
Leadership Development in Church...What's Working Now?

We hear this question from pastors all the time...

How do we develop more leaders?

It's an important question. Because the health and growth of a church is often tied to the health and growth of leaders.

If your leaders are giving generously, the people in the church often follow. If your leaders are making disciples, the people in the church will be encouraged to do the same. If your leaders are intentionally getting better and developing skills, then your church is more likely to grow.

We asked pastors three crucial questions about their strategy to develop leaders, and their answers might surprise you.

Question #1: "What is your strategy for developing leaders in your church?"

We learned that 67% of pastors said their church really didn't have an intentional strategy to develop leaders.

But here's what is interesting: They didn't say it was unimportant. They didn't say they didn't care. They didn't say it wasn't a priority.

But 2 out of 3 pastors said they didn't have any type of intentional strategy to do leadership development with their staff, elders, deacons or key leaders.

You and I both know that a goal without a strategy to reach that goal isn't likely to be reached.

So we asked a second question...

Question #2: "What tools do you currently use to develop leaders?"

53% of pastors said they regularly read books to help their leaders get better.

Books can be a great tool. We love this idea and even have a [recommended list](#). The [Pastor's Book Club](#) might be a good next step as well. Books are great sources for leadership material.

50% of pastors also said they personally attend conferences and events and try to take people with them.

That's gotten a little harder since the challenges 2020 brought us, and expenses are always a challenge when it comes to travel and in-person training.

While Books and conferences are great leadership development tools, and they can be a piece of a leadership development strategy in your church, I would argue they aren't enough.

Not everyone learns best through reading books and cost/logistics might keep you from taking all of your leaders to the best conferences and events.

Question #3: "If you don't have a leadership development strategy, what holds you back?"

This was an open-ended question and pastors responded honestly. In looking through all of the responses, we can summarize the responses in just one word.

Time.

The biggest hindrance to leadership development was time. Again, pastors didn't tell us leadership development was unimportant. A lack of concern wasn't the challenge.

It was simply a matter of prioritization.

We completely understand.

Ministry takes a lot of time.

There are sermons to write, meetings to attend, events to organize, and people to help. Leadership development is something you're planning to get to...as soon as things calm down.

You know it's important. You know it's one of the keys to future success.

But finding the time and energy to do this right now, when there's a slew of other opportunities right in front of you, is difficult.

Leadership Development is a top priority, but it rarely happens. To actually develop the leaders God has assigned to your church, you need two things:

1. Cadence
2. Content

Recently, we hosted a workshop called LeaderPulse. We unpacked a few principles and big ideas, but then we helped about 5,000 pastors design their leadership development plan for the next year.

The idea was to decide what to do and when to do it.

By the end of the event, every plan was decided and documented.

[Get the LeaderPulse Workshop replay here.](#)