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# What do you do when you don't have enough leaders?

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Most churches need more leaders.

And most churches say they have tried everything — from preaching to asking to begging, not to mention trying all the ideas from the last online summit you attended.

If nothing seems to be working, this is for you.

(Fair warning though...you're not going to like all the suggestions.)

But here are four things you can do when you don't have enough leaders.

## **#1 – Cut back on what you're doing.**

I warned you that you might not like all of the suggestions. But hear me out... Most churches are simply trying to do *too many* things.

And one of the greatest consequences is that volunteers are spread too thin, dispersed across a myriad of ministries that are no longer effective.

If you can't find more people, perhaps you need to place people where they can do the most good. That means stopping some things, maybe temporarily, and maybe permanently.

If you were to join Church Fuel, one of the exercises we would take you through is identifying your **Keystone Ministries**.

These are the handful of ministries that are the most important — the ones that need the most announcement time, the biggest budget, and the most volunteers. They are the most important in your church, and if they were to go away, your entire church would suffer or be fundamentally changed.

It's hard to identify these, but it's harder to orient around them. But it's something you *must* do.

There are volunteers in your church serving faithfully in areas that used to matter but are no longer on strategy. A wise leader tasked with being a good steward recognizes this and moves people to where they can make the biggest impact.

These are always hard conversations, and you must operate with care. But the **key to growth in your church might not be something you start but something you stop**.

Moving great volunteers into the right place is one of the reasons why.

[Here's an article about keystone ministries](#) — with some practical advice on how to identify them.

## **#2 – Invite people personally.**

You can't recruit leaders from the stage.

You can recruit volunteers that way, but if we're talking about leaders, you're going to have to have **personal conversations**.

This distinction is so important in church and ministry because there's a giant difference between a volunteer and a leader.

Think about the sermons, volunteer fairs, interest cards, sign-up tables, and other tactics you've used to recruit volunteers. They may play a small part in your leadership development strategy, but this is not how you're going to release more leaders into your church.

You need a pipeline, not a presentation.

You need a relationship, not a resource.

If you want more leaders, it's going to take a personal touch. From you, your staff, or other key influencers in your church.

If you're looking around your church and thinking to yourself, "I've already asked all the people I know," pay attention to the next two ideas.

### ***#3 – Go where leaders gather.***

I remember a time when I was pastoring a church and had started to give into "woe is me" thinking. I arrogantly thought I didn't have enough high-capacity people around me and that's what was holding us back.

A friend reminded me that leaders attract leaders, and that if we didn't have a leadership culture, I needed to look in the mirror. I needed to be a better leader, and I needed to be around better leaders.

If you're looking around your church and don't see leaders, first look in the mirror. Next, look outside your church.

Are there civic groups you could join? Are there local non-profits looking for board members? Are there clubs, breakfasts, associations, or programs?

Maybe you could join your city's Chamber of Commerce. Many county governments even have leadership programs that are open to business and community leaders. What a great place to meet local leaders!

When you broaden your perspective, great things will happen.

#### ***#4 - Evaluate how you spend your time.***

I know there is a lot on your plate.

Seriously, the job description for a pastor is ridiculous.

Quite frankly, the job description for today's pastor is filled with too many tasks and doesn't give enough time for developing and discipling people. When you're so busy doing all the things, you don't have time for people.

That's a deadly combo, a recipe for burnout, and a sure-fire way to never have enough leaders in your church.

It comes down to tasks vs. people.

How much of your time do you spend doing tasks?

And how much of your time do you spend developing people?

If you're like most, things certainly skew in the task direction. But what would happen if you reversed the ratio?

Creating a culture of leadership will require you to break some of the typical patterns even if some important tasks go undone.

Some of the things on your plate just can't stay if you're serious about finding, developing, and discipling more leaders.

If that doesn't sound realistic, maybe you could take a baby step. Are there some tasks that you could do with other people?

- Could you invite a potential leader to a leadership team meeting and get feedback?
- Could you invite a business owner to the finance team to share perspective?
- Could you take a younger leader with you on a hospital visit?
- Could you invite a few potential leaders on the mission trip?
- Could you gather a few people on a Tuesday night to help with sermon research or illustrations?

As you read this list, maybe you realized that none of these would provide a quick fix to your current predicament.

That's because there isn't a quick fix to leadership development. Just like you can't make instant disciples, you can't develop instant leaders. There's no microwave or Instant Pot here.

But you can start taking action today, and those actions could become the catalyst for a new culture of leadership in your church.

Remember, leaders attract leaders.