

Leading Effective Boards



Greater Sydney Conference

The Church Board

- The culture of your church will come to mirror your meetings. Mediocre, passionless meetings bring with them a mediocre passionless organization.
- Are the meetings you lead productive, compelling and energizing?
- Do you look forward to your board meeting?
- Would your board members rather spend two hours in a meeting or go to a movie?
- "If we hate meetings, can we be making good decisions and successfully leading our organizations? I don't think so. There is simply no substitute for a good meeting – a dynamic, passionate and focused engagement – when it comes to extracting the collective wisdom of a team. The hard truth is, bad meetings almost always lead to bad decisions, which is the best recipe for mediocrity." Patric Lencioni *Death by Meeting*
- Most meetings are lethargic, unfocused and passionless. However it should not be this way.
- When properly utilized meetings are actually time savers.

The Work of the Governance Board

The work of the Board is best done in a relational, prayerful and sharing atmosphere.

- Clarify, pray for and embody the Mission of the local church and ensure it is attained
- Keep sharp in regard to issues of healthy church leadership and practices
- Establish and champion the vision of the church
- Serving as an accountability point for the senior pastor
- Working with the conference appointments committee regarding conference appointments to the church
- Working with the senior pastor to shape the key ministry leaders team
- Protect against harmful influences
- Evaluate and put in place future directions for the church
- Serve the church through effective governance (putting in place guiding principles and policies)
- Accountable oversight of the church membership and financial assets.
- Understanding community needs and constantly assessing how the church can be part of meeting those needs

Appropriate Spiritual Gifts

The Church Board needs the blessing of certain spiritual gifts: leadership, knowledge, wisdom and faith. Most of these will be found in the leaders who are members of the Board.

The gift of leadership (Rom. 12:8) is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future and to communicate those goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish these goals for the glory of God. This gift is central to the task of the Church Board.

The gift of knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8) is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to discover, accumulate, analyse and clarify information and ideas that are pertinent to the growth and well-being of the body. Information is the bed-rock on which plans are constructed. If your congregation does not have someone with this gift, the Church Board can request a consultant from the conference.

The gift of wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8) is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to know the mind of the Holy Spirit. "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors they succeed." (Prov. 15:22) When you sit down together in a planning session, listen carefully to one another and bathe your planning in prayer. God promises to be present through His Spirit and guide your decisions.

The gift of faith (1 Cor. 12:9) is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to discern with extraordinary confidence the will and purposes of God for the future of His work.

Self-Leadership

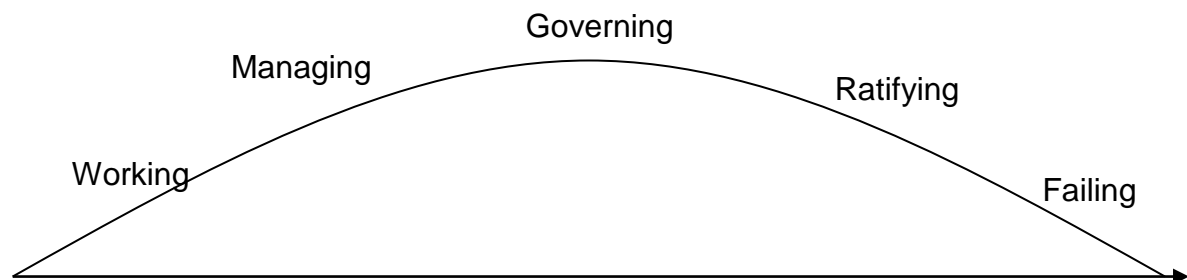
Board members need to be clearly trained on what it means to be part of the board and the need for self-leadership especially in regard to the character they bring to a board meeting.

Who are you bringing to the board?

- Do you have a heart for God?
- Do you have a heart for God's mission of reaching lost people?
- Do you embody the vision of your church?
- Do you live out the 'one-another's of scripture in your board meeting?
- Is your pride subdued?
- Have you prayed through your contribution on the board?
- Have you sought God's wisdom?
- Are your motives pure?

Governance v Management

Board Life Cycles



Working Board	Managing Board	Governing Board	Ratifying Board	Failing Board
No Pastor, perhaps no acting elder/lay leader	Weak or immature pastor, needs help running organization	Competent pastor, experienced staff that knows more than the board about the work	Hire a good pastor and stay out of his way	Members resign, high turnover, organizational fragmentation
New start-up or small organization	Emergency situations or changing pastors	Clear division of duties	Board approves what the pastor brings	Financial mess, consumed by cash-flow pressures
Board essentially doing the work of the pastor as a team	Board knows a lot about the work, assigns tasks to the pastor	Focus is on board work, concerned with values	Organization OK, but board in decline	Relational strife, distrust between and among staff and board
Board heavily involved in the work	Board is hands-on and proud of it	Up-to-date principles in writing	Focus on stability, status quo	Looking to the past, way behind the staff
Focus on day-to-day operations	Focus on administration and operation	Future-oriented, operates on strategic level	Hands off, getting lazy, out of touch, unaware	Not strategic, crippled by fire-fighting
Immediate time horizon	Intermediate time horizon	Hands on / hands off, delegates to pastor	Stale policies, little accountability, no term limits, reunion of old friends	Confused, aren't sure what to do
Primary role of board is recruiting volunteers and raising	Primary role of board is making decisions	Primary role of board is defining principles, holding	Primary role of board is rubber stamping pastor's	Primary role of board is ensuring survival

funds		pastor accountable for outcomes and planning for the future	initiatives	
-------	--	---	-------------	--

Adapted by Karen Cress ©James C Galvin & Associates, Inc.

- Governance will rarely be achieved by a board structured for management. We do need both functions in a church. How might you separate these functions?
- Is your meeting a small group designed for decisions or a large group designed for information sharing? There is a place for both types of meetings however when we mix these meetings up we get frustration.

Leading Effective Meetings

Prepare Well

- Be very intentional in how you shape the agenda. Ensure priority is given to governance issues if you are in a board that is both governance and management.
- Ensure Agenda items are ready to be presented with expectations of what decisions are being made.
- Clarify what needs to be dealt with at what level of meeting. e.g. should an issue actually be dealt with by that ministry department/leader rather than the whole board and just reported on.
- Have real data about the problems everyone knows exist.
- Encourage leaders to report well with concise information that is pertinent to the whole board. Reports need to be prepared as opposed to on the spot ramblings. Issues that might arise out of the report need to be thought through and if discussion is needed should be on the agenda. Some churches use a reporting template.
- Send agenda out early with necessary background readings and points of pre meeting prayer.
- Use assessment tools or discussion aids to help clarify what issues are. Using a tool separate to your ideas can make it easier to generate discussion and be a reflection of the wider meeting rather than one person's opinion.
E.g. Quick life-cycle assessment.
Change readiness questionnaire
Seven habits questions.

Make Space for Board Members to Engage in Community

- Structure board meetings around a meal from time to time
- Make time to share with and pray for each other. Task oriented people will not like this however may see it differently if they know 'community' is the task at this point.

Your Devotional Time is Crucial

Remind people of the mission and why they are doing what they do
Ideas:

- Pray for new people in the congregation
- Pray in various places.
- Shift where you hold your board meetings to promote creativity
- Use stories to illustrate what the vision and mission look like

How does the Holy Spirit fit into group decision making? What place does prayer play throughout the meeting?

Clarify What Is Expected

- Clarify are people meant to be debating, voting, brainstorming, weighing in or just listening. Some want informative and quick. Others think it should be interactive and strategic. Others would like to step back, take a breath and talk meaningfully about culture. Others want to make clear decisions and move on. All are right and so need to know what is expected on a given issue.

Conflict is Your Friend

- Most leaders of meetings seem focused on avoiding tension
- Leaders must look for legitimate reasons to provoke, and uncover relevant, constructive ideological conflict. By doing so they'll keep people engaged, which leads to more passionate discussions and ultimately to better decisions.
- The truth is, the only thing more painful than confronting an uncomfortable topic is pretending it doesn't exist. And I believe far more suffering is caused by failing to deal with an issue directly – and whispering about it in the hallways – than by putting it on the table and wrestling with it head on.

- Once the decision is made, everyone supports it. That's why it is critical that no one hold anything back during the discussion.

Retreats

A regular leadership retreat can be a great time for building community and engaging issues of church life at a deeper level. What exercises and resources will help people engage? What exercises resources will help people grow in understanding church life?

Board Training:

How do you train your board in church health thinking?

- Articles and books
- DVD segments with discussion questions
- Worksheets
- Activities
- Guest

Topics for Training might include:

- Life-Cycles
- Discipleship
- Purposes of the Church
- Self-Leadership
- Change Management
- Vision

Books:

Patrick Lencioni – *Death by Meeting*, Jossey-Bass, 2004

Mack Tennyson - *Making Committees Work*, Ministerial Association

Michael Anthony – *The Effective Church Board*, Baker Books, 1993.

Church Life is a Team Sport

“The leadership of a church, like the bone structure of a natural body, needs to be healthy and properly aligned in order for the body to work as it should. Teamwork in the leadership promotes teamwork in the body.” Michael Fletcher, *Leadership Transitions*, Wagner Publications

Ideas for Good Team Meetings

- **Get to know your team**
Their aspirations, story, perspectives.
Spend time in environments outside the meeting context.
- **Forge a Clear, Common Goal,**
Be concise – if the team can't see it the team can't do it.
- **Clarify Member Skills and Responsibilities**
Teach team skills
- **Avoid Predictable Problems**
Long, drawn out discussions
The Dominators (going around the table, asking for input)
- **Learn To Imagine again**
Generating a volume of thoughts gets people talking about options.
Once expressed, ideas can be refined.
Avoid criticism of ideas as they are being formed. Focus instead on how ideas can be improved or used.
- **Have Fun**
Collaboration on a team and creative ideas engenders laughter, jokes and high spirits. Let it flow.
- **Ensure Participation**
What really makes team meetings work is inclusion and contribution.
The more team members speak up at the meetings and offer their opinions, the higher the quality of decisions made.
- **Use Disagreement**
Recognise that disagreement is expected
Put the emotion away and listen. Once conflict becomes emotional, resolution becomes more difficult. Make it a team rule to handle conflict without the heat.
When you see a conflict, label it and open it for working through
Ask probing questions

Team players have to become comfortable with conflict. Oddly enough, if teams are working well, conflict will be part of many discussions. The trick is to view conflict as a by-product of having diverse thoughts around the table. The trap is to see conflict through an emotional lens.

- **Ask Lots of 'What if' Questions**

- **Trust Each Other**
Show an interest in others
- **Reward The Team**
What 'reward language' do people on the team speak?
- **Run Good Team Meetings**
Clear goal for the meeting
Sense of accomplishment or progress
Avoid aimless discussion

From Michael Maginn, *Making Teams Work*.

Teamwork Requires A Secure Leader

A Secure Leader

Encourages others' attempts
Points out others' strong points
Overlooks flaws
Readily admits own mistakes
Gives away credit to others
Rejoices when others succeed
Is excited when others do it better
Is willing to risk to improve
Is content to remain anonymous
Is quick to build teams

An Insecure Leader

Sabotages others' efforts
Brings attention to others' faults
Uses flaws as ammunition
Is defensive and justifies mistakes
Demands or manipulates credit
Is jealous of others' successes
Is easily intimidated
Plays it safe to retain position
Requires others to notice
Wants to do things himself

Wayne Cordeiro – *Doing Church As A Team*, Regal 112

Being a Team Member

From John Maxwell, *The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player*, Nelson

Adaptable
Collaborative
Committed
Communicative
Competent
Dependable
Disciplined
Enlarging
Enthusiastic
Intentional
Mission Conscious
Prepared
Relational
Self-Improving
Selfless
Solution Oriented
Tenacious

Go to QualitiesOfATeamPlayer.com

A Board Member's Approach to the Job

One of the reasons a board member's job is so difficult is that "the job" is essentially a group responsibility. In fact, it is hard to discuss how an individual is to approach a group task. Yet each board member has a responsibility to come with an effective mind set, to carry out his or her part of preparation and participation, and to take responsibility for the group. These are not always easy tasks.

Some advice follows on the frame of mind and individual preparations necessary for a given board member to play an effective role in creating a productive board.

1. *Be prepared to participate responsibly.* Participating responsibly means to do your homework, come prepared to work (sometimes the work is to listen), agree and disagree as your values dictate, and accept the group decision as legitimate even if not—in your opinion—correct. It is not acceptable, for example, to have opinions but not express them.
3. *Represent the congregation overall, not a single constituency.* You will understand and personally identify with one or more constituencies more than others however ensure this does not cloud your perspective of what steps the church needs to take overall.
4. *Be responsible for group behavior and productivity.* While doing your own job as a single board member is important, it does not complete your responsibility. If you are part of a group that doesn't get its job done, that meddles in administration, or that breaks its own rules, you are culpable.
5. *Be a proactive board member.* You are not a board member to hear reports. You are a board member to make governance decisions. Even when you are receiving education, do so as an active participant, searching doggedly for the wisdom that will enable good board decisions.
6. *Honor divergent opinions without being intimidated by them.* You are obligated to register your honest opinion on issues the board takes up, but other board members are obligated to speak up as well. Encourage your colleagues to express their opinions without allowing your own to be submerged by louder or more insistent comrades. You are of little use to the process if full expression of your ideas can be held hostage by a louder member.

7. *Use your special expertise to inform your colleagues' wisdom.* If you work in accounting, law, construction, or another skilled field, be careful not to take your colleagues off the hook with respect to board decisions about such matters. To illustrate, an accountant board member shouldn't assume personal responsibility for assuring fiscal soundness. But it is all right for him or her to help board members understand what fiscal jeopardy looks like or what indices of fiscal health to watch carefully. With that knowledge, the board can pool its human values about risk, brinkmanship, overextension, and so forth in the creation of fiscal policies. In other words, use your special understanding to inform the board's wisdom, but never to substitute for it.
8. *Think upward and outward more than downward and inward.* There will be great temptation to focus on what goes on with management and staff instead of what difference the organization should make in the larger world. The latter is a daunting task for which no one feels really qualified, yet it is the board member's job to tackle it.
9. *Tolerate issues that cannot be quickly settled.* Shorter-term, more concrete matters can give you a feeling of completion, but are likely to involve you in the wrong issues. If you must deal with such matters, resign from the board and apply for a staff position.
10. *Don't tolerate putting off the big issues forever.* The really big issues will often be too intimidating for you to reach a solution comfortably. Yet in most cases, the decision is being made anyway by default. Board inaction itself is a decision. Don't tolerate the making of big decisions by the timid action of not making them.
11. *Support the board's final choice.* No matter which way you voted, you are obligated to support the board's choice. This obligation doesn't mean you must pretend to agree with that choice; you may certainly maintain the integrity of your dissent even after the vote. What you must support is the legitimacy of the choice that you still don't agree with. For example, you will support without reservation that the Lead Pastor must follow the formal board decision, not yours.
12. *Don't mistake form for substance.* Don't confuse having a public relations committee with having good public relations. Don't confuse having financial reports with having sound finances. Don't confuse having a token constituent board member with having sufficient input. Traditional governance has often defined responsible behavior procedurally (do this, review that, follow this set of steps) instead of substantively, so beware of the trap.

13. *Obsess about ends.* Keep the conversation about benefits, beneficiaries, and costs of the benefits alive at all times. Converse with staff, colleague board members, and the public about these matters. Ask questions, consider options, and otherwise fill most of your trustee consciousness with issues of ends.
14. *Don't expect agendas to be built on your interests.* The board's agenda is a product of careful crafting of the board's job, not a laundry list of trustee interests. Remember, too, that you are not on the board to help the staff with your special expertise, but to govern. No matter how well you can do a staff job, as a board member you are not there to do it or even to advise on it. If you wish to offer your help as an individual—apart from your trustee duties—do so, but take great care that all parties know you are not acting as a board member. The staff's using you as an adviser or helper must remain a staff prerogative rather than yours.
15. *Support the chair in board discipline.* Although the board as a whole is responsible for its own discipline, it will have charged the chair with a special role in the group's confronting its own process. Don't make the chair's job harder, rather ask what you can do to make it easier.

Thinking About Church

“The members of our church should give diligent attention to the word of God, that they may understand their duty and then labor with all their energies of the mind and heart to make their church one of the most prosperous in the land.” (R&H 9-6-1881)

Three questions are at the core of how your church works:

1 - What The Church Is To Be?

The biggest challenge we have in transforming a congregation is in how people think about the church.

The first picture that comes into the mind of your church members when they hear the word ‘church’ will determine how they will go about being and doing church.

The question of what the church is to ‘be’ needs to be answered first if we are to put our “do” and “how” into the right context. When we fail to pray about, work through and communicate a healthy, Biblical picture of the church we then also easily miss the point in regard to how we will minister and what resources, processes and programmes we will use.

Common Pictures of ‘church’ include:

- A building
- A service
- An organisation

These picture have more to do with a Constantinian construct of the church than they do a New Testament picture.

A Healthy Picture of the ‘Church’

Community

The primary pictures of ‘church’ in the New Testament are ones of community. The Greek word which we translate ‘church’ is ekklesia, the Greek word for community.

Community is at the very essence of God’s nature. God, as expressed in the trinity, already existed as community. God created us for community and until we understand how this works we will keep chasing the wrong things. God is expressed as we live out his dream of community where there is a love

for God that is reflected in a deep love for His other children. The church should be the primary place where this community is expressed. "They will know you by your love"

The whole Bible is the story of God's ongoing attempts to create community; how sin destroys it and how God does whatever it takes to make a way for that community to be experienced again. The way community is expressed among believers is vital in showing that there is a group of people who live by God's plan and shine His character to the world.

Ideas for Creating a Picture of Community:

- Think about what's on your Bulletin cover?
- Think about what pictures you paint of 'church'?
- How does what you preach contribute to a picture of community. For Adventists our theological understandings of 'Sabbath' and 'State of the Dead' are wonderful pictures of community.
- Vision cast for community i.e Cast it, Celebrate it, Live it.

On a Mission

This New Community is not just any ordinary gathering of people. It is Christ's body. Christ gives His new community a mission and for Adventists this understanding of mission is intensified in the book of Revelation.

In Revelation, the church is described as Christ's bride. This makes the church worthy of our best time and energy. Revelation 2 describes the church being held in His hand.

Revelation 12 & 14 give a picture of an end-time community on a mission. The description includes:

1 – Obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus 12:17. We must be teaching our churches what it means to be disciples of Christ and how to apply the gospel in their everyday lives. **(Growing Spiritually)**.

2 –The rest of her offspring (remnant) Rev 12:17 (God's new Community). The remnant is a community that shows the world what happens when a group of people choose to live life God's way. We need to grow our churches in the sense of community where we are loving one another deeply, encouraging each other and putting others needs ahead of our own. The world needs to see God's word applied in the lives of a group of believers. **(Community)**

3 – Proclaiming the gospel 14:6, including that Babylon (systems of worship that do not put God first) are fallen 14:8. We are to take seriously our

command to be outward focused. We need to let the world, that is 'drunk on self', know that there is a better way of life for now and eternity.

(Sharing)

4 – Giving Him glory for judgment is come. Worship Him 14:7 We are commanded to take worship seriously. Worshipping God for what he has is and will do. In this context we are to commanded to worship God for his creative power which brings with it a responsibility to steward our environments. **(Worshipping)**

5 – Following the lamb wherever He goes 14:14. This is a fantastic picture of a community of people who have given their own lives away and are prepared to follow God on His mission. **(Serving)**

After establishing our mission we can then evaluate models of 'church', resources, programmes etc on the basis of how they contribute to us achieving our mission.

Myth-Debunking Truths About The Church

- The church is a living organism, not a static institution
- The church is so much more than a building
- The church is not to be bound to a single location
- God is the seeker, we are on His mission to seek
- The church is much more than a one-hour service held on day a week
- The kingdom of God is meant to be decentralized but people tend to centralize
- We are each God's temple and together we are also His temple

I think Starbucks cares more about selling my neighbours coffee than the little church down the street cares about helping its neighbours find forgiveness in Christ. Churches would never admit this, and to say it out loud sounds harsh, but they live it every day. – leoskwo posting on OutofUr.com

The gospel says, "Go," but our church buildings say, "Stay."
The gospel says, "Seek the lost," but our churches say, "Let the lost seek the church."

Howard Snyder (The Problem of Wineskins)

"The answers are not found in our models, methods and manmade systems but in the truth of God's Word and in being filled and led by the spirit of God." *Neil Cole (Organic Church)*

2 - What Is The Church To Do?

If we are to be this 'community on a mission' we must do those things that ensure this community is lived out. Once again this is not something we need to invent. The Bible makes it very clear what this new community is to do.

- (1), **Evangelism** - A continuous effort to find lost people must be made. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:28)
- (2), **Community**- genuine fellowship must be facilitated among believers (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25; Philemon 2:1-4; 1 John 1:3.)
- (3), **Worship** – The church must facilitate worship (John 4:23-24; Acts 2:42)
- (4), **Discipleship** – Instruction, reproof and spiritual growth must happen in an intentional way. (Acts 20:28-32; 2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:12-13)
- (5), **Service** – Each member is to be glorifying God and edifying one another through ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10, 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:6-11)

These to 'do' purposes are summarised well in our Adventist Fundamentals:

Seventh-day Adventists Believe...

The church is the **community** of believers who confess **Jesus Christ** as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for **worship**, for **fellowship**, for **instruction** in the Word, for the **celebration** of the Lord's Supper, for **service** to all mankind, and for the worldwide **proclamation** of the gospel. The church derives its authority from **Christ**, who is the incarnate Word, and from the Scriptures which are the written Word. The church is **God's family**; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the **body of Christ**, a **community** of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the **bride** for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a **glorious church**, the faithful of all the ages, the **purchase of His blood**, not having spot or wrinkle, but **holy** and without blemish –

Fundamental Belief, 12 (was no 11 before introduction of new fundamental at 2005 General Conference Session)

We are then growing people to become

**Sharing,
Serving,
Connecting,
Growing
Worshipping believers.**

3 - How Is The Church To Do Ministry?

There is no one right way to do church. In fact, there are as many ways to go about how we apply the purposes as there are congregations. The 'how' of church life is where we must, with our leadership teams, pray about and discern what God wants to do in and through the congregations we serve in.

The diagram here uses the eight Natural Church Development factors as a link toward establishing the 'how's'. Research of congregations world-wide in various contexts highlights how in churches that are achieving their mission these eight factors make up the framework of "how" to go about being and doing church. Keep in mind these may not be the only "how" factors and will be lived out in different ways in each congregation.

Too often congregations take on models and programmes that are the "hows" for other environments and wonder why they do not work for them. It is seemingly easier to take on an already established model rather than doing the seeking of God's will and evaluation of our congregational contexts to determine how God wants our congregation to go about ministry.

This does not mean we cannot borrow from other churches. We will find useful resources and processes that work for them and can then be adapted for effectiveness in our context. Answering the 'be', 'do' and 'how' questions allows us to use various resources with a measurement in place that determines what and how we will use these other tools.

Centre circle: what the church is to be.
 Middle circle: what the church is to do.
 Outside circle: how this can be done.



There is no one Biblical way to do church

Churches must be free to develop creative forms and structures to apply the New Testament principles.

Explore Dream Discover

Thinking About Church Life Cycles

All Living Organisms Have a Life Cycle

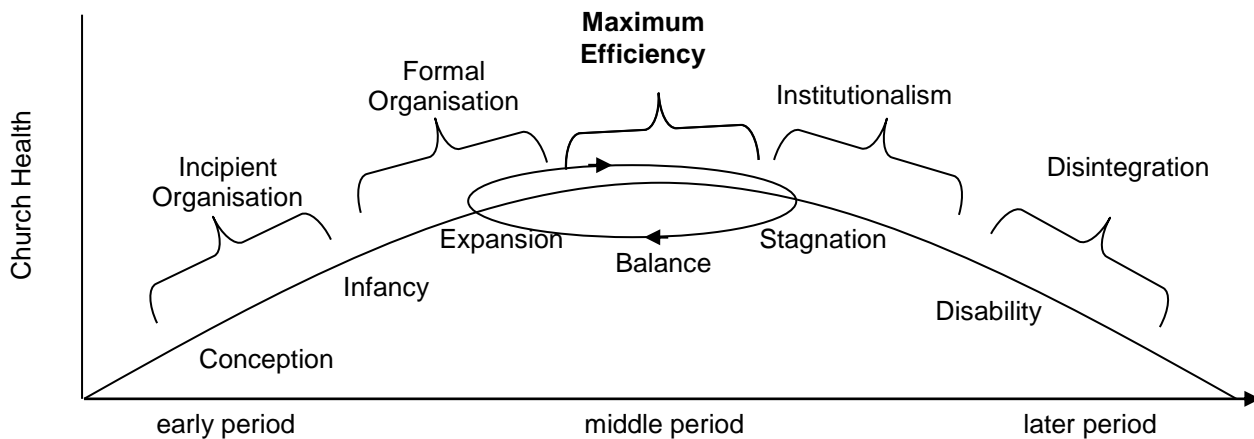
Church Is A Living Organism, Not An Institution

90% of all churches reach a plateau by their 15th birthday

90% of churches are on the right hand side of the life-cycle

Churches Can Be Renewed

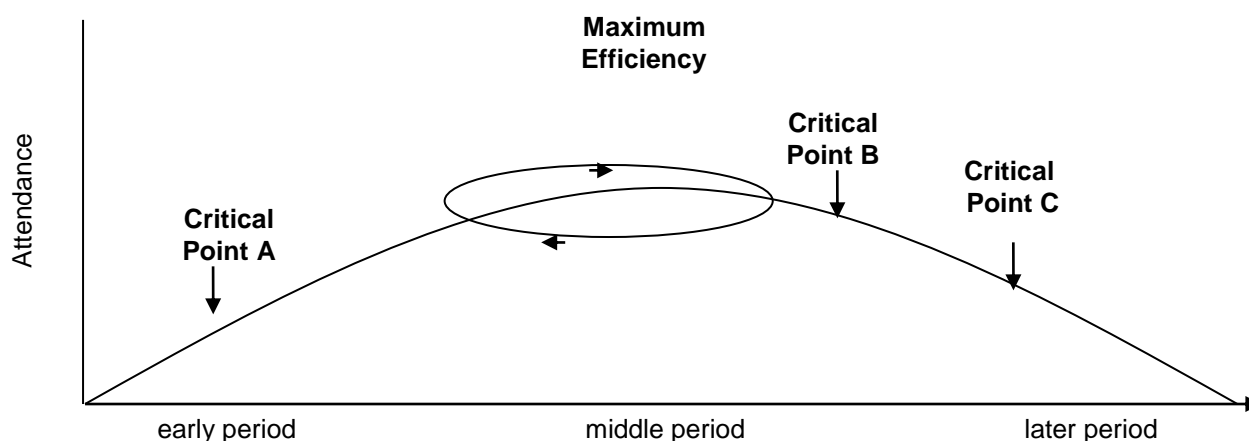
Churches Can Live At The Maximum Efficiency Point



Organizational life stages:

- 1- Conception
- 2- Infancy
- 3- Expansion
- 4- Balance
- 5- Stagnation
- 6- Disability

Critical Points



Factors That Make These The Critical Points

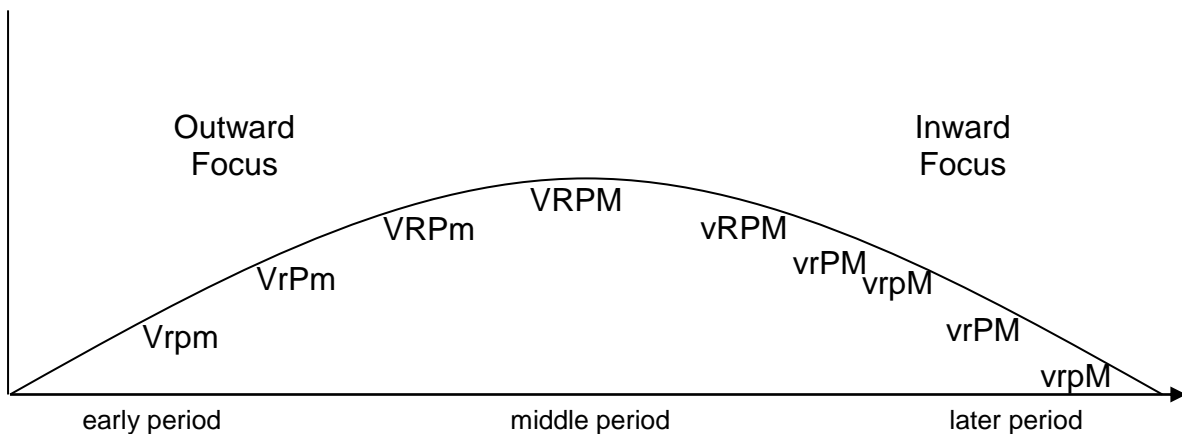
Responding To Critical Points

Avoiding Stagnation and Disability

1. Make sure a discipleship process is in place that grows people in personal spiritual disciplines.
2. Actively cast an outward focused vision.
3. Increase the pace of leadership development while in stage 3.
4. Ensure that leaders have access to ample and reliable information about the state of the ministry.
5. Leaders must help the ministry refocus and renew before hitting stagnation.

Revitalizing On The Down Side

1. **Prayer** is the most important factor in tuning churches around. Create an environment of prayer seeking **God's leading** for the mission of the church and for one another.
2. Focus on what the church is to **Be** and **Do** with a compelling **Outward Vision**
2. Focus on **Steps** over Programmes
3. Develop A Culture of **Evaluation**
4. **Communicate** Often



V = Vision
R = Relationships
P = Programs
M = Management

God Honoring, Outward Focused Vision is crucial in turning churches around.



Re-thinking Vision

Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.
Proverbs 19:21

Vision is not just a destination; it is a journey

Vision is a picture of what God wants us to do.

Vision is an active process, an ongoing process. It is a continual search for what God is doing and wants to do.

We must keep dreaming and keep visioning to keep our churches, ministries and personal lives from perishing.

Preparing The Vision

1 – Prayer – Vision is usually birthed out of a serious search for God's direction.

2 - Vision is best birthed out of thorough knowledge – collect the right information.

3 – Holy discontent for the status quo. As long as we are content with the status quo, we will not discover God's vision.

4-Timing – Rushed preparation result in sloppy vision. The reason 99 out of 100 churches that try to make major transitions fail is that they go too fast."

Defining The Vision

Discover your purpose

Vision is a lot like a jigsaw puzzle. You work it one piece at a time – and it takes a long time to get all the pieces in place. Discovering your purpose is the border of the puzzle.

Define your strategy

You can not find the right answers without asking the right questions:

What process will accomplish our purpose and reach our target? Programs and events will not get the job done. There must be a deliberate process in place.

How do we move from where we are to where we want to go?

What must change?

What must not change?

What is the best order of change?

Planting The Vision

Take time to plant before moving on to implementation

Vision is a seed... it must be planted in the proper soil.

Take time to plant the vision with key leaders before sharing vision with the entire church.

Secure the understanding of the power brokers (Nehemiah 2:5)

When a recognised leader does not know what is going on the result is confusion.

A leader who is uninformed often feels unwanted and unneeded.

When people are not included in the change process, they can feel you are taking their church away from them. This causes them to feel threatened. They often react by digging in and waiting for you to change or leave.

Secure the assistance of those whose help you will need.

Seek the advice of your team

You need a vision team for feedback, for balance, for accountability and for fellowship.

Sharing The Vision

Leaders first, church second

Nothing devalues and alienates a leader as quickly as not knowing what is coming next before the rank and file know.

It is very difficult for leaders who do not know what is going on to support it.

Share With The Church

The success of any vision comes down to one issue: will the majority of the people of the church get behind it?

Since vision is both caught and taught, it must be shared in multiple ways.

Preaching

Small group vision studies

Purpose Statements

Vision phrases

Vision verses

Faith stories

CD's, books and articles

One on one

Living it out in your own life – You can't expect a church to catch a vision that you are not living out in your own life.

Implementing The Vision

Most churches spend far too little time in preparation and move far too quickly into making changes

Implement your changes one at a time in a strategic order.

The order of change is different in every church

You can teach an old dog new tricks – but you must be really patient with the dog.

Many churches are led by insecure leaders who are more concerned about what people think than they need to be.

Dealing With Opposition

People can only handle so much change

People feel awkward when asked to do something new

People think first about what they must give up
People are at different levels of readiness for change
People tend to revert back to their old behaviour the minute the reason for change is removed.

Anyone who is trying to do something for God will face some opposition.

You will be criticized. It might as well be for doing the right thing

The reality is that criticism and opposition will drive you somewhere. Let it drive you closer to God and you will become better; let it drive you away from God and you will become bitter.

Keep on leading. "You can define the greatness of a man by what it takes to discourage him."

Don't let the whiners set the agenda of your church. Don't let the complainers have the time that you need to be giving to the workers.

The angrier you are about a complaint, the more sensitive you need to be in your response,

You can measure a leader's maturity by how he/she responds to complainers.

Evaluation

One of the dangers in seeing God's vision take root in the church is that we again settle in and get content

Vision is a Journey

People need to hear vision again and again until it becomes a part of their soul.

Summarised from:

Dan Southerland, *Transitioning*.

Alan Nelson and Gene Appel, *How to Change Your Church Without Killing It*.

Randy Frazee, *The Comeback Congregation*.

Andy Stanley, *Visioneering*.



Size Transitions

Congregations of different sizes are entirely different organisms requiring different models of leadership, organizational structure, ministry placement and decision making.

1. Congregations fall into distinctive size categories and congregations of different sizes organise in different ways.
2. Congregations do not grow or decline smoothly, but tend to plateau at certain predictable sizes.
3. In order to successfully grow past a plateau, a congregation must deliberately break with familiar patterns of behaviour and begin to act as the next size congregation acts.

While any classification based on size and related ministry environment is a generalisation the size of a congregation plays a large factor in shaping the dynamics of that church.

Moving from one size to another requires skilled leadership, education and a lot of communication. Many issues of church politics grow out of people relating to the church out of the wrong size mindset.

At each stage developmental lessons need to be learnt for the church to move forward.

“Through hundreds of consultations and thousands of pastoral surveys we have learned something very significant: Churches have more in common by their size than by their denomination, tradition, location, age or any other single, isolatable factor” Carl George, *Barriers*, 129

Size Categories

Very Small = less than sixty attenders (40-70 Transition point)

Small Church = 60 to 200 (Transition point 150 -250)

Medium church = 200 to 400 (Transition point 350-450)

Large Church = 400-800 (Transition point 750-850)

A church's size category is a matter of attitude as much as numbers.

To cross over into a new stage, leaders must understand what lies ahead and make the necessary realignments before they expect to move to a new level of growth.

“The most severe and potentially damaging tensions are those caused by pastors and individuals on the leadership team who relate to the church according to the wrong size category.” Michael Fletcher

You can't skip the stages

Problems arise when we have a large church mindset in a small church context. Having a vision to be a large church is great however you cannot skip the stages to get there.

Often in the pastors impatience structures are implemented prematurely that tax the leadership team and cause the pastor to feel isolated.

When there is confusion about size roles

- Relationships suffer and unity is broken
- Church politics develop
- Momentum for growth is lost

Regardless of whether the congregation chooses to become larger as one group or grow lots of smaller congregations the ways of thinking and acting at different stages are important.

Questions:

What changes are anticipated if our church grows significantly?

What would our church be like without significant growth?

Expected changes:

- Church structure
- Leadership styles
- Communication
- Facility

Factors To Be Worked Through:

- Congregations self definition
- Pastor's role
- How decisions are made
- Size and function of paid staff

- Facility capacity
- Movement toward multi-cell reality
- Delegation of planning
- Change management
- Infrastructure for member care and involvement
- Conflict prevention and management

Small church

- Patriarchs, matriarchs and heavy donors run the church, whether or not they are on the board. The real votes almost never take place in the board meetings. They are made in living rooms, on the phone or in a café. The real power is based in an informal group, not in the pastor or board.
- At this level the pastor has to work real hard to develop the Elders as leaders
- Pastor needs to be the consultant to the matriarchs/patriarchs
- Growth threatens closeness and informal influence networks. Can the 'in' people handle not being 'in'.
- Change from 'I' to 'we'
- Pastor is the manager of the various parental figures
- Need to develop leadership and small group systems

Small: 150-350

- Good communication with the congregation and the ability of the pastor to delegate authority, assign responsibility and recognise the accomplishments of others are important. "Without such skill the central pastoral function weakens the entire structure. The clergyperson becomes overworked, isolated, exhausted and may be attacked by other leaders." *Size Transitions 35*
- When congregations reaches 130-150 people they begin to get nervous because they are beginning to lose the intimate fellowship the prize so highly.
- "If clergy have the idea firmly fixed in their head that they are ineffective as a pastor unless they can relate in a profound and personal way with every member of the parish then 150 active members (plus an even larger number of inactive members) are about all one person can manage" *Size Transitions 36*
- This transition is considered the most difficult. Many churches make an unconscious decision not to make the transition and keep hovering around 150. They are not willing to lose ready access to their 'religions leader' and the feeling of oneness where everyone knows everyone else.

- People must accept they will not be able to know everyone in the church
- The people will have to become inclusive of others and unwritten rules will have to be supplanted with clear methods of communication

Empowering leaders who function as shepherds

What members need from the pastor:

- Planning with other leaders to ensure high quality ministries
- Good recruitment, training, supervision and evaluation to grow leaders
- Keep the morale of the leaders high and give high priority to the spiritual and pastoral needs of the leaders.
- The pastor must often step back from direct ministry with people to coordinate and support the people who offer this ministry.

Breaking 150

- Pre-wire the crisis
- Compelling Vision
- Articulate why your church has and should continue to grow
- Increase leadership development
- Work through spans of care issues
- Work through the 'everyone needs to know everyone' challenge. People need to do know 12 people really well and then 40-60 reasonably well.
- Work through facility issues
- Need clear methods of communication (both ways)
- Church will need to become inclusive of others, work on assimilation process
- Pastor in transition from primary care giver to coordinating leader
- The pastor must embrace the idea of sharing leadership with others

Medium 200-400:

- Multiple mini-congregations of various sizes
- There is leadership on many levels
- The worship service is a big deal

Pastor:

- Must coordinate multiple staff in a healthy way
- Must coordinate diverse groups around the mission
- Demonstrate a high level of administrative skills

- Work through the changing role of the governing board, staff and ministry leaders
- Planning and administration must become a 'staff' function
- Shared vision and camaraderie at the board level is critical.
- "When a church reaches an average attendance of four hundred or so, generally the members of the board are the people who can make a difference or the spouses of the people who can make a difference. The formal and informal power structures have come together. These boards are 'dangerous' because they can actually accomplish something" Carl George 146.
- Imperative that the senior pastor is a good leader of the staff team.
- Need to identify which positions need to be staffed and at what point.
- New level of leadership needs to be established to 'detangle' the ministries of the church and have them work synergistically and interdependently.

Moving Forward

"At every level varrier breaking begins in the brain. First, the pastor must look ahead and anticipate that change is required" Michael Fletcher, 68
 People who want churches to grow seldom give much thought to the fact that growing churches always change – the greater the growth the more radical the change. "Do you want growth knowing that growth will mean change?"

- Size transition is a lot like standing on a fault line.
- To cross over into a new stage, leaders must understand what lies ahead and make the necessary realignments before they expect to move to a new level of growth.
- Vision casting is especially important in the transition phases. Must be clearly articulated plan in regard to what, when and how.
- Education produces Liberation
- Assess where you are
- Anticipate the tension "prewire the crisis"
- Get the leadership team on the same page and develop a plan

- Communication produces Cooperation

Summarised From:

Michael Fletcher, *Overcoming Growth Barriers*, Bethany, 2006.

Beth Ann Gaede, ed. *Size Transitions in Congregations*, Alban, 2001

Carl George, *How To Break Growth Barriers*, Baker, 1993.

Alice Mann, *The In-Between Church, Navigating Size Transitions in Congregations*, Alban, 1998.

Gary McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, Revell, 1999.

McINTOSH'S TYPOLOGY OF CHURCH SIZE

Factors	Small Churches	Medium Churches	Large Churches
Size	15 – 200 worshipers	201 – 400 worshipers	401+ worshipers
Orientation Structure Leadership	Relational Single cell Resides in key families	Programmatical Stretched cell Resides in committees	Organisational Multiple cell Resides in select leaders
Pastor Decisions	Lover Made by congregation. Driven by history	Administrator Made by committees. Driven by changing needs	Leader Made by staff and leaders. Driven by vision
Staff	Bivocational or single pastor	Pastor and small staff`	Multiple staff
Change	Bottom up through key people	Middle out through key committees	Top down through key leaders
Growth Patterns	Attraction model through relationships	Program model through key ministry	Proclamation model through word of mouth
Growth Obstacles	Small-church image Ineffective evangelism Inadequate programming Downward momentum Ingrown fellowship	Inadequate facilities Inadequate staff Inadequate finances Poor administration Increasing complexity	Poor assimilation Increased bureaucracy Poor communication Loss of vision Lack of member care
Growth Strategies	Renew a sense of purpose Begin new ministries Cultivate evangelism Celebrate victories Start new groups/classes Involve new people	Develop distinct identity Add additional staff Use facilities multiple times Offer multiple worship services Write a long-range plan Improve quality of ministry.	Renew the vision Design assimilation plan Streamline procedures Offer need-based events Adjust leadership roles Increase the number of small groups.

Gary McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999)



Greater Sydney Conference

How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, And Create Movement

Church Unique

Will Mancini

Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, 2008.

Your Church is Unique - Each church has a unique God-given thumb print.

- If you copy someone else's vision, who will accomplish the one God has for you?
- Too often churches conform to the shape of an external mold or model rather than reach their full potential.

Traps:

Table 1.1. "Thinkholes" Summary

Thinkholes	How We Neglect Uniqueness	The "Thinking" Problem	Thinkhole Practices
Ministry treadmill	Busyness eliminates time for reflection	No time to think	Add more programs
Competency trap	Presumption decreases appetite for learning	No need to think	Work harder
Needs-based slippery slope	Consumerism removes the need for discernment	Needs are all we think about	Make people happy
Cultural whirlpool: BuzzChurch	Innovation short-circuits self-awareness	Addicted to new thinking	Be cutting-edge
Cultural whirlpool: StuckChurch	Change outpaces the discipline for learning	Too tired to think	Glorify the past
The conference maze	Success increases the temptation to copycat	Let's borrow their thinking	Model best practice
Denominational rut	Resources disregard local uniqueness	No one helps us think	Protect theology

Getting Stuck With Strategic Planning

Sometimes the strategic plan may actually obscure the concept of Church Unique and fail to guide the church to a better future.

- It is often difficult to know how the contents of a strategic planning document should intersect with the realities of existing church life. Most strategic plans are too cumbersome to be useful.
- The question with strategic planning is: Are we talking about the organization to people, or talking to people about the organization?
- Planning documents need simplicity and clarity. What will a leader/church member think when they see this. What do they need to know and will they easily find it?
- Avoid an overload of data. The difference between most church strategic plans and what is actually needed is like using a large multi-fold map and a destination map from 'Mapquest'. Both are accurate but one is simple, clear and easy to understand.
- Too much information shreds the big picture into so many small pieces that the vision is hopelessly lost. More information equals less clarity. We have 'knowledge fatigue'. People do not need more information they need more meaning from the right information.
- Leaders of today must learn how to deliver meaning by distilling what they say.
- Analysis is important however not everyone needs to know it. Analysis does not lead to synthesis.
- In most church settings the details of the strategic plan eclipse the big idea or the all-encompassing vision that people have not yet captured.

"Too much information may, in fact, have a cancelling effect – that is, multiple ideas or concepts can actually compete with each other for the listeners' attention and retention... and with every individual thought you introduce, you diminish the effectiveness of the prior ideas you may have presented." Andy Stanley.

- In regard to the Mission, Vision, Purpose Statement: Only one will be remembered which makes only one necessary. By having all three of

these terribly long, redundant statements, we severely diminish the opportunity for anyone to carry and communicate the vision contagiously.

“The fastest way to get out of a hole is to stop digging.”

- In a context where a team work environment is not in place the strategic plan itself becomes a silo builder that reinforces the concrete walls between ministry areas.

“Churches must work as a football team rather than a golf team.”

Table 2.1. Strategic Planning Fallacies Summary

The Fallacy of:	The Wrong Assumption	The Strategic Plan Backfires as a:	The Real Need
Complexity	More information will provide clearer direction	Vision shredder	Clarity
Accountability	More goals will help us work better together	Silo builder	Synergy
Predictability	The near future will resemble the recent past	Leadership blinder	Adaptability

The Vision Frame

Mandate

A clear and concise statement that defines what the church is ultimately supposed to be doing.

- Needs to be shaped around Jesus Mandate – Seek and Save/Great Commission.
- When it comes to growth challenges, leaders jump too quickly to the branches: parking lots, seating capacity, finances, staff etc. But when God’s people are deeply stirred with redemptive passion, the church becomes an unstoppable force, hurdling other barriers with ease. The question then becomes: What is stopping your people from strengthening their redemptive heartbeat?
- If your clear and concise mandate does not wave an unmistakable evangelistic banner, nothing else will.
- What do you do that focuses your church externally?

“The church is only the church when it exists for others.” – *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

“Apply a disproportionately greater emphasis on evangelism at the beginning of the day in order to have a balanced church at the end.” – *Bill Hybels*

In constructing the mandate, Start with A – where people are and then B – where your church is taking them.

Motives

Why are we doing it

“You won't do ministry that really matters until you define what matters.” – *Aubrey Malphurs*

- Motives are the shared convictions that guide the actions and reveal the strengths of the church. Motives are filters for decision making and springboards for daily action.
- A church without motives is like a river without banks.

Map

How are we doing it? The Map demonstrates how the church will accomplish its mandate on the broadest level.

- The map provides a pattern of how ministry fits together for fulfilling the mission.
- Make it a simple design

“Churches with a simple process for reaching and maturing people are expanding the kingdom... Conversely, churches without a process or with a complicated process for making disciples are floundering. As a whole, cluttered and complex churches are not alive.” – *Thom Rainer*

- Remember: Programs don't attract people; people attract people.

Table 14.2. Benefits of the *mMap*

Church Without a Strategy (More Is More; Wal-Mart Approach)	Church with Strategy (Less Is More; Starbucks Approach)
Churches are stuck thinking that more programs means more ministry	The <i>mMap</i> shows how to accomplish the mission with a few right ministries
Churches are deceived by the myth that people want more choices	The <i>mMap</i> clarifies a simple pathway of involvement
Churches inadvertently think that time at church equals spiritual maturity	The <i>mMap</i> limits and stewards time “at church” to release people to “be the church”
Churches can't say no to their people's ideas even when the ideas are ineffective	The <i>mMap</i> filters which ideas fit best and which ones don't fit
Churches allow an immature knowledge-centered spirituality to dictate program offerings	The <i>mMap</i> presents and guides people through a balanced process of discipleship
Churches make religious consumers	Churches make Christ followers

Marks

Marks let us know when we are successful. They are a set of attributes in an individual's life that define or reflect accomplishment of the church's mandate.

“The true measurement of a church is not ‘how many’ but ‘how loving,’ not ‘how relevant; but ‘how real’” – *Robert Lewis*

- Your mission is what you measure.
- Every church feels the gravitational pull to measure only the ABC's (attendance, buildings and cash). The problem is that you can be very successful with the ABC's but be a circus.
- What kind of Christian is Your Church Designed to Produce?

Prayer

May I allow You to work in and through me as I serve on the board of Your church. May I bring to the board a character that honours you and may I seek your wisdom for making decisions that impact lives.