



Building an
Effective
Ministry Strategy

GLOBAL NETWORK
OF EVANGELISTS

4

PRACTICES
OF
STRATEGIC
MINISTRY
LEADERS

Practical guidance for emerging evangelists to create and build an effective strategy to accomplish goals and finish the mission Christ has given.

01 Pause and Pray

Effective leadership starts with a pause. Take time to reflect, gain clarity, and make informed decisions to align overall purpose and calling.

This focal area seeks to equip ministry leaders to cultivate emotional well-being, self-awareness, and authenticity in leadership, integrating biblical principles and key leadership insights for personal growth and greater ministry effectiveness.

02 Design and Discern

Discerning God's call and specific mission is the key to effective leadership, fostering trust, collaboration, and a great ministry strategy.

With a practical focus on strategic planning, this section highlights the significance of discerning God's call and aligning strategic planning with biblical principles. He will equip ministry leaders to envision desired outcomes and create greater impact for Christ and His kingdom.

03 Surrender to Serve

The pace of ministry can often be unsustainable. This section emphasizes the importance of slowing down, reflecting, and making intentional adjustments in pace of life and leadership to create space for God's will and presence to shape ministry strategies.

04 Thrive Tomorrow

Using examples of three kinds of trees — Bonsai, Banyan, and the Pando Forest in Utah — this section focuses on purpose and legacy of leadership. Using the 'RESCUE' framework, it will enhance self-leadership and improve leadership effectiveness.

01

PAUSE
AND
PRAY

WHERE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ALL THIS?

One usually does not associate the word 'pause' with the term, *strategic planning*. In fact, it seems the antithesis of planning. Yet for the Christian leader, the planning process is led by the Holy Spirit with the acknowledgment that God desires to use holy vessels for His purposes. Planning and prayer go together, and planning and dreaming go together. Planning is essential to building an effective ministry. Creating time for a pause in the process of strategy is essential and honors the Lord.

CLARIFY YOUR CALL

Cultivating an awareness of self and practicing a continual denial of self is part of the ministry journey. Regardless of the context, ministry demands resilience, continuous dedication, and a willingness to learn and grow alongside the church or organization we lead. Christian leaders must increasingly clarify calling, purpose, and gifting to make meaningful impact in sustainable ways. Before achieving effectiveness, it is crucial to engage in self-reflection and self-denial. Lamentations 3:40 urges us to look inward and evaluate our actions, with the intention of returning to a close relationship with the Lord; *"let us examine our ways and test them and let us return to the Lord."* Among the key responsibilities of a proficient Christian leader are introspection, the affirmation of personal convictions, and a heart that is open to God's leading. In addition to reflecting on our unique calling, this section will lean into exploring our overall health as a leader, what Peter Scazzero in the *Emotionally Healthy Leader* calls our *shadow side*. But first, let's clarify our sense of unique calling and ministry purpose by earnestly exploring the following questions:

- Can you identify particular passages in the Bible God has used to speak to you about His design for your life and the life of your ministry?
- Can you give specific examples of answered prayer in relation to God's direction for your life and the ministry of your church?
- In what ways do other believers affirm God's call and direction in your life and the life of your church or ministry?

- How do you actively seek and discern God's guidance in making personal and ministry decisions? How do you ensure alignment between His calling and the strategies implemented in your ministry?
- What steps do you take to ensure your personal and emotional well-being are nurtured and maintained while leading in ministry?

CONTEMPLATING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING: THREE AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Self-awareness:

Take the time to reflect on your own strengths, weaknesses, triggers, and blind spots. Dig deep and uncover any unresolved emotional issues that may be holding you back. Turn to Psalm 139:23-24 for guidance and invite God to reveal growth areas in your life. Remember, fostering greater self-awareness is a critical element of effective leadership.

2. Authenticity and vulnerability:

Choose to be real and honest in your leadership journey. Embrace authenticity as a daily choice and allow your true self to be seen. In public and in private there should be congruence. Reflect on your ability to be vulnerable, both with yourself and with others. Let 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 inspire you to showcase God's strength through your weaknesses.

3. Boundaries and self-care:

Recognize you can't pour from an empty cup. Prioritize your own well-being and practice self-care without it being disproportionate to serving others. Take seriously the biblical principles of rest and discover ways to recharge and rejuvenate by doing what fills you. Evaluate your boundaries, time management, and self-care practices. Remember that by taking care of yourself, you will be better equipped to serve others effectively (Mark 6:31, Psalm 23:2-3).

SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do you prioritize and invest in your emotional well-being as a ministry leader?
2. Are you aware of any unresolved emotional issues or areas of vulnerability that may be affecting your leadership?
3. What steps can you take to cultivate self-awareness, self-care, and emotional maturity in your role?
4. How do you create a culture of emotional health and authenticity within your ministry, encouraging others to assess their own well-being?
5. In what ways can you model vulnerability and transparency as a leader, creating safe spaces for others to share their struggles and seek healing?

EXPLORING YOUR SHADOW SELF

Christian leaders are called to a life of integrity and authenticity. In *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*, Peter Scazzero speaks of the "shadow side" each person has and the importance of addressing it. The shadow side refers to the hidden or unconscious aspects of personality, emotions, and behaviors that may not be readily acknowledged, accepted, or initially seen.

It represents the parts of ourselves that we may suppress, deny, or project onto others. These can include unresolved wounds, fears, insecurities, unhealed traumas, destructive patterns, and negative tendencies. This often happens beneath the surface, influencing our thoughts, decisions, and interactions with others. By acknowledging and addressing our shadow side, we can bring these aspects into the light, embrace our sense of wholeness as leaders, and embark on a journey of personal growth, leading to ministry growth, albeit not in the areas seen by men.

Elements of our shadow side we may need to address:

- **Pride and humility:** What are our motives and attitudes of service? Are we willing to learn from and serve others without an expected return?
- **Unresolved wounds and forgiveness:** Paul encourages us in Ephesians 4:31-32 to deal with any grudges we may possess and to forgive generously as leaders. Are we harboring a grudge or unforgiveness?
- **Control and trust:** How do we apply the words of Solomon in Proverbs 3:5-6? How does acknowledging God's divine direction work? As leaders, we sometimes tend to micromanage or control every aspect of the plan. What do we need to surrender?
- **Conflict and reconciliation:** Ministry leaders face conflict in many different ways. Strong leaders need to learn to discern the difference between what is non-negotiable and what is simply preference as they work in teams.
- **Balance and priorities:** There is more to life than success in ministry. Ministry *for God* can begin to take place *of God* (idolatry) if we are not intentional. Hard work is good, but the motives are equally important.
- **Fear and courage:** Even the strongest leaders deal with fear and hidden insecurities. Somehow in ministry, we have come to think that boldness and courage have no place for fear. Yet Proverbs 9:10 reminds us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

02

DESIGN
AND
DISCERN

God will not call you *to* what He has not prepared *for you* and prepared *you for*. Discerning the best path is what makes strategic planning essential as a Christian. God's sovereignty underpins every plan we make. *Outcomes-driven Planning* is a model using a reverse theory of change. Each year, our team at the Global Network of Evangelists looks at ways we can plan outcomes to drive our mission; **to identify, affirm, equip, and mobilize evangelists in 150 nations**. Before we dive into the process, here are six principles of our ministry planning:

1. Seek God's guidance through prayer:

Make prayer essential to the planning process. Dedicate time to seek God's wisdom, clarity, and direction. Invite Him to guide every decision and step of the journey. Prayer is not a token, 'God bless our plans', but a real desire for guidance and the presence of God throughout the process.

2. Align with biblical principles:

Ground strategic planning in the teachings and principles of Scripture, not in the latest trends and fads, and certainly not in the approaches from other ministries. Study God's Word to discern His values, mission, and purposes and align your mission with that.

3. Listen to the Holy Spirit:

Cultivate a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Pay attention to the promptings, nudges, and convictions that arise during planning. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide and reveal God's will for the ministry. The Holy Spirit will never lead you to practices that are contrary to the written word of God.

4. Seek Godly counsel:

Seek input and advice from trusted mentors, coaches, leaders, and fellow teammates. Engage in discussions and receive feedback to gain different perspectives and insights. Surround yourself with individuals who possess wisdom and discernment, and who can provide guidance based on experience and spiritual maturity.

5. Lean on your team:

Large or small, there are people God has brought your way. Include them in the process and use them as a sounding board, at the bare minimum, for the plans you have. Broadening perspective is very helpful in building a coalition of understanding.

6. Evaluate with discernment:

Any good strategic plan needs corrections. Be flexible to allow for change without putting the whole plan in jeopardy. Not every open door is an opportunity from God. Evaluate everything through your mission and vision to maintain alignment.

STRATEGY ROAD MAP

By following these steps, you will be able to discern and develop an achievable strategy that will be specific, measurable, and will increase your effectiveness.

1. Define the problem or need:

What issues are we trying to address through our programs and ministry?

2. Identify the specific ministry inputs or resources needed:

What resources do we need for our program/services?

3. Assign the best activities/approach to execute:

What we DO — processes, tools, events, and actions to bring about change/results.

4. Track outputs through measurable results:

What are the direct products of your activities or ministry approach?

5. Delineate specific outcomes your strategy is hoping to see in the short, mid, and long-term:

Expected changes in the population served (what we would see that signals change).

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE MINISTRY STRATEGIC GOALS TEMPLATE

Please scan the QR code to get the template:



This spreadsheet will assist you in developing a specific, measurable, and attainable strategy for your ministry that can be scaled and easily shared. It is ideal to use this resource with your team to get a broader perspective and greater buy-in.

03

SURRENDER
TO SERVE

It is no coincidence that building an enduring ministry strategy is sandwiched between ‘pause’ and ‘surrender’. The principles shared in the first section on ‘pausing’ are much needed and helpful in building a holistic structure. The strategies outlined in the ‘surrender’ section here are helpful in the long haul of executing the strategy. You need to adopt a posture of surrendering to more fully serve God’s Kingdom purpose.

This is always done in the context of teams and community. This means you will be developing people along the way and building a team that will be able to own the shared goals and be committed to executing the shared plan. Everyone knows that behind every good leader is a great team — devoted, diligent, and dogged! As a team there are some principles you can embrace to help on your journey to executing the strategy together for the glory of God.

STRATEGIES OF SURRENDER

1. Do God’s work, God’s way, in God’s time and for God’s glory:

Proverbs 16:19 highlights an important truth: “The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps.” Surrender your plans to God, even when says ‘no’ or ‘not yet’, be assured He knows best.

2. Embrace genuine vulnerability:

If the Apostle Paul could declare God’s power is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9), then each of us should embrace a heart of vulnerability. This is important because we all feel overwhelmed, at times, by what God has called us to. Each of us should realize that our vision, mission, and strategy are bigger than our own ability to execute it. We need God, we need our team, and we need to be transparent about this.

3. Model a redemptive work-life rhythm:

We all know about the dangers of getting into the space where we feel that without our hard work and effort, the ministry will ‘fall apart’. Marriages suffer, families are wrecked, and bad relationships are started because of this faulty thinking. Life is more than the sum of our work and eternity is weighed by a different scale! Psalm 127:2 reminds us that rest/sleep is God’s gift to us: “In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat – for he grants sleep to those he loves.”

4. Foster collaborative decision-making:

An important aspect is giving the vision to those who will be with you on the journey. There is great value in inclusive and collaborative decision-making, seeking input and feedback from team members and other important role players (Proverbs 15:22). The importance of valuing diverse perspectives and fostering a sense of ownership and unity within the ministry (Philippians 2:2-4) cannot be over-emphasized.

5. Embrace a Kingdom mindset:

Surrendering means being open-handed in ministry rather than tight-fisted. While we embrace God’s call to ministry, let’s not be competitive and let us maintain a focus on Kingdom values, principles, and priorities. Let’s champion others who have a similar vision, even if we don’t always agree.

6. Balancing vision with pace:

We often have a greater vision than we have the capacity to achieve. It can become easy to burn others out in the process of fulfilling what God lays before us and we need to ensure we balance a big vision with the perspective of time. How does a healthy balance allow for greater longevity, effectiveness, and well-being in ministry (Proverbs 29:18)?

7. Seeking wisdom from Godly counsel:

Ministry is all about the relationships we foster. People can become God’s greatest gift to us if we develop an understanding that God brings different relationships into our lives for a reason. We need Paul and Timothy relationships, Nathan and David relationships, we all need a Jonathan, Barnabas, and sometimes even a Peter. They enrich our lives and improve our perspective.

RESCUE?

R – Reflect: Take intentional time to reflect on your personal journey, strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth.

E – Equip: Focus on equipping others with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to excel in ministry. Provide practical training, guidance, and best-practices to enhance leadership abilities, pastoral skills, and effective communication.

S – Serve: Lead by example and serve others. The heart of a leader should be one of joyful and selfless service.

C – Connect: There is great blessing in growing meaningful connections and building authentic relationships.

U – Unleash: God wants us to step into our calling with boldness and confidence. What are our unique gifts, talents, and passions for the advancement of God’s Kingdom?

E – Empower: We need to mentor, disciple, and invest in the development of others in our ministry spheres, nurturing growth, and providing opportunities.

one message.
many expressions.



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