counseling, all the marrying and burying. They want to know everybody by name, every kid by name, every dog. This shepherd-type of pastor loves the personal contact of getting involved with people in that area.

There's nothing wrong with having a shepherd's heart. God loves people with shepherd's hearts. That's why he made so many of them. There are about 400,000 churches in America and maybe 95 percent of them run less than 300 on a weekend.

Most of those are led by men who have a shepherd's heart. But if a church is going to grow, one of the prices of growth is you must be willing to stop being everybody's pastor.

In other words, you'll have people who do not come to you, personally, for counseling. They won't come to you for weddings. They won't come to you for funerals. I'd say that is a price I've had to pay. I can't do everything anymore. I can't meet everybody's needs individually as much as I'd like to; I have to give most of that over to other pastors and lay ministers.

The same thing is going to be true of your area. If you have a vision to grow a large church reaching people from across the spectrum, you'll have to change the way you think. That's why you have to do an honest assessment of your gifts.

Not everyone can walk away from the shepherd model. If that's you, plan your vision accordingly. Your own gifts and abilities will determine your style of ministry and the size of your vision.

Growing Past the Temptation to Quit

How to Not Leave the Ministry

By Steve Sjogren

A wise veteran church man told me, “After living through 60 years of life, I am convinced that the most difficult job in the world is church planting.” I agree. More than once I’ve told my wife, Janie, “There has to be a more lucrative way to be miserable.” I’ve done a number of things for a living, and church planting has certainly proved to be the most difficult.

It’s only natural that given the high level of stress in planting, there will be great turnover. I don’t have scientific proof, but my guess is that the number one reason church plants don’t succeed is because the senior leader quits. Several times in my first few years of planting, I actually did quit, at least for a day or two.

Remember that God is involved in your project and it’s not just you by yourself sweating it out. Expect interventions from outside your situation. Once a man that I had never seen before, a retired farmer, came to me and said, “I don’t know you, young man, but I feel you are to know that God has invested too much in you for you to quit now.” He didn’t know it, but my motivation had been at an all-time low. I had indeed been contemplating quitting my church plant. That word of encouragement from the mystery farmer has come back to me many times over the years as a source of encouragement.

Here are some wisdom points that I have walked in over the past years. I have found these to be golden principles as I have worked with church planters.

1. Tend your inner garden.

Amazing intensity can mount up in our hearts as we do the rugged work of church planting. Release that in the form of intercessory prayer. For me, this prayer isn’t so much a grocery list of intercessory prayer, though I do keep a prayer list in my journal. I tell the Lord what He already knows. I bring to Him the specific issues that are pressing in on me.

You do have an inner garden. The only question is, What shape is it in? As the poem asks, “How does your garden grow?”

2. Pray deep prayers.

When Paul spoke of his groanings too deep for words – those inner prayers uttered by the Holy Spirit – I believe he was referring to the prayer he did to release the intensity that rested upon him.

3. Read Scripture.

For years I've told my church, "Five chapters a day keeps the pastor away." Without a routine, I would find it impossible to get my five chapters in a day. For the past few years, I've done more devotional listening to Scripture than I've read. I've purchased the Bible on audio CD and find it a very pleasant listen. Often I end up listening to more than my five chapters.

4. Write Scripture.

I've heard it said, "Girls keep a diary; boys write in their journals." Wordsmithing aside, during the past few years, I have been enriched in my times with God as I have done less reading of Scripture and more writing out of Scripture in my journal. It's simple. I write out complete verses, chapters, and books of the Bible word-for-word into my journal. In the margin, I make comments on those verses that stand out to me. I have been asked, "Why write Scripture out? Isn't reading it good enough?" After 25 years of speed-reading, I have found it increasingly difficult to benefit from my time in Scripture. After all, some of those chapters have been covered as many as 150 times. What has been the result of my writing? I feel the love and appreciation that I once had for Scripture returning.

Also, I am slowing down. I tend to live and work at a pace of about 10,000 rpms. My friends and coworkers frequently comment on how much I get done with my skill at multitasking. There's nothing wrong with getting things done, but sometimes I can accomplish so much that I nearly do myself in. As I write my way through the Bible (I'm most of the way through the entire Bible at this writing), I slow down to the speed of my soul. It's at that speed that I hear God's voice, and I become aware of God's immediate presence and experience the renewal of the Holy Spirit.

5. Limit times with negative people.

Steer clear of those who bum you out. Be mindful of how much time you allow yourself to be exposed to negative people. In my experience, there needs to be a cap put on the amount of daily time we spend with people who bring us down. Once you've figured out who those negative folks are in your life, and you see them coming, start your watch. Give them a few minutes – maybe five at a stretch, maximum – and then make up an excuse for leaving their presence. You have far too much going on that requires a positive mental attitude to allow yourself to be brought down by these naysayers. That's literally what I do. I set my watch for the amount of time I allow myself to spend around these folks, and I abide by it. I make up about any excuse. I will pick up my pager and tell them I've been paged (that's partly true – I was paged a number of times that day already, and I just hadn't responded to them yet!).

6. Offer many light touches but few deep ones.

Don't spend too much time with just anyone. Move toward a mile-wide-and-an-inch-deep approach when it comes to counseling. No doubt this will seem like a superficial and limited treatment of some people's heavy-duty problems. Perhaps that is true, but for you to maintain your sanity in the first few years of

planting, it may be a harsh fact of life that some of those who come to your church have needs that are beyond your ability to help. In many cases a kind word and a brief prayer is a sufficient and prudent response.

Each of the new churches I have planted has attracted a slew of chronically broken people like magnets. At one point I thought I had a ministry to manic-depressives (those with bipolar disorder) because so many had found their way into our church. Let's rejoice in each person the Holy Spirit sends us – in fact they are all gifts. Make sure it is you – not the needy person – who defines the amount and type of care offered.

7. Live modestly.

Balance is an overused term. Clearly the physics of life require that one action brings about a reciprocating action. What goes up must come down. What gives out must be refilled.

Don't give in to manic living. Establish a routine of sanity. Find healthy ways to recover. Read the newspaper every day. Read normal magazines and books (not just on leadership and church growth!). Bicycle. If you can talk your wife into it, get a motorcycle.

At the end of some of my early days in Cincinnati, I would hear dozens of people a day say no thanks to my vision. I usually recovered by watching a decent flick. For me the movie wasn't the point. As much as anything, it was a matter of breaking the routine and clearing out the cobwebs of my mind. Remember, we are running a marathon, not a sprint.

8. Own what you can, but no more.

Enduring church planters know how to draw boundary lines. They can realize what is within their realm of responsibility and what is beyond their purview.

There are a myriad of out-of-control factors that enter into the picture when it comes to the establishment of a new church. Those factors change somewhat from day to day, but the church planter walks in the world of out-of-controlledness from day one of his church plant, and it seems there's no looking back from that time forth. That's just the way it is in the game of church planting.

9. Find friends.

James Taylor sings, "When you need a friend . . . I'll be there." A friend is someone who can be called upon at any time – day or night. No matter what your issue or need, they are available to listen and to lend support. This is someone you can call at 2:30 A.M. – and they will actually talk to you. Based on that definition, how many friends do you have?

Men tend to have many acquaintances but few, if any, authentic friends. Church planters tend to be unbalanced in life toward too much of a task emphasis and

too little of a focus on relationships. Most planters have no one in particular they can turn to for support, encouragement, and plain old fun.

If you are one who has many acquaintances but no friends, pray a couple of friends into your life. While you are at it, pray a couple more in for your wife as well. God's job is to provide friends for you. Your job is to pray and look and find them.

10. Quit an all-too-demanding side job.

If you are bivocational in the launching stage of your plant, don't forget why you are doing all of this – to launch a church! You did not move here to build a career in the secular workforce. If your job is robbing you of energy and enthusiasm beyond reason, find a new job. The ideal arrangement is a job that looks something like this:

- Pays an hourly rate.
- Has daytime hours so that your evenings are freed up to build leaders and launch small groups.
- Doesn't overly drain you emotionally or physically.
- Puts you in touch with a good cross section of your community.

I have found that jobs in sales or education tend to be all consuming and are therefore ill-suited for planters.

11. Acknowledge leaders s-l-o-w-l-y.

It is common for leaders to trust volunteers too quickly in the early phases of a church plant only to discover that these were LWAs – leaders with an agenda. As church planters we are in a conundrum for several years in a new plant – we need leaders desperately, but most of those available to lead aren't leaders. Why is it common for these faux leaders to find their way to church plants? Those who have been rejected in the past by other churches find it attractive to start over at a new church where no one knows them. The challenge with leaders is this: to allow those who have failed in the past to get a fresh start, but at the same time to make leadership decisions that will allow the church to grow in the years to come. This is my conclusion on the issue: I must take into more serious consideration the larger work of God over the individual leadership choices. It's a goose and golden egg question. The golden eggs (individual leaders) are wonderful, but I must protect the goose (the local church) above all considerations.

12. Seek counseling.

Some will stumble on this point. But count on it – you need counseling. Planters lead spartan lives. They spend years being resisted, rejected, stressed out and sometimes even downright cursed. It seems unfair. We are just trying to bring Christ to people. We are lifelong Boy Scouts – trying our best to do our duty, seeking to do right. As the old joke goes, some little old ladies don't want to be helped across the street, no matter how loving we are. If we do have one of the

most difficult jobs in the world, then an occasional counseling stint isn't unreasonable.

At several points in my life I have pursued prolonged counseling (i.e., several months of weekly meetings). Connecting with a skilled objective party has done wonders for me.

One note about choosing a counselor: As you seek help, I recommend you not limit your options to so-called Christian counselors. All things being equal, I would choose a Christian counselor over one who was not, but the quality of help varies greatly. I have wasted precious time with unskilled therapists. These days the health insurance industry is looking for the most bang for the buck. The less expensive, the better is their motto. The result – the competency level of counselors has dropped several notches over the past several years. Don't waste your limited time and insurance coverage with a soul helper who isn't much help, IXOYE on the card or not.

13. Celebrate success – even when it appears insignificant.

As a task-focused person, I find it easy to fixate on problems. Problems tend to expand to fill all the energy nearby. At those times it is almost impossible to see the great things happening around me. A way to avoid the frustration trap is to establish milestones in your planting journey. Keep track of and celebrate your 1st and 5th small group, for example. Rejoice in your 30th person and your 1st and 20th baptism.

14. Ignore invalid critics as much as possible.

An invalid critic is one who either speaks an exaggeration or an all-out untruth about your leadership. They might speak a word regarding people problems. At several points along the way in your first year, you will have some significant rejection issues to wrestle with. Someone will come, seem committed and then leave with an attitude. They will tell others who are still committed and in the group that you are not much of a leader, that you are not teaching the truth or that “this dumb little so-called church will never amount to anything” (a direct quote from one of my former members). If you are wired anything like me, on the heels of a conversation like that, you will be tempted to obsess on the critical words spoken. It isn't long until that situation can take up far too much of your mental energy. What's a planter to do? Here are a couple of policies I have developed in planting at Vineyard Community Church:

15. When someone leaves, have a consistent verbal response ready for all inquirers.

I've discovered that if you don't have a response for someone's departure, others will volunteer their own version of what happened. Sometimes their version is softer, but more often it is a harsher version of reality. If the person or family was visible in the fellowship, it is vital that you offer an explanation to those who ask. It helps me to write out key words in advance of giving a verbal explanation.

“Yes, the Johnsons did leave recently. We’re still friends. They were looking for a different kind of church – one that wasn’t as outwardly focused as we are. That’s just not who we are nor is it where we are going.”

It is virtually always a mistake to make mention of the departure of a family to your entire group at a weekend celebration. To mention this is to revel in the disagreement of someone who didn’t buy into the vision. I wouldn’t mention the departure to anyone save the top couple of leaders, and even then I would state it in the most positive of terms – “They are pursuing a new ministry opportunity that is exciting. We bless them” (if you honestly can!).

Guaranteed – fewer people knew the person in question than you initially estimate in your shock of hearing that they are leaving. And of those who did know the person, few will think that it is a big deal that they left. In my years in Cincinnati with a large staff, only twice have we made mention of someone leaving, and they were highly visible staff. However, I am still approached five or six times a year with a request to mention someone’s departure. I always say no.

16. Develop the Forrest Gump response skill.

That is, it’s OK to smile, then ignore those who are trying to engage you in needless controversy. Every weekend I have one or more of those conversations with folks. I refuse to engage them in an argument. One friend of mine put it well: “It’s hard to argue with an idiot.” I’ve learned to shift into this mode temporarily. It has served me well.

17. When controversy strikes, set a time limit on how much you will talk about “it.”

I tend to be a bit obsessive by nature, as are many church-planter types. When a significant problem hits that has the potential for some widespread emotional stirring, I find it challenging not to work on it until it is completely fixed. I like issues to be addressed and done with, and then I wipe my hands of the situation so I am free to move forward. The problem is, many challenges we face as pastors simply can’t be resolved – at least in the short run. When your time limit is up for the day, refuse to talk about it any longer until tomorrow.

Recruitment's Missing Link

***One spiritual gift stands crucial to activating all the others:
the gift of administration.***

by Carl F. George

From the book Growing Your Church Through Training and Motivation copyright © 1997

It is my conviction that volunteer work in the church is more greatly enabled by spiritual-gift theology than by any other single factor, training technique, or conceptual base. And one spiritual gift stands crucial to activating all the others: the gift of administration.

Automatic Appraisers

As my fellow researchers and I have come to understand it, the administrator gift excels at clearly stating major and supporting goals, visualizing the division of labor required to enable a group to work together toward those goals, and especially appraising the work force: Who can handle which assignments? Another way to say this is that an essence of the administrative gift is the ability to recognize ability.

In our experience, administrators do not have to be asked to assess people's capabilities—they do it automatically. They are continually sizing up talent and have a rich store of observations from their contact with people around them. They carry in their memories a knowledge base. They can estimate skill in handling both supervisory functions and specific tasks.

We have also learned that laypeople with the gift of administration are typically very busy, employed in business or other positions where their gifts are utilized. Unfortunately, they often cannot help their congregations because their abilities have not been recognized or, if recognized, have not been requested. At the same time, they generate frustration in others by turning down any number of specific tasks in the church. Why? They know instinctively that they will not make maximum contributions in such slots; they have chosen to avoid non-administrator assignments.

We have rarely heard of a case where administrators were not willing to make room in their busy lives to do the things for which they had been uniquely, specially gifted. But they do not stand around casually, waiting to be asked. That isn't their style.

The Hash Position

Many pastors have leadership gifts. They have the ability to cast a vision of a desired future, to promote ideas, and to inspire people to enter into programs of committal or self-improvement. They regularly challenge, comfort, instruct, and

correct. These elements of the leadership gift cause people to gain a sense of hope and destiny and to be willing to contribute their energies and money to the work of the church.

Unfortunately, many of these bright, capable, loving, energetic leader types do not have the insights needed to take the resources they have attracted and relate them to one another or to church goals. They can neither accomplish the goals nor bring satisfaction to the volunteer workers who are enlisted.

This is no cause for embarrassment. It is simply a proof of Paul's teaching that "there are different kinds of gifts," each of them distributed as the Spirit wishes. One of those gifts is leadership. Another of those gifts is administration. The two are not the same at all.

In working closely with hundreds of pastors in dozens of denominations, we have discerned that relatively few have the gift of administration among their dominant gifts. This has profound impact upon their ability to identify and direct volunteer workers within their congregation.

The absence of the administrative gift shows up sometimes in the poor placements pastors make. At other times, it is seen in their inability to visualize a job description or position required to support their objectives. One of the most sure indicators is the creation of what we have come to call the "hash" or "dump" position on the church staff. Sometimes it is the second professional position, sometimes the fourth or fifth. Whatever its rank, it comes about when the pastor who lacks an administrative gift appraises all the weaknesses or problems of the church at a particular time, lumps them together into a job description, and employs the first available person who is naïve enough to think he or she could possibly fill the position. Hash positions may include everything from long-range planning to custodial work, with youth recreation and senior citizen counseling thrown in for good measure.

Regrettable War

Meanwhile, the tension between leadership-gifted pastors and administration-gifted laypeople (and/or staff) grows. C. Peter Wagner has commented in *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* that Christians tend to project their spiritual gifts onto others. That is, they tend not to be aware of their own abilities as gifts, assuming that all other persons have the same potential.

Believe it or not, one of the easiest ways to identify a person's giftedness is to examine what he or she criticizes! One thing an administrator surely knows how to do is spot the absence of administrative performance in other people. However, in our observation, he rarely realizes that his pastor might not have the gift of administration. He assumes the opposite and then criticizes the pastor for laziness, unwillingness to delegate, lack of confidence in lay leadership, distrust of newcomers, backwardness, or unwillingness to manage intentionally. If he were in the pastor's position he would surely handle matters differently. The only

excuses he can think of for the pastor are lack of humility, dedication, spirit, or commitment. These malignings are easy to radiate and difficult to overlook.

The pastor is naturally hurt by these criticisms and frequently launches a defensive action. How a leader wages war against administrators may take several forms.

He may devalue the administration gift and consider matters like planning, goal-setting, monitoring, controlling, and supervising to be mere details, unworthy of serious consideration by the truly spiritual.

He may insist that there are enormous differences between the business work and the church, and the body of Christ does not admit to the same kinds of intentional activity for which successful businesses are known.

Pastors who are skillful in maneuvering can occasionally close out the business and administratively trained people from having any particular say, either at the church board or department leadership level.

Where the leader's defenses are successful, administratively gifted laypersons start compartmentalizing—turning off their brains and gifts at the door, having learned that to attempt to offer insights from their business life will only raise defensiveness from the minister and other leaders. This effectively blocks them from applying their gifts.

Loyal Legion

Other members of the church, however, seem much less problematic. Every pastor has, in varying numbers, a loyal legion of fans who comes to the rescue each time there is a call for help. Although church leaders have noted that relatively few people volunteer on a general call (pulpit announcement, bulletin insert, even costumed skit portraying worker needs), the ever-willing group is different. It is commended by the minister and frequently affirmed with mottoes like "The best ability is availability."

This motto, like other old wives' tales, needs to be carefully examined. Perhaps it should be rephrased to read, "The best ability (for a particular task) is the ability required to satisfactorily perform (that task)." If the need is for an emergency warm body with a good attitude, then availability may be the ability that wins the day. We have found, however, that many ministers do not recognize the gifts of availability for what they really are.

We have come to believe that the gifts of helps and service have as a key ingredient the willingness to be available to call for help. (Somewhat arbitrarily, it has been suggested that the gift of helps focuses on assistance to a person or persons, while the gift of service describes willingness to invest time and energy in a group or organization.) These long-suffering, service-gifted persons spend many hours in front of computers or with brooms in their hands or rearranging chairs or addressing and mailing envelopes or telephoning or doing multitudes of other things required for organizational maintenance.

If, when the call for volunteers goes out, those who respond have as part of their gift mix both helps or service and an additional gift that happens to match the task, the results can be positive. Suppose the youth department needs a substitute teacher. The loyal legion says, "We'll help." If one of them is accepted and appointed, and if he or she also happens to have a gift of exhortation, teaching, pastoring, or leading, the result is a happy combination.

Frequently, however, a "willing" worker is put into the teaching position but, failing to have the gift of teaching, burns out in a very short time. A variation occurs when the poorly performing helper, held to the task by continued pleas, eventually weakens the class to the point that its vitality is gone and its growth potential blighted. An administrator would define this as a case of improper volunteer placement based on failure to perceive gifts.

Ministers tend to misread availability as a spiritual virtue—that is, "willingness" or "loyalty," when, in fact, it is essentially an evidence of the gifts of helps or service.

Why are helping-gift people so available? Because many of them tend not to stay with any assignment for a very long time. An element of their gift is to clear their agendas of obligations. Either they accept tasks of short duration, or else they drop longer assignments midstream. They are often short-haul workers whose enthusiasm for a particular job remains only as high as their sense that the organization really needs them for that phase of its work.

So now the problem can be seen more clearly: A minister with leadership gifts but without administrative insight seldom recognizes ability and thus perceives willingness as the helping gifts. The willing are assigned instead of the able.

What Leaders Can Do

The pastor with the gift of leadership is in a most strategic place. Through the power of the pulpit, he interprets not only Scripture but the history of the congregation as well. This power guides the church to set forth suitable goals for its ministry.

After that, the ability to recognize, to affirm, and to enlist administrators is crucial if those dreams, ideals, and visions are to become realities. Here are some steps to follow:

1. Study the subject of spiritual gifts in depth.
2. Learn to recognize people's gifts from their criticisms and suggestions.
3. Make it a practice to affirm the gifts you see.
4. Ask for help in the church according to gifts discerned.
5. Enlist those with the gift of administration to serve on personnel and nominating committees, where they can practice making appointments by gift.
6. Ask people individually how they see your gifts as helping them.

7. Keep spotting the gifts of administration by noting those who enjoy accomplishing things through others.

What Administrators Can Do

We have interviewed dozens of frustrated laypeople and staff members with gifts of administration and have found a recurring attitude in almost all of them: They've given up on their pastors. They have concluded that the minister is an incurable impediment to progress, and therefore they can only sit and stew.

Three things administrators need to understand are:

1. The pastor is caught in a position that demands he be something of a star.
2. Pastors who do not understand the difference between leading and administering generally do not know how to ask administrators for help.
3. Other people don't see what administrators see.

Administration-gifted people must discipline themselves to use their gift for the body of Christ rather than on the body of Christ. Careful language will go a long way to reduce defensiveness. Few pastors will refuse the person who asks, "Can I help you construct some supporting strategies for your vision? Can I help you find the people to make your dream happen?"

Congregations that grow as organisms—that is, with respect to the spiritual gifts of the people—are flexible, resistant to burnout, and confident that they are discovering the will of Christ. They are deploying the members of his body in ways that are satisfying, effective, and result in the production of both new converts and additional leaders in greater numbers than churches that are merely organizations.