

Leadership Tips

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Leadership Development and Church Ministries
Open Bible Churches
Compiled by Dr. Paul Leavenworth

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LEADERSHIP QUOTES

On Prayer

“Lord, teach us to pray...” Luke 11: 1

“When you pray, say:

Father,

Hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

For we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

And lead us not into temptation.” Luke 11: 2-4

“He who prays as he ought, will endeavor to live as he prays.”

John Owen, pastor

“Prayer is the chief agency and activity whereby men align themselves with God’s purpose.”

G. Aston Oldham, theologian

“Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; prayer is laying hold of God’s highest willingness.”

Bishop Trent, pastor and theologian

“Secret intercessors make it possible for public laborers to do their work and win.”

Evan Roberts, revivalist

“What the Church needs today is not more and better machinery, not new organizations or more and novel methods; but men [and women] of prayer, men [and women] mighty in prayer.”

E.M. Bounds, pastor and writer

“I urge, then, first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.”

I Timothy 2:1-4

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Intimacy

Intimacy with God (Vertical)

A number of uses for intimate occur in English language. Intimate (according to Webster):

1. most private or personal, 2. closely acquainted or associated, 3. very familiar, 4. promoting a feeling of privacy, coziness, romance, 5. careful study or investigation—thorough knowledge (e.g. He has an intimate knowledge of solitude disciplines), 6. a very close acquaintance with the facts. Synonym—see familiar (familiar, close intimate, confidential).

These synonyms overlap but also differ with each other. Note: *familiar* is applied to that which is known through constant association, and, with reference to persons, suggests informality, or even presumption, such as might prevail among members of a family; *close* is applied to persons or things very near to one in affection, attraction, interests, etc.; *intimate* implies a very close association, acquaintance, relationship, etc. or suggests something of a very personal or private nature. *Confidential* implies a relationship in which there is mutual trust and a sharing of private thoughts, problems, etc. Intimacy with God combines several of these usages.

Intimacy with God refers to a close, private, and personal relationship with God in which there is mutual affection, a sharing of interests, and a sense of growing familiarity with God based upon an accumulation of experience with God. Such a relationship is indicated by intimate times like:

- times in which God's presence is sensed
- times of revelation of truth—when God shows something or shares it
- times of affirmation by God
- times of fulfillment of God's purposes in our lives (destiny fulfillment)
- moments of faith, in which we sense God is doing business with us and we accept it
- crises—in which God delivers
- times of committal, repentance, renewal (fresh starts)

Now here is what I am suggesting. When a leader is in a growing intimate relationship with God, he/she will move naturally into the focal issues. So then, what I am suggesting is that the goal for leaders is not a focused life. The goal is intimacy with God. The by-product of intimacy will be a focused life. Part of my seeking intimacy with God will be the discovery of focal issues. As ministry flows more and more out of being I will see an increasing intimacy with God. These notions are intertwined.

Further, I am sensing that as a leader grows in horizontal intimacy there is an increased sensitivity toward vertical intimacy. Conversely, vertical intimacy should spill over into horizontal relationships as well. See Jesus' circles of intimacy.

Intimacy with People (Horizontal)

Mentoring is defined as relational empowerment. Empowerment can happen even when relationships are minimum. But it ought to be the case that in a mentoring experience the relationship should at least be developed so that at the end of the mentoring experience there is a deeper relationship than there was in the beginning. Intimacy describes the deepest kind of relationship. Probably very few mentoring relationships will approach intimacy in fullness. But some intimacy can be experienced even in relatively short mentoring experiences. Recently I worked through Terry Hershey's book, *Intimacy—The Longing of Every Human Heart*.

I was challenged by him to attempt even in my shorter mentoring experiences to move toward intimacy at least in certain aspects. Here is my first attempt to define some of what he was implying.

Intimacy, which ultimately is a gift of God, is an on-going process of reciprocal sharing between two people in which there is,

- transparency in which each feels safe to be open
- vulnerability flowing from some kinds of transparency which is respected and not taken advantage of
- empathy—a caring affirming reflection on what is shared together, and
- acceptance of the other without necessarily an agenda for change, and which results in a feeling of belonging and significance in both parties.

Intimacy is not a state that is reached but a process involving interactive behavior which reflects vulnerability, transparency, empathy, and acceptance. We do not reach intimacy; we demonstrate intimate behaviors. The first two sharing ventures, vulnerability and transparency, involve risk. The second two, empathy and acceptance, make the risk worthwhile and minimize it. Since intimacy is not a state that is reached but an on-going process that is experienced around those concepts of vulnerability, transparency, empathy.

What kind of behaviors are involved in being transparent?

What kind of behaviors are involved in being vulnerable?

What kind of behaviors are involved in showing empathy to one who is transparent and vulnerable?

What kind of behaviors are involved in accepting the other one?

Notice the end results of intimate behavior. Both parties feel a sense of belonging. Both parties are affirmed and recognize that there is meaning and significance in life.

The heart of intimacy is the concept of sharing. Sharing takes time. There is no shortcut. For a relationship to build toward intimacy there must be frequent times, sharing, and reflection upon that sharing.

Inevitably conflict will arise in a relationship that moves toward intimacy. But if the relationship is kept central and not the conflict, it can be worked through with the result of an even deeper intimacy.

Mentoring by definition is moving toward change of the mentoree which is somewhat in conflict with the acceptance component of the definition. But there is acceptance in the present state and the process to move forward to a new state—an agreed upon need for change.

9 Categories Around Which Intimacy Can Be Developed

Hershey lists a number of areas in which intimacy can grow. Intimacy can be experienced with a person in some areas and not others. Just a simple listing and description of these opens up new possibilities for developing relationships. In mentoring, a mentor can work on his/her relationship and developing intimacy in one or more of these categories. This recognition of categories of relational intimacy and deliberate proactive movement toward developing intimacy by a mentor will obviously pay high dividends in the resultant empowerment in the mentoring experience.

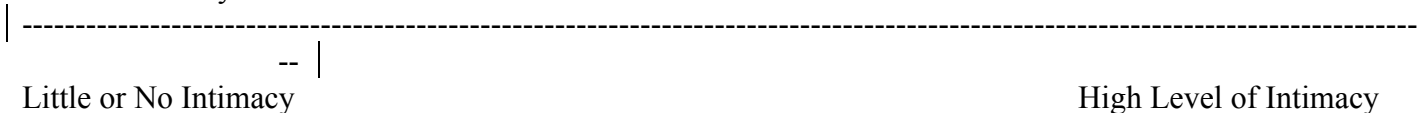
Category	Explanation	Examples
1. Work Intimacy	This is sharing of vocational pursuits, professional interests. Work intimacy comes when each respects and appreciates each other's work goals, the significance of the work; its ultimate value.	
2. Recreational Intimacy	This is the freedom to have fun together. It involves play, enjoyment, laughter, the breaking of intensity in working.	
3. Intellectual Intimacy	This is when the two share a closeness of ideas. Intellectual intimacy involves common values, shared ways of thinking or frameworks for perceiving things. Frequently, there is a shared perception of what is beautiful and good and what is not.	

4. Emotional Intimacy	This is the ability to share one's emotional life with another; inner feelings; inner thoughts which allow another to see the inner person.	
5. Physical Intimacy Outside of Marriage	This is the ability to appreciate each other in a proper way and to show proper affection by touch, look, etc. so as to express friendship.	Handshake; Christian embrace; pat on the back, etc. that is affirmation of beauty; recognition of each other, cultural indications of closeness that is proper.
6. Conflict Intimacy	This is a sharing process in which the two parties share the desire to face and struggle with differences in order to enhance their relationship. Conflicts usually arise over differences or perceived differences or unexpected happenings.	
7. Crisis Intimacy	This is a sharing of the deep experiences in life and the deep experiences involving the hurdles and pain of a relationship as well. Crisis intimacy means we will face pain in a relationship and maintain the relationship; a lack of crisis intimacy means we will give up the relationship in the face of pain.	
8. Physical Intimacy	Physical intimacy means a sharing involving appreciation of the other's physical being. Physical communication such as touch, handshake, embrace, etc. In marriage this would involve shared physical actions all the way up to consummation of physical intimacy—sexual intercourse.	
9. Spiritual Intimacy	This is a sharing of our relationship with God; the well being of our inferiority—our inner life with God. As each person in an intimate relationship grows in individual intimacy with God and shares what is happening with the other then there is also a growth in intimacy between the two.	

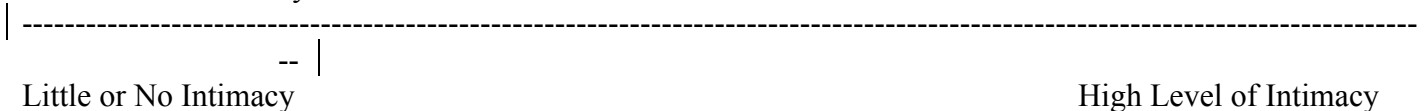
Intimacy Continua

Is there some way we can see progress in any of the categories of intimate relationships. Below is an attempt to describe symptoms that point to intimacy for the various categories.

1. Work Intimacy



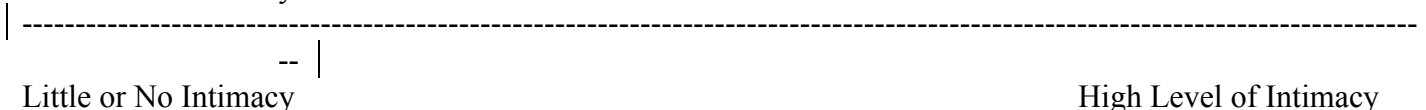
2. Recreational Intimacy



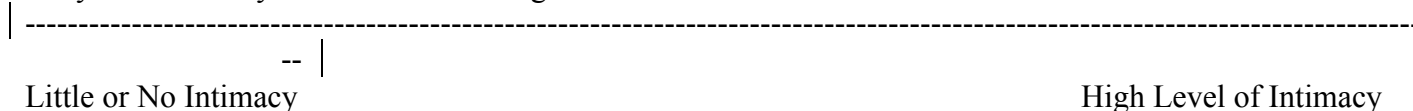
3. Intellectual Intimacy



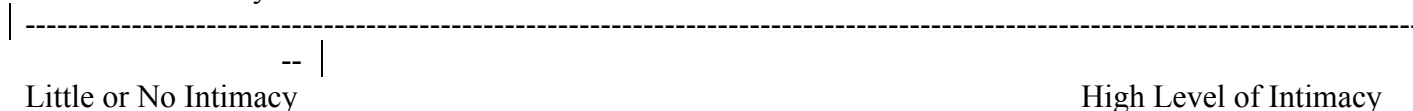
4. Emotional Intimacy



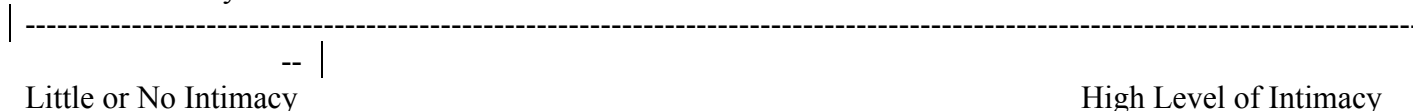
5. Physical Intimacy --Outside of Marriage



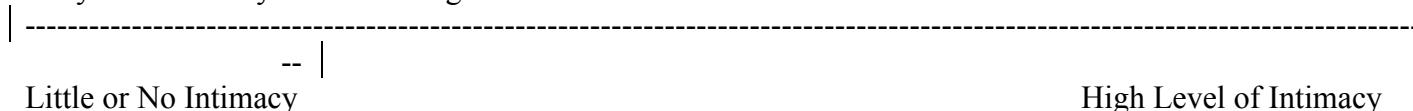
6. Conflict Intimacy



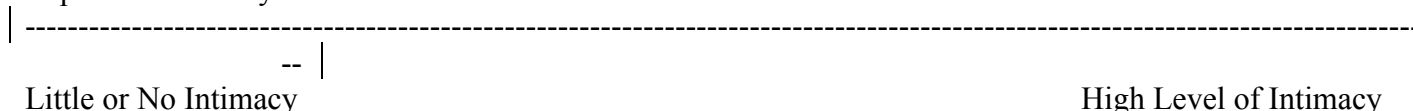
7. Crisis Intimacy



8. Physical Intimacy --In a Marriage



9. Spiritual Intimacy



J. Robert Clinton, INSTE Commencement, June, 2002

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Myths About Spiritual Maturity

Maturity Myth #1: Spiritual growth is automatic once you are born again. A lot of churches believe this myth because they have no organized plan for following up new believers and no comprehensive strategy for developing members to maturity. They assume Christians will automatically grow to maturity if they attend church services.

The truth is that spiritual growth is intentional. It requires a commitment to grow. A person must want to grow, decide to grow, and make an effort to grow.

Maturity Myth #2: Spiritual growth is mystical, and maturity is attainable by only a select few.

The truth is that spiritual growth is very practical. Any believer can grow to maturity if he or she will develop the habits necessary for spiritual growth. Paul often compared training for the Christian life to the way athletes prepare themselves and stay in shape. We need to take the mystery out of spiritual growth by breaking the components down into practical, everyday habits.

Maturity Myth #3: Spiritual maturity can occur instantly if you just find the right key. Many sincere Christians spend their entire lives earnestly searching for an experience, a conference, a revival, a book, a tape, or a single truth that will instantly transform them into a mature believer. Their search is futile.

The truth is that spiritual growth is a gradual process of development. There are no shortcuts to maturity.

Maturity Myth #4: Spiritual maturity is measured by what you know. Many churches evaluate spiritual maturity solely on the basis of how well you can identify Bible characters, interpret Bible passages, quote Bible verses, and explain biblical theology. While knowledge of the Bible is foundational to spiritual maturity, it isn't the total measurement of it.

The truth is that maturity is demonstrated more by behavior than by beliefs. The Christian life isn't just a matter of creeds and convictions; it includes conduct and character.

Maturity Myth #5: Spiritual growth is a personal and private matter. This is an American aberration from the truth. The idolatry of individualism in our culture has influenced the way we think about spiritual growth. So much of the teaching on spiritual formation is self-centered and self-focused, without any reference to our relationship to other Christians. This is completely unbiblical and ignores much of the New Testament.

The truth is that Christians need relationships to grow. We don't grow in isolation from others. We develop in the context of fellowship.

Maturity Myth #6: all you need to help you grow is Bible study. Many evangelical churches have been built on this myth. I call them "classroom churches."

The Truth is that it takes a variety of experiences with God to produce true spiritual maturity. In addition to Bible study, it takes worship, ministry, fellowship, and evangelism experiences. In other words, spiritual growth occurs by participating in all five purposes of the church. Mature Christians do more than study the Christian life—they experience it.

Rick Warren, Saddleback Valley Community Church, Lake Forest, California

UNION LIFE

Union life is critical. Most Christians in church life have never heard of Union Life (or its equivalent names much less understand the concept of it). They do not know of the possibility of victory in this present Christian life. Following is a working definition of Union Life and a list of spiritual formations on Union Life.

Definition: Union Life is a phrase which refers both to the fact of the spiritual reality of a believer joined in spirit with the resurrected Spirit of Christ and the process of that union being lived out so that the person is not dominated by sin in his/her life.

Synonyms: exchanged life, replaced life, deeper life, victorious life, normal Christian life

Throughout Christian history people serious about their Christianity have longed for a more zealous life-style expression of it. Various methodologies have been tried to attain that "more committed" expression. Numerous movements have sprung up. The phrases listed above convey rather esoterically what these various believers have discovered.

Examples:

- ◆ *The Exchanged Life* (see chapter 12) describes Hudson Taylor's inner-knowing of this spirit reality which he discovered through the John 15 passage on the vine and the branches.
- ◆ See the pamphlet, "The Life that Wins," by Charles Trumble, the famous editor of the Sunday School Times in the first third of the 20th century.
- ◆ See *The Normal Christian Life* which is Watchman Nee's teaching on this truth from Romans to his church followers.
- ◆ See *The Green Letters* which is Miles Standford's teaching of his understanding of this spirit reality.

List of Spiritual Formations on Union Life

1. Romans 1:1-17 The life changing litotes, do you believe it? (Romans 1:16 and context and an overview of Union Life in Romans)
2. Romans 3:21-31 The foundations of victory – the court room of eternity- guilt free appropriation
3. Romans 6-8 The victory overview
4. Romans 6:1-14 The historic fact of union life (Romans 6, illustration 1)
5. Romans 6:15-23 The deadly decision (Romans 6, illustration 2)
6. Romans 7:1-6 The new life partner (Romans 7:1-6, illustration 3)
7. Romans 8 Spirit life and adoption (Romans 8, overview)
8. Romans 8 The victory process (Romans 8, Spirit led victory – the Skipper illustration)
9. Romans 8:18-30 Into the image, Christ in me as me (the shaping processes of God)

These spiritual formations will be helpful in at least 3 ways.

1. They are a model for how to teach Union Life (from the left brained approach).
2. They may impact Union Life as one increasingly enters into Union Life for themselves. Some need to be freed of past things in order to live victoriously.
3. They may be of help for those for whom Romans is a core book.

J. R. Clinton, Monday Morning Memo, June 10, 2002

LEADERSHIP

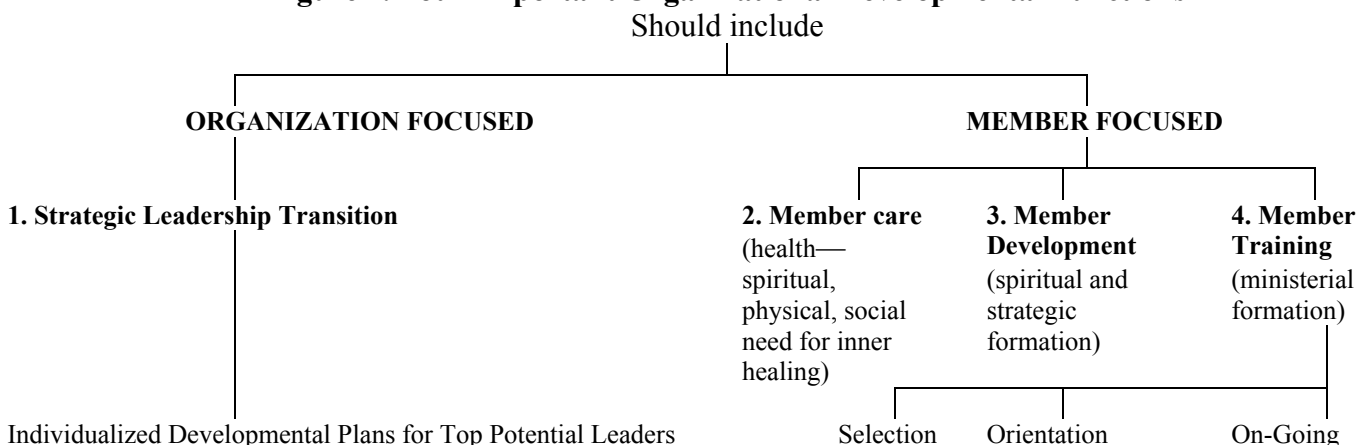
Leadership Transitions

Strategic Leadership Transition

In my opinion, para-church organizations without a developmental bias will not make it in the modern mission movement. Para-church organizations, which do not focus on a full range of developmental functions, will find recruitment of younger emerging leaders tough going. Those, which do not focus on strategic leadership transition, will falter after the present high-level leaders fade off the scene. Historically, organizations have haphazardly focused only on one developmental function for its members. A range of developmental foci are needed. (I am using the notion of development as it concerns developing an organization's people and its leadership, not its finances [one of the major ideas associated with organizational development].)

Figure 1 below suggests a needed range of developmental functions. This article is concerned with the organizationally focused function, *strategic leadership transition*.

Figure 1. Four Important Organizational Developmental Functions



Member Training

Historically para-church organizations have done some member training, especially orientation and ongoing (some workshops and seminars provided on a haphazard basis, usually need provoked). Selection has almost always been done from an organization's need rather than from a candidate's potential developmental needs.

Member Care

Member care has increasingly been a concern of missions during the last quarter of the 20th century and continuing on now. Organizations have provided specialized help for members in need of help with their personal lives and relationships. Sometimes organizations have specially-trained leaders whose major function in the organization deals with member health. But for the most part this has been outsourced. But at least organizations recognize that almost all of its members are in need of personal help.

But two of the range of organizational developmental functions have for the most part been totally missing from organizations—strategic leadership transition member development.

Member Development

Member development has not been a focus until recently with the advent of boomer organizations. Life long developmental tracking is needed if members are to be developed along the philosophy that *ministry flows out of being*. Organizations need to be fully aware of the historical pilgrimage of each member. Decisions for placement need to be made in terms of this developmental information. Most organizations make decisions based on the organization's need. Certainly that is a driving force for an organization, which wants to carry out its organizational mandate. But for an organization, which wants to keep on carrying out its organizational mandate it must make decisions regarding placement of its people from both the organization's need and the people's developmental need. Developmental information including intimacy with God, personality, character, giftedness, destiny, values learned through experience, next needed experience, personal desires and goals and potential for higher level leadership—all need to be part of the selection process. Most organizations do not have life long development case studies on each of its members. But this is the subject of another article.

Strategic Leadership Transition

Allow me to introduce three definitions relating directly to the notion of a developmental organizational.

Definition: An organization which balances concern for *task leadership*, *relational leadership*, and *inspirational leadership* so as to accomplish its basic purpose for being and which at the same time develops its people so that they move toward their inherent leadership potential of being and doing is said to be a developmentally aware organization.

(My study of the history of leadership theory identified three major umbrella like functions which comprise the major functions of all organizational leadership: **task oriented leadership**—the basic influence to accomplish that for which the organization exists; **relationship oriented leadership**—the basic influence which creates the supportive atmosphere and ambiance necessary to workers accomplishing their goals; **inspirational influence**—the motivational aspects of leadership which move workers to build the relational base necessary and to achieve the goals of the organization.)

Definition: Leaders who influence an organization toward developmental awareness lead with a developmental bias.

Such leaders will be concerned with member care, member development and member training. These functions dominantly deal with *relational leadership*. They in themselves, will help foster *inspirational leadership*. But beyond that, leaders who lead with a developmental bias must be concerned with *task leadership*. After all they are responsible for leading the organization to accomplish the purpose for which it exists—*task leadership*. Inspirational leadership is involved here as well.

One of the most inspiring leadership activities that top leadership can do is provide a stable organization and on-going leadership which will continue to lead the organization so that it effectively carries out God's purposes for it. The developmental function that deals with this leadership activity is called *strategic leadership transition*. Sad to say, most organizations do not transition older leaders out and newer leaders in, in such a way to renew, promote and inspire continuity in the organization. What then is *strategic leadership transition*.

Definition: Strategic leadership transition is the process whereby existing high-level leaders *early-select* promising high-level potential leaders and individually tailor make a development plan which allows them to develop these leaders, over time, to full potential.

Such a developmental plan then allows for the developing leader to move into the responsibility and practice of high-level leadership positions, functions, roles, and tasks.

An important function that high-level leaders who are working on strategic leadership transition (and often is missing in an organization) is leadership release.

Definition: Leadership release is the process whereby an existing leader deliberately encourages and allows an emerging leader to accept responsibility for and control of leadership positions, functions, roles, and task.

Suggestions as to how to do it:

Suggestion 1 – Prioritize this function

Make strategic level transitioning a major focus of the organization.

Suggestion 2 – Don't do this in a program

Don't do this programmatically. Keep it individually tailored to each rising leader. If you do a program then you will get all kind of requests from people you would not choose to be a part of this. And politically you will have to include folks who will detract from the focus.

Suggestion 3 – Don't publicize this function

Keep it quiet. Only the high-level leaders and the leaders being raised up ought to be aware of this special effort.

Suggestion 4 – Specific plans and reviews and modification

Each potential high-level leader ought to have an individualized plan with a periodic review and modification of the plan in accordance with development.

Suggestion 5 – Co-ministry

Co-ministry with higher-level leaders is a must. Such a ministry raises the status of an emerging leader toward the status of the respected leader he/she co-ministers with, gives exposure to the organization's people, and provides experiential learning.

Suggestion 6 – Mentoring—a prime means

Mentoring (both from within the organization and without) must be intentional and in terms of developmental needs. A whole range of mentoring is needed. (I have identified 9 major mentoring functions: discipling, spiritual guide, coaching, teaching, contemporary modeling, historical modeling, divine contacts. See *The Mentor Handbook*, Clinton and Clinton, available through Barnabas Publishers.) There should be short term mentoring as well as long term mentoring. *Mentor sponsoring*, or course, is the major thrust of the whole strategic leadership transition function. But *coaching* (of the next needed leadership level skills is a must). *Spiritual direction* is paramount. Contemporary *modeling* is a major way younger leaders learn about leadership. Taking younger leaders with you and allowing them to sit in on major problem solving activities and seeing how decisions are made will speed their development as leaders, immensely. *Sponsoring* is crucial and should be deliberate. This includes linking to important needed resources—including people and finances. Send them to seminars and workshops and conferences and pay for it. Send them to school if that can help, and pay for it.

Suggestion 7 – Goodwin's expectation principle

Recognize that with this whole strategic leadership transition function you are using a powerful social dynamic principle. Bennie Goodwin, in a small booklet on **Leadership** published by Inter-Varsity articulated well.

EMERGING LEADERS TEND TO RISE UP TO THE LEVEL OF GENUINE EXPECTATIONS OF OLDER LEADERS WHOM THEY RESPECT.

So if the high-level leaders are good models and they early-select good potential leaders, they can expect this dynamic to work for them.

Suggestion 8 – Release them when ready

Release these leaders into higher-level leadership when they are ready, whether or not the person they are replacing wants to vacate his/her leadership.

Closure: Organizations vary in terms of needs for the developmental functions. The following table generally shows some need priorities of organizations. The parenthesis mean that the function is not usually being done.

Organizations and Priorities

Founded	Priority of Need—Development Function
Before 1950	1. (Member Development), 2. Member Training, 3. (Strategic Leadership Transition), 4. (Member Care)??
After 1950 but before 1980	1. (Strategic Leadership Transition), 2. (Member Development), 3. Member Training, 4. Member Care
After 1980	1. Member Care, 2. (Strategic Leadership Transition), 3. (Member Development)?!, 4. Member Training

While the priorities in the table are general (are what ought to be, in my opinion), it should be recognized that few para-church organizations are doing member development. And fewer still are doing strategic leadership transition. For leaders who are concerned with on-going effectiveness of the organizations, this must change.

J. Robert Clinton

MINISTRY

Effective Ministry _____

What is "Effective" Ministry?

In our culture is is easy to get confused about what effective ministry looks like at the grassroots level. Our interviews with pastors and laity confirm that there is a tremendous degree of confusion about the practical meaning of effective ministry. For instance, we know that many Christians believe that each of the following is an indisputable mark of an effective church:

- having a sanctuary filled with 1,000 (or more) people at the weekend service;
- raising a million dollars a year (or more) for the church's ministry;
- donating a half-million dollars or more annually to global missions;

- adding buildings or constructing a new campus with at least 100,000 square feet of ministry facilities;
- sending church choirs to sing in churches, community events, and on school campuses throughout the nation or overseas;
- broadcasting the church worship services throughout the city, region, or country;
- offering a wide range of Christian education classes and ministry programs;
- having high name awareness in the community at large;
- adding 100 (or more) new members in a year.

Contrary to popular opinion, these scenarios do not necessarily reflect a church that is truly effective. If effective relates to personal commitments and activities through which people become more Christlike, the situations just described do not automatically signal either corporate or personal spiritual health.

Attendance figures, square footage, staff size, annual operating budget, and the like are simplistic, sometimes misleading measures that overlook the most important aspect of any ministry—the hearts of people. There are many churches that offer a smorgasbord of ministry events and meetings but in which the participants are simply going through the motions.

George Barna, *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches*,
1999, Regal Books, Ventura, California

Characteristics of Healthy Churches

Ten Characteristics of a Healthy Church

Extensive research, more than 100 church visits, in-depth Bible study, concerted prayer, and dialogue with hundreds of church leaders has led Vision New England to the exciting discovery of the 10 characteristics of a healthy church. A healthy church is prayerful in all of the following aspects of church life and ministry, is reliant on God's power and the authority of His Word, and values:

1. **God's empowering presence.** The healthy church actively seeks the Holy Spirit's direction and empowerment for its daily life and ministry.
2. **God-exalting worship.** The healthy church gathers regularly as the local expression of the body of Christ to worship God in ways that engage the heart, mind, soul, and strength of the people.
3. **Spiritual disciplines.** The healthy church provides training, models, and resources for members of all ages to develop their daily spiritual disciplines.
4. **Learning and growing in community.** The healthy church encourages believers to grow in their walk with God and with one another in the context of a safe, affirming environment.
5. **A commitment to loving and caring relationships.** The healthy church is intentional in its efforts to build loving, caring relationships within families, between members, and within the community.
6. **Servant-leadership development.** The healthy church identifies and develops individuals whom God has called and given the gift of leadership and challenges them to be servant leaders.
7. **An outward focus.** The healthy church places high priority on communicating the truth of Jesus and demonstrating the love of Jesus to those outside the faith.
8. **Wise administration and accountability.** The healthy church utilizes appropriate facilities, equipment, and systems to provide maximum support for the growth and development of its ministries.
9. **Networking with the body of Christ.** The healthy church reaches out to others in the body of Christ for collaboration, resource sharing, learning opportunities, and united celebrations of worship.
10. **Stewardship and generosity.** The healthy church teaches its members they are stewards of their God-given resources and challenges them to be sacrificially generous in sharing with others.

Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church Workbook*.

Connecting with Newcomers

Helping Newcomers Connect, Grow, and Stay

[For his Doctor of Ministry dissertation, David Durey worked with 15 Portland, Oregon area churches that have a solid track record of successfully assimilated new converts. His research included speaking with 45 new Christians, senior and associate pastors (one per church). The churches varied from denominational and nondenominational, charismatic and noncharismatic, long established and relatively young. Following are the results of his research.]

QUESTION: <i>What attracted unchurched people to the Church?</i>	Number of Responses	QUESTION: <i>How does the Church help Christians mature and grow?</i>	Number of Responses
Saturday Night Service Option	1	Counseling Department	1
Prayers of Family	1	Recovery Groups	1
Preaching	2	Retreats	1
Friendliness of Church	2	Shot-gun Approach	2
Advertising/Media	5	Financial Stewardship	2
Spiritually Seeking	6	Christian Service	2
Big Events/Productions	7	Deliverance Course	3
Concern for Children	8	Church Seminary	3
Visibility/Proximity	9	1-1 Discipleship/Mentoring	4
Personal Invitations	32	Christian Basics Class	4
		Leadership Training	5
		Preaching/Corporate Worship	5
		Adult Education/Electives	8
		Formation Path	9
		Small Groups	11

QUESTION: <i>How have unchurched people formed significant friendships?</i>	Number of Responses	QUESTION: <i>Why do the unchurched stay?</i>	Number of Responses
Dinner/Believer's Service	2	Marriage Help	2
Family or Friends	3	Need-meeting Ministries	2
Choir	3	Identify with the Culture	2
Worship Services	4	Visitor Follow-Up	3
Pastors	4	Felt Safe	4
Retreats	4	Involvement Opportunities	5
Membership Classes	6	Respect for Pastor	5
1-1 Discipleship	6	Spiritual Growth	5
Adult Bible Classes	8	Children/Youth Ministries	6
New Believer Classes	9	Bible Emphasis	7
Volunteer Involvement	10	Atmosphere of Excitement	8
Need-Meeting Ministries	13	Small Group Involvement	8
Small Group Involvement	31	Worship/Music	10
		New Relationships	13
		Preaching	14
		Friendliness/Caring	24

QUESTION: <i>What are the characteristics of a fully assimilated person?</i>			
	Number of Churches		Number of Churches
Completed Membership Class	1	On Path to Personal Healing	1
Building a Strong Family	2	Filled with the Spirit	2
A Discippler	2	Committed to Church's Vision	4
Equipped	4	Committed to Evangelism	5
Committed to Fellowship	6	Saved	6
Water Baptized	6	Fully Devoted Follower of Christ	9
Small Group Attendance	11	Worship Attendance	11
Financial Stewardship	11	Personal Ministry	14

Throughout the research, analysis, reflection, and writing, a number of practical applications continued to surface. Two relate to attraction and outreach while the other two focus on assimilation.

1. Encourage Personal Invitations. Churches need to provide opportunities and encouragement for members to extend personal invitations. According to Lutheran historian Martin Marty, one concept defines the difference between churches that grow and those that do not: Are they inviting others to join them?

Church leaders must instill this as a value in their people. Leaders cannot rely on visibility of their church facilities or great preaching as their primary means of attraction. Churches grow when those who attend invite friends, relatives, and acquaintances who are not connected with a church. Wise leaders create events, ministries, and activities about which their members feel excited and to which they want to invite their unchurched friends. Worship services in "inviting" congregations are also high quality and seeker friendly so members know they can be enthusiastic in encouraging friends to attend.

One congregation in the study provides a particularly good example of an inviting church. They offer a lot of bridge-in events throughout the year, such as drama presentations, a mother-daughter tea, and a public-garden tour. Also, "every weekend service we present the gospel," states one of the pastors of that congregation. "So, we encourage people to bring their friends. We try to work primarily through networks of relationship... They know that it is a safe place to bring their unchurched friends."

George Barna's *User Friendly Churches* suggests that in successful churches, members realize that inviting people to church is just part of their responsibility. They are also expected to accompany their guests to the church activity and then provide the follow-up.

2. Equip Members for Personal Evangelism and Follow-up. Many of the churches studied equip members and lay leaders alike with tools they can use to share the gospel on a person-to-person basis. One of the pastors I studied regularly concludes his sermons with an explanation of how to become a Christian. Yet that's still no substitute for one-on-one discussions, he says. "I've found that a lot of people don't get it until someone sits down with them personally and says, 'here's what the Bible says about how you can know for sure that you are going to heaven, how you can be forgiven, and how to be saved,' " he concludes.

One church uses an "altar call" for inviting people to make a public commitment to Jesus Christ. It then has altar workers available to pray with people who respond to the invitation to accept Christ. Each altar worker who prays with the new converts continues one-on-one follow-up with them for at least three weeks or until they get connected in a cell group. The goal is that within three weeks, new converts will cover three simple booklets with the discipler and begin attending a cell group.

3. Emphasize a Small-Group Formation Path. Rick Warren states that "believers grow faster when you provide a track to grow on" (from *The Purpose Driven Church*). He also acknowledges that Christian need relationships in order to grow and that believers develop best in the context of friendship.

Churches could easily combine the intentionality of a spiritual formation path with the relational support and accountability provided by small groups. At one of the churches studied, new Christians are invited to a commitment level called the "Follow Me" stage. It involves working on their growth process in a small group for up to a year and a half. As they continue to grow, they move into the "Be with Me" stage where they begin to take on ministry leadership responsibilities. Even at this stage, they participate in an ongoing accountability group that helps them continue to grow.

4. Update Your Membership Class. Finally, churches should provide a membership class that will both spell out the expectations of a fully assimilated member and help build new relationships. The research in this study indicated that these churches had essentially the same expectations of new members as they did for those they considered to be fully assimilated in the church. They help newcomers evaluate if they want to continue to associate with the church, and they project what newcomers can anticipate for their future involvement within the church.

LEADER'S READING RESOURCES

Che Ahn (editor), *Hosting the Holy Spirit*, 2000, Renew

Che Ahn, pastor of Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena, California, has collected several essays on the "hosting of the Holy Spirit" by leaders in the renewal movement that is impacting many in the western church culture. Ahn makes the distinction between periodic, short-term "visitations" and powerful, longer-term "habitations" of the Holy Spirit. Through essays by renewal leaders such as John Arnott, (Toronto Blessing), Lou Engle (The Call), Frank Damazio (City Church), John Kilpatrick (Brownsville), Tommy Tenny (*God Chasers*), Cindy Jacobs (Generals of Intercession), and others; Ahn attempts to give "insights into how we might live a life that pleases Him and will further cause Him to dwell wonderfully among us, transforming hearts and lives until the Lord's return."

Don Flinto, *Your People Shall be My People*, 2001, Regal

Don Flinto, former pastor of Belmont Church in Nashville, Tennessee and currently a pastor to pastors, describes the role of Israel in God's plan of salvation throughout history and for today. He describes how current events in light of Biblical prophecy point to a "spiritual awakening" in Israel and a "final exodus" in which Jew and Gentile will cooperate as "one new man" in the completion of the Great Commission. Flinto believes that "as the Church understands the prophetic times in which we live, we will become better partners with God in hastening the fulfillment [of the Great Commission]."

E. Glenn Wagner, *Escape From Church, Inc.*, 1999, Zondervan

E. Glenn Wagner (not C. Peter Wagner), former VP of Promise Keepers and pastor of Calvary Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, challenges church leaders to evaluate Biblically the values of the "corporate" model of the church and return to the "pastor-shepherd" model. He describes how the "corporate" model has led to undermine the Biblical potential of the church in our culture and how pastors have turned from "shepherds" to CEO's. Wagner challenges us to return to the Biblical model of shepherding where the primary responsibility of church leaders is "caring" for the sheep. Wagner says that "we don't need to look to sociology or psychology or managerial experts to tell us how to make the church "work." We need only to follow what God already has told us in his Word: Shepherd the flock of God!"