

Administration Toolkit



Best Practices for
Effective Ministry Leadership
Serving Together for Christ

A publication of
Membership and Support Services
Temple of Restoration
Church of God in Christ

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Preface

Why administration! Why plan! It is ironic when you consider it. Most of us spend more time on church administration than on any other single task of ministry, and yet it is the one chore that many of us dislike the most. However, most of us will find a review of self-management skills to be helpful. No matter how profoundly we care for the sorrows and joys of others, if we fail in administration and leadership, we will eventually fail in the other areas as well.

Most of us instinctively understand that administration and planning are inextricably bound. The truth is that both planning and administration have many levels. We begin with managing ourselves. We start by understanding the importance of effective administrative leadership. Then we ensure, through study, practice, prayer, and diligence, that whether we are naturally gifted in that area or not, we are more than competent. It means learning to see that the church office is running smoothly, the bulletins are produced flawlessly, and our information storage systems are so efficient that we retrieve information when needed, with lightning speed, every time. It means we ensure that our buildings are clean, well-equipped, and safe. It means that our financial system operates smoothly and efficiently. These are the basics, which, for people with great minds, can seem like a bit of a chore. However, without them in place, and until we have mastered our responsibilities, our people will never trust us enough to allow us to lead in critical areas, such as vision casting and follow-through plans. The Bible admonishes us to do all things decently and in order. Don't let a "that-a-do" attitude dominate anything you do: *If you do it, **do it right**. If you say it, **say it right**. If you write it, **write it right**.*

Without a real drive for excellence in ministry, we will never have the thrill of learning to lead leaders, as they lead followers, in the execution of the vision we are casting. Suddenly, "doing church work" in a "spirit of excellence" isn't drudgery: it is the path to genuinely significant pastoral ministry and to a growing, thriving church.

Effective planning and church administration enhance ministry. This administration toolkit booklet contains leadership nuggets, which will help us create and maintain effective structures in advancing the Kingdom of God through Spirit-led planning and development.

For Excellence in Ministry!

Robert Robinson

Pastor

Part One

Leadership in the Church

How to Get Where you're going?

Are you a leader in a Christian organization that seems to be bogged down by its weight? Are you frustrated by your inability to “get things moving”? Do you have a many-aimed organization that appears to be getting all tangled up in itself? Well, you’re not alone. However, it is time to address some essential matters: setting and working towards clear objectives.

Christian Organizations are different! What’s wrong with bogged-down organizations?

Before we discuss the basic principles, it is essential to examine Christian organizations and their susceptibility to various forms of moral decay. Regardless of the multiple symptoms, the primary issue is typically the lack of clearly defined, highly communicable objectives. The organization may have a grand purpose, but too often that purpose is not stated in terms of what we intend to do to accomplish that purpose. One of the significant signs of this malady is the existence of numerous committees, departments, or boards that are organized around their activities rather than the tasks they are trying to accomplish.

How Do You Get Moving Again? Start with yourself. Do you, as a Christian leader, have a clear picture of what you want to do and be in one year, five years, at the end of your lifetime? You can’t lead other people in defining their goals if you don’t know your own. Now, state your organization’s fundamental purpose, and then outline its key objectives. Next, consider the type of organization and the types of people required to accomplish these tasks. Whenever possible, organize all groupings by task rather than by function. Set dates for when each task and sub-task is to be completed, and plan to disband the task force when it has reached its goals.

But What about Others? People are uneasy with the lack of results, but many dislike change even more. It’s not easy to switch from “this is how we do it here” thinking to “this is what we want to get done.” Here are a few basic steps to establishing organizational goals which will capture the allegiance of your group: bring together key people, bring in other people early in the process, prioritize the many good ideas you’ll get and decide on a few over-arching purposes and some specific goals, analyze what steps, estimate the cost, communicate your goals, and remember you are in a process.

Operational Goals. Every goal should have a purpose. State your reasons first for wanting to do something. Now state the goal. What is it you plan to accomplish? However, note that the primary distinction between a goal and a purpose is that a goal is measurable. Therefore, you need to have a date by which the goal will be accomplished. We also need to describe the steps that will lead us to the goal. But who will be responsible? Who will be accountable for these goals? If nobody owns them, the chances are very high that they will never be accomplished.

What Can We Do to Improve? As a Christian, what should be my philosophy of management? Christian organizations should not be second-best when measured against secular organizations: Excellence, Purpose, Communicated Goals, etc.

Planning – Part One. We have a responsibility to decide what we should be or do, and therefore, we must plan. Planning starts with goals. Planning takes time. Plans communicate our intentions. Steps in a plan are sub-goals. **Planning – Part Two.** Start with the goal and gather ideas. Sort out the steps. Establish dates. Assign personnel. Design an evaluation system. Organize and display your plans. Work on your plan, etc.

It's budget Time Again. Whether it is a ministry or the church at large, there is little joy in the process of determining how much money is available to spend and how much we can afford to pay. What is the budget for? First, a reflection of our goals; second, a forecast of need; third, a measurement of progress toward our goals; fourth, an indicator of success. These four purposes suggest that the budget can be a highly understandable and communicable tool for informing everyone about what's happening and what is planned.

Let's Be Accountable. Nothing happens if someone doesn't consider them accountable. And yet, Christian organizations in general and local churches in particular are often at their weakest when it comes to holding themselves accountable. Why aren't we more responsible? Probably the biggest problem is fear. There can be great pleasure in being held accountable. We assume that, because we are working in a volunteer organization, such as a local church, or because we are doing "the Lord's work," there is no way to demand accountability. Unfortunately, some people do not believe that holding people accountable is "Christian." "People don't do what we expect. They do what we inspect," sounds very totalitarian to them.

Three Kinds of Accountability. There are three kinds of accountability. The first is built into the situation into which we are born. If we expect to be a part of our society, we accept the accountability that that society places upon us. We are expected to perform specific tasks correctly and on schedule. The second kind of accountability is that which we accept when we join an organization, whether as part of our vocation or as a member of our local church. We play different roles at different times, sometimes as leaders and sometimes as followers. However, accountability is always an integral part of the job. The third kind of accountability is that which we voluntarily make to others. We all seem to perform better when we have set goals for ourselves and invite others to share an accountability relationship with us.

We Need a Follow-up. Accepting accountability is not enough. Someone needs to be responsible and accountable for taking the necessary follow-up and monitoring progress. We need to ensure that the agreed-upon goals remain in place. We need to determine whether the instructions provided were adequate and precise. It fosters a sense of responsibility towards one another. How do I follow up? The best way is to set follow-up dates along the way. Build these checkpoints into the initial planning and agree upon them with the people you are working with. Follow up promptly to recover if something has gone awry. There's little point in calling the day before something needs to be done if it takes three days to do it.

Self-Renewal. Rekindle the enthusiasm that marked the early days of your involvement in the ministry: keep goals dynamic, reexamine functions, emphasize form over structure, and consider what others think. Encourage self-renewal at all levels, etc.

Part Two

Leadership Skills

Communicate, or Else... An effective organization requires clear and communicable goals, adequate resources, motivated personnel, and effective communication. Effective communication, not structure, is the cement that holds any organization together. How easy it is to forget that imparting information is not the same as communication. The “receiver” may have heard everything that was said, but communication only occurs when they assign meaning to the content. Build communication around objectives. Build in a feedback system. Establish regular channels for updated information. Recognize different levels of communication. Plan your communication. Be as redundant as possible. Educate people to communicate better. Give it time.

How’s Your Delegation? First, delegation is not assigning tasks to someone for which he is already responsible. Delegation is assigning part of your job to someone else. If you hold an executive position, then your sphere of responsibility greatly exceeds your capacity to perform the entire job yourself. Part of your tasks must be delegated. Consider these steps to delegation: decide what needs to be done, select the best person for the job, make the assignment clear, establish a level of authority, anticipate the problems, build in checkpoints, evaluate and build on results, etc. Remember – you can’t delegate the responsibility of your job. Don’t delegate to pass the buck. Delegation should free you up for higher-priority items. However, there is a pitfall in delegation. People often assume they have more authority than you have given them, and when they fail to report back, you lose control.

Decision-Making. The need for a decision comes at any time of the day, and decisions come in all sizes. There is a close relationship between decision-making and problem-solving, which involves identifying and describing the situation, evaluating alternatives, comparing their risks, and selecting the best option. Seek God’s promised wisdom. Implement the decision – How a leadership decision is announced and implemented many times is just as important as the decision itself. Consider the timing of the announcement. The process by which the decision is made is of tremendous importance.

...A Word of Appreciation. There is a tension here. Nowhere else is it more significant than in a local church, for the local church is dedicated to two conflicting purposes: caring for its members and sending them forth to do the work of Christ. But the glue that holds any organization together is loving communication and the communication of love. The spontaneous expression of appreciation is often the result of considerable preparation and practice, encompassing both personal and organizational initiatives, as well as individual and organizational responses. There are no unimportant people.

Part Three

Leadership Tools

Job Descriptions -- What is a job Description? Essentially, a job description is a written outline of the responsibilities and expectations associated with a specific job or assignment. It is a description of the job, not the person filling it: primary function, qualifications, list of duties and responsibilities, and accountability, among other details.

Filing – What is the purpose? If more of us would ask that simple question, “why?” we probably would do many things differently. What’s the “Why?” of a filing system? The fundamental purpose of a filing system is to retrieve something, not to store it. This is fundamental to the design of all filing systems, from informal to formal, making it come back to you. This includes planning, filing correspondence, general organizational systems, and computer-based systems, such as File 13, etc.

Part Four

Managing Your Time

An executive essentially has five key elements with which they work: people, power, resources, information, and time. Christians should be particularly concerned about time because the Bible has a great deal to say about it. Time management is, in essence, self-management, encompassing topics such as where to begin, setting priorities, creating schedules, and making time.

Meetings! It is straightforward to outline the key elements of a successful meeting. It is much harder to carry them out: know the purpose, goals, right participants, homework, right location, adequate communication tools and resources, agenda and information available to everyone adequately, keep the meeting moving in the desired direction, announcing what has been accomplished, and what action will be taken in the future to handle the open items and unresolved questions.

Would You Like to Serve on a Committee? There are several compelling reasons for establishing a committee. We may need a committee when there is more work to do than one person can accomplish. We require specialized expertise or experience to address a problem effectively. Representation of a variety of opinions is needed to arrive at a representative decision. Committees break down into two primary types: standing committees and ad hoc committees, which are designed to dissolve at a specific date. The committee's establishment should be accompanied by a clear statement outlining its purpose, particular goals, reporting channels, the format of the report, the limits of its authority, timeline, and other relevant details.

Part Five

Christian Excellence

- Excellence! We are called to excellence. We are called to set standards of excellence for ourselves and all people. Philippians 1:10 Paul prays that we may have the ability to discern and approve the excellent things.
- Excellence is a measurable standard, and that implies a level of accountability. Yes or no. Make it or not.
- Excellence demands a goal, and that's sticking your neck out to others.
- Excellence demands priorities, and that's telling people what comes first in your life.
- Excellence is a process, and that means continually checking progress.
- Excellence is about style, and that means recognizing the gifts God has given me and using them responsibly.
- Excellence is mainly about motivation, and that's what it's all about!

“And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God” (Philippians 1:9). The purpose is glory and praise of God. The goal is excellent. Note that the steps to the goal are knowledge and discernment thoroughly mixed with an abundance of love. The measurement is the fruits of righteousness. The power comes through Jesus Christ. All glory to Him!

Temple of Restoration

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

CHECK REQUEST FORM

Date of Request:	Amount Requested:
Requestor's Name:	Ministry Name:
Date Needed:	
Reason for Request:	
Requestor's Signature: _____ Date _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Make check to payee: Name of payee: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Check/Cash to be picked up by: _____	
ADMINISTRATION USE ONLY BELOW THIS LINE	
Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied	
Authorized Signature: _____	
Comments: _____	
Ministry Amount Charged: _____ Remaining Balance: _____	
Invoice Number: _____	Invoice Date: _____
Check Number: _____	Check Date: _____

Temple of Restoration

Church of God in Christ

Pre-Event Worksheet

1. Event/Project:

2. Purpose of event, please explain:

Location:

Proposed Date of Event:

3. Contact person(s):

4. Please provide a complete event budget that includes:

Food

Decorations

Advertisement

Guest Speaker(s)

Honorariums

Miscellaneous

Postage

Printing

Clean up if janitorial services are contracted.

Estimated Cost_____ How will funds be acquired to cover the cost?

5. If the event is a fundraiser, what is your fundraising goal? What will be the cost for admission or tickets?

6. The Pastor must approve the program that is planned for the event. Please comply with the Temple of Restoration's required 12-week timeline for special projects. Complete a pre- and post-event sheet.

Requested by: _____ Date _____

Approved by: _____
Pastor or his designee