



Learning Community

Seventeen

Getting Results

20-30
minutes

Personal Check-in:

Facilitator Instructions: Give everyone a few minutes to find two short passages that relate to the subject of execution and follow-through in the Christian life. Then take turns responding to the following questions:

Sharing Questions:

1. In what ways does this passage challenge and inspire you?
2. What is one idea you have been exposed to recently (in the last 12 months) that has helped you improve your own follow-through and execution?
3. What is one way that you would like to grow as a leader in the coming months regarding your managing and leading skills? How can we pray for you regarding this?



15-30
minutes

Homework Debrief:

Instructions: Below is a list of the homework assignments from the last meeting. Ask each pastor to update the group on how they responded to each of the items. After everyone has checked in regarding the homework, take some time to talk about lessons that are being learned so far. Capture the discussion on a whiteboard or a flipchart.

1. Come prepared with a list of SMART goals that you can present to the group. Develop a list of goals that you would like to work toward over the next twelve to eighteen months. Shoot to have at least ten goals that encompass a number of ministry areas including outreach.
2. For next time read *Good To Great* by Jim Collins and respond to the Book Review Questions.



30-45
minutes

Book Review Debrief:

***Good To Great* by Jim Collins**

1. Which of the Level 5 Leadership qualities do you feel are most important for a pastor to embrace and why? Which ones do you personally feel you need to work on developing the most? What are 5 practical steps you can take for each of these leadership skills you want to improve in?
2. According to Collins, Level 5 leaders look out the window to attribute success to factors other than themselves. When things go poorly, however, they look in the mirror and blame themselves, taking full responsibility. As pastors, we are often guilt ridden and find ourselves the easy person to blame for problems. What are your thoughts on how we can manage our responsibility as a leader and at the same time avoiding the guilt trap? Going a step further, how can we grow personally in the ability to understand the underlying problems which may be frustrating the church as it seeks to grow?
3. In your congregation how does Collins ideas regarding getting the “who” question settled before the “what” question is addressed, make an impact on what you will do in the future? If you are the solo full time staff person, does it make a difference “who” is on your team? Why or why not? If people are in the wrong seat on the bus, what should you do?
4. How can you as a pastor who is the chief comforter of the saved, help the saved confront the brutal facts that we are not being effective in reaching the lost in a way that brings hope and real change? What are some practical steps to communicating our reality in a way to motivate the saved to action? Do you think “The facts are better than dreams”? How do you keep a balance between the two?



5. What is the Hedgehog Concept? How does it apply to your congregation? What do your people care deeply about? What can they be the best in the world at? What would you substitute for the “economic” driver? Why? What is your church's hedgehog concept? Work with 5 key leaders at your church before the next LC to come up with your hedgehog concept. Keep good notes on the process and share the ideas with your LC.

6. How are you leading your congregation to turn the flywheel of change? How are you focusing on process as well as results? How do you find the balance between getting the church off dead center and building momentum and keeping a focus on process development? Has the TCN coaching process helped you with this balance? How can the process be improved?

7. What is a BHAG? Does your congregation have one or more? Does the culture of the church body encourage BHAG's that are never reached and soon forgotten? How can your congregation create one that is set with understanding that captures the imagination and will not kill the church? What are some BHAG's in your past that were bad ones and what are some good ones?

8. Out of all the ideas in this book, choose 2 that you are going to implement. Share with your partner how these ideas will change your schedule and your priorities in the use of time and other key resources. For what can your partner hold you accountable to do before your next LC meeting regarding these two ideas?



45-60
minutes

Case Study Interaction:

Instructions: If a pastor is lined up for this meeting, give him 10-15 minutes to talk about his church. With the remaining time, ask the group to give feedback on the following questions and to spend time interacting with the pastor about the following:

- 1. Please share the prescriptions you received from the Weekend Consultation.**

- 2. What progress have you made toward implementing the prescriptions?**

- 3. What are the most significant challenges you are facing in implementing the prescriptions?**

- 4. Have you done your time study? What did you learn about your use of time? What are you doing to make changes in your use of time? How are you getting these changes rooted in your life for the long term?**

- 5. What leadership skills are you focused on developing? Share your sense of progress and your challenges.**

- 6. Have you built new bridges into the community? If not, why not? If so, how? What are the results so far? How can you improve your vision casting for reaching the community?**

- 7. What are you doing each week to create a sense of urgency? Are you seeing an increase in Sunday worship attendance?**

- 8. What are your plans for the next three months?**



20-30
minutes

Learning Activity: You and the 4 Quadrants

Facilitator Instructions: Transition the group to the article below entitled “You and the 4 Quadrants” then have everyone individually work through the Four Quadrants of the Execution Model as it relates to his church. After everyone has had time to read and work through the Quadrants, ask people to respond and share his thoughts in pairs or triads.

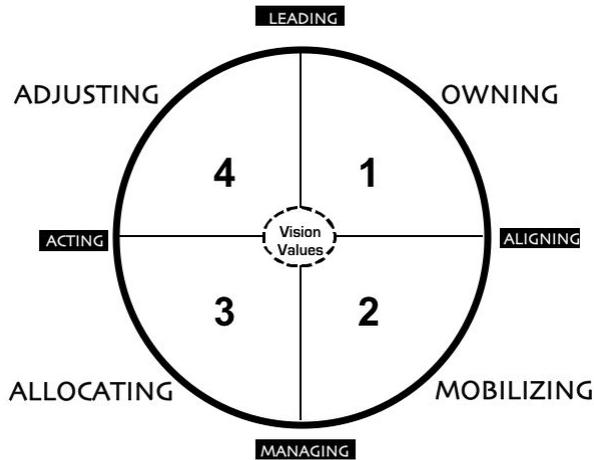
You and the 4 Quadrants

I watched and studied, and I saw that leaders placed too much emphasis on what some call high-level strategy, on intellectualizing and philosophizing, and not enough on implementation. People would agree on a project or initiative, and then nothing would come of it...Here is the fundamental problem: people think of execution as the tactical side of business, something leaders delegate while they focus on the perceived “bigger” issues. This idea is completely wrong. Execution is not just tactics-it is a discipline and a system. (from Execution by Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan, 6-7)

Execution. It is a word that sounds a little odd when applied to the ministry of the local church. Let’s face it, since the local church is a volunteer organization, execution is spotty at best and down-right non-existent in some settings. Bossidy and Charan’s thought-provoking work on this subject places sole responsibility for follow-through and implementation at the feet of an organization’s leaders. If we want better execution in our churches, we need to look in the mirror first and foremost.

Church leaders need a workable framework for understanding how to create a culture where execution is the norm rather than the exception. It will take time for follow-through to build and for the completion of tasks to gather momentum. It is worth the effort even though it feels like an illusive goal. Just when you think you’ve got the “follow-through blues” licked, another problem emerges somewhere else in the church.

Leading and managing a local church can be exceptionally frustrating at times! That being said, if you can get the execution muscles in your congregation strengthened over the next twelve to twenty-four months, just think of the lives that will be touched because your people “cared enough to follow-through”. With transformed lives as our ultimate goal in this discussion, let’s take a look at the four quadrants of execution.



Quadrant 1:

What is one thing that I'm doing well in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that I would need to change related to this Quadrant?

What is missing from how I am executing in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that is confusing to me about this Quadrant?

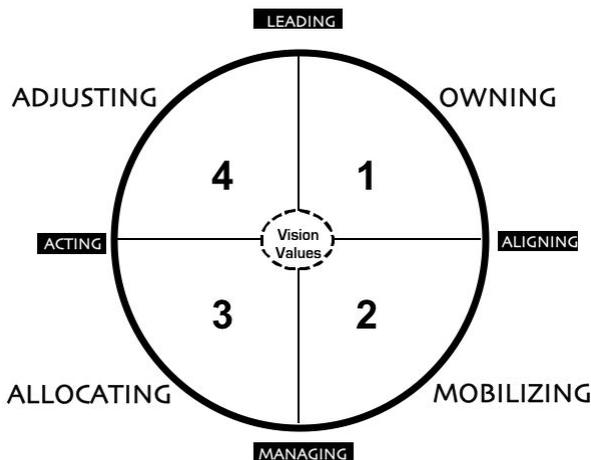
Quadrant 2:

What is one thing that I'm doing well in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that I would need to change related to this Quadrant?

What is missing from how I am executing in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that is confusing to me about this Quadrant?



Quadrant 3:

What is one thing that I'm doing well in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that I would need to change related to this Quadrant?

What is missing from how I am executing in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that is confusing to me about this Quadrant?

Quadrant 4:

What is one thing that I'm doing well in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that I would need to change related to this Quadrant?

What is missing from how I am executing in this Quadrant?

What is one thing that is confusing to me about this Quadrant?



45-60
minutes

Learning Activity: Getting Things Done

Facilitator Instructions: Transition the group to the article below. Ask everyone to read slowly and to highlight key ideas. After everyone has read, ask people to respond to the reading in pairs then summarize with the entire group.

Practices of Effective Executives

Peter Drucker, the acknowledged dean of management, has long argued that effective managers do not fit any one type of leadership style, or personality, or personal strengths and weaknesses. Instead, he says, they cultivate eight specific practices that insure their effectiveness. In Harvard Business Review, June 2004, he details these practices in an article entitled, "What Makes an Effective Executive."

- They ask, "What needs to be done?"
- They ask, "What is right for the enterprise?"
- They develop action plans.
- They take responsibility for decisions.
- They take responsibility for communicating.
- They are focused on opportunities rather than problems.
- They run productive meetings.
- They think and say "we" rather than "I."

The first two of these, Drucker contends, gives the leader the knowledge they need. The next four helps them convert this knowledge into action. The last two ensure that the whole organization takes responsibility and is accountable for results.

(1) "What needs to be done?"

There is a big difference between this question and "What do I want to do?" The pursuit of the second question can render a leader ineffective if it deters them from tackling the issue that must be dealt with for the organization to succeed. Truman, for instance, assumed the presidency with dreams of completing the domestic and social reforms of Roosevelt's New Deal that had been sidetracked by World War II. However, he quickly and correctly determined that foreign policy had to be his dominant concern. His post-war leadership not only contained the spread of Communism, but through the Marshall Plan, also spurred global economic growth.



Many leaders, particularly those in ministry, have leadership agendas informed by their vision and values of what they want to accomplish. This is entirely appropriate. The dilemma is that they often pursue these goals without paying attention to the “what needs to be done” issues. As a result, their leadership agenda often gets derailed, not because it isn’t right, but because their failure to give attention to more critical issues cost them their leadership line of credit. This often happens when new pastors move into congregations and immediately set out to accomplish the vision they unpack with them without paying attention to the needs of the moment. It also happens with incumbent pastors and spiritual leaders when, for whatever reason, they lose touch with the most pressing needs of their ministry in pursuit of something they want to accomplish. For instance, implementing a new ministry targeting community transformation can be sabotaged if the most critical need of the moment is for parishioners to receive excellent pastoral care. Another example may be a pastor’s launching a facilities expansion campaign (because he wants to) when the pressing need might be to become more connected to the community through multiple venues.

Drucker also argues that effective executives decide one or two issues to spend their time on (he really prefers one, but allows that most executives need the change of pace that working on two tasks affords). This means that after figuring out what needs to be done right now, the effective leader determines his priorities and sticks to them. As these tasks are performed, other tasks can move into place. This helps to avoid the splintering of the executive.

I deal with many leaders who suffer from leadership attention deficit. These are well meaning, bright, committed, Jesus-loving people, but ineffective leaders. Every effective leader I know has the commitment to focus on task around priorities. For some, this comes naturally; for others, it is superimposed by the leader on himself as an act of will, often with accountabilities put into place to help him stay on task. Some leaders who cannot reign in their lack of focus should probably ask themselves if they need to relinquish their leadership or restructure their organization to allow someone else to take the organization to the next level.

(2) “What is right for the enterprise?”

This business advice for leaders is designed to help them figure out what is best for the organization, not the stockholders, the employees, or the executives. This is the call to look out for the long-term business capability of the organization, not the short-term interests of a few or just a part of the business constituency.



Pastors and spiritual leaders also need to ask this question. Churches have shareholders, too! Often the long-term mission of the church is sacrificed to the views of a powerful few. The rise of the missional church in North America will force this issue for many church leaders. It will require great courage to make decisions that will position the church for the emerging culture.

A church in the northeast part of our country has been tremendously successful in its first twenty years. The pastor was a student and practitioner of church growth. He ministers among young, urban professionals who like to be a part of winning teams. But he also realizes that what has made the church successful for its first ministry chapter is not going to position it for success in the next twenty years. He is convinced that the accomplishments of his ministry are fairly unimpressive to younger generations. He has a passion to reach them and to be missionally relevant and effective in their lives, so he is courageously leading the church through a reassessment and paradigm shift toward community transformation (he is dealing with the shifts we identify in module 33). He knows how to “do church” and win in the current system; but he knows in his heart it will not be best for the church in the long haul. So he is asking the tough questions.

(3) Develop action plans

The effective executive translates the knowledge and insight of what he must do into action. Before he does this, however, he develops his own course of action, beginning with his own. The action plan needs to include desired results, possible and probable restraints, methods of assessment and correction, and, critically, the implications of how the leader will spend his time.

Each of these components is important. This module is about achieving results. This presupposes that the leader knows what results he and his congregation are after. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, so the leader and the congregation don't know when they are winning, and have no way of knowing how bad they might be losing. Knocking the fuzzies off your thinking in terms of the results you seek is critical to mission success.

An effective leader also knows that he must size up possible resistance to his agenda. This is not negative thinking. This is just smart. And, ahead of time, the leader must determine how that resistance will be met; what is worth going to the mat over, who will be involved at what level of communication to resolve the resistance. Being caught off guard here can derail the best plans.



The leader must also put into place appropriate feedback loops to determine the effectiveness of implementation. Assuming that things are getting done just because people agreed to it or like the idea is a misassumption. Accountabilities must be established and maintained.

Finally, the leader should think through how the new plans are going to affect him. A pastor I am working with who is leading his church to a more missional paradigm is right now considering what responsibilities he will lay down, and what he will need to pick up in the new ministry chapter. He realizes he will need to spend much more time in the community, developing relationships with business, social, and political leaders in the community he wants to impact.

These action plans are not intended to straight-jacket the leader, but to better prepare him to accomplish his aims. Everyone knows the maxim, “battle plans become obsolete when the bullets start flying.” However, it is the preparedness of those who spend the most attention to making battle plans that enables them to wage battle successfully in the chaos of war. Fabulous preparations allow the artist to improvise.

(4) Take responsibility for decisions

Drucker builds a case that a decision has not been made until people know who is going to carry it out, the deadline for carrying it out, the names of the people who will be affected by the decision and therefore have to know about/understand/approve it, and the names of the people who have to be informed of the decision, even if they are not directly affected by it. Many organizational decisions run into trouble because one or more of these bases are left uncovered.

(5) Take responsibility for communicating

This involves sharing plans with and asking input from ministry colleagues, including staff and key lay leaders. Many people in congregations would be more supportive of the ministry efforts of the church if they knew more about them. In an information age, the lack of communication is a chief complaint of people in every organization. This is true in the church as well. The leader who is determined to be effective will pay very close attention to this aspect of his leadership. Redundant communication is necessary. Pulpit, print media, email, Website, leadership meetings, memos, letters. It is practically impossible to over communicate in an era when you are having to fight for peoples’ attention.



What you communicate is important too. If you are after results, then talk about them. Talk about what is necessary to achieve them. Be specific about behaviors that people need to adopt or need to stop in order to achieve the results you are after. Make sure that staff leaders have adequate information for pursuing the objectives. Talk about the implications of not achieving them. Tell people the situation if the congregation does not meet its challenges. Paint a picture of a better world if the congregation does achieve its ministry objectives.

(6) Focus on opportunities rather than problems

Problems have to be dealt with, of course. But problem solving does not produce results. Exploiting opportunities produces results.

Drucker identifies seven situations that can yield opportunities.

- An unexpected success or failure
- A gap between what is and what could be in a process or service
- Innovation in a process or service, whether inside or outside the industry
- Changes in industry structure and market structure
- Demographics
- Changes in mind-set, values, mood, or perception
- New knowledge or a new technology

These seven areas provide huge mining territory for spiritual leaders. They are areas of learning (why did that event take off, or not), who is making spiritual resources available to young people in late afternoons right after school and late Friday night, who is building relationships with elementary schools in town, what new innovations are churches implementing, what windows of opportunity exist to establish new ministry to the community, what new relational database software will allow you to track interactions between the office and church participants.

The most effective leaders staff to opportunities, putting their best talent there. They begin their reports to their boards and constituencies with opportunities, not problems. While they understand that problems can not be ignored, except at the peril of overwhelming opportunity, they constantly scan for emerging possibilities. They build a culture of “what if” rather than “what went wrong.” Their staff meetings don’t obsess on problems. They deal with these, but reserve energy for exploring new opportunities.



(7) Run productive meetings

Ministry involves meetings. The key is to make them work for ministry, not detract time and energy from ministry. One of the most frequent complaints among church staff leaders and lay leaders is that their time is wasted in meetings. This is completely avoidable.

The single biggest contributing factor to meeting productivity is for the meeting convener to think through the meeting ahead of time. This means shaping an agenda to accomplish what needs to happen, not aimlessly wandering into a time block waiting to see what happens (this is the case with many weekly staff meetings in churches). Is the purpose of the meeting to make a decision or to brainstorm? Will multiple people report or just one? Is the meeting even necessary? Can the information (if that's all there is to consider) be disseminated in another way? Is there a published agenda? Do people know how long the meeting will be? Do you assign time parameters to agenda items? These considerations may seem tedious to the executive, but paying attention to them will raise productivity significantly and actually energize meetings. A place to start here might be to canvass people you regularly have meetings with to ask them how the time might be used better for them.

(8) Think and say “We”

The psychology of the leader here hangs out for everyone to see. Too many “I’s” denote an executive who is more concerned with personal career development than organizational success. Followers are motivated by “we” and demotivated by “I” leaders. A good place to start here is to evaluate your communication in the pulpit (are illustrations always about you and your dilemmas/successes or about someone else?), in the newsletter or e-letter, in emails, in personal conversation, in staff meetings. Have someone you trust count the “we’s” and the “I’s” for you.

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Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss how the ideas you have embraced from *Good To Great* connect with this article? What is similar and what is dissimilar? Make a list of the ones that are similar. Assuming that similarities indicate that two great thinkers agree, what will you do with those ideas? Make an action plan with 3 things you will do from the similar list.

2. Drucker says that “The single biggest contributing factor to meeting productivity is for the meeting convener to think through the meeting ahead of time.” Do you do this? If so, give 3 examples of recent meetings when you led in this way. If you do not, think of a meeting that is coming up and make a clear outline of what you will do to prepare. Will you commit to this course of action in the month ahead? Keep a list of all the meetings you lead and your feelings afterward as to the effectiveness of preparing or not preparing.

3. Review this list of 8 action items with one of the pastors in your LC and make a commitment to action steps to put these ideas into practice. Hold each other accountable to fulfilling your commitments.

4. As on of your action steps, gather a group of 3-5 key leaders in your church and have them give you feedback on how you are doing with these 8 actionable practices. Discuss ways you can improve. Share the results in the next LC meeting.



**5
minutes**

Homework and Wrap-up

Facilitator Instructions: Close out the session by highlighting the homework assignment.

Homework Assignment:

1. Come prepared with a list of one-year goals for your congregation. Additionally, write down the group the five most significant insights you have gained from the Learning Communities over the last couple of years.
2. Read the book *Reveal* by Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson and respond to the Book Review Questions.



Book Review Questions:

***Reveal* by Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson**

1. What are you surprised by from the research found in this book?

2. What are you challenged by from the findings in the book?

3. What implications does the research have for your church?

4. Which of the findings from the research do you have questions about?

5. What new ideas from the book would you like to incorporate into your future planning?

6. What are your two favorite quotes from the book?



LC Evaluation:

Date:

Location:

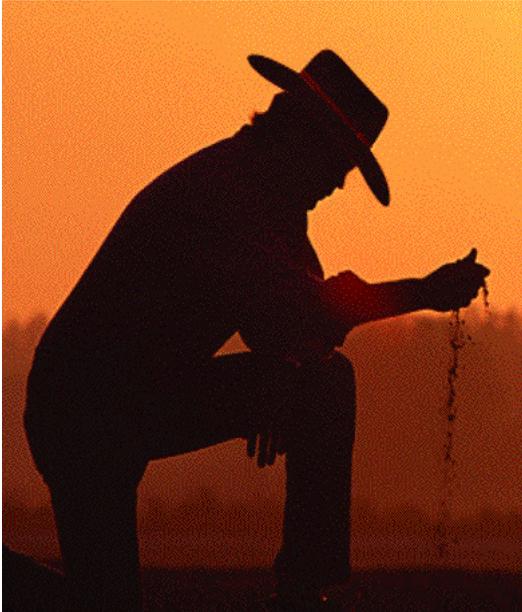
Questions:

1. What did you like most about the homework from the last Learning Community?

2. What did you like least about the homework from the last Learning Community?

3. How could we improve today's Learning Community experience?

4. How can we give you additional support for developing leadership skills in your own life and helping your church turn outward?



Me and the Harvest

1. How committed have I been to praying for people who need Jesus?
2. What have I done in the past month to help someone move closer to Christ?
3. What changes do I need to make in the next month to find time to be more outreach focused?
4. How did I keep the fire burning for outreach in our church this past month?
5. What have I learned about the community needs in this past month that our church could be poised to meet?
6. What's the most important outreach oriented action step I can take in this next month?