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BRINGING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS: IDEAS FOR ORGANIZING A GROWING TEAM

I.   Foundations

A.   Our goal is to use music to serve congregational singing. That can be very complex, or it can be very simple (Ephesians 5:19-21, Col 3:16, Psalm 150)

B.   There are varieties of gifts, which include both "spectacular" gifts and "non-spectacular gifts" like administration. There are both leadership gifts and support gifts. (1 Cor. 12:28,30)

C.   You may be the creative type, or you may be the administrative type, or you may be both. Take heart – you don't have to be the whole church. (1 Cor. 12:14,17,18)

D.   The Bible puts administration & organization in an honored place, but secondary place (1 Cor 12:28, 14:40, Exodus 18:13-27, Acts 6:1-6).

E.   Good administration is not more important than sound doctrine and lives lived in the power of the Holy Spirit.

F.   Leadership is always more important than management. But good management can amplify, and poor management can undermine leadership.

G.   Gifts of administration can enable others to use their gifts more effectively (I Cor 12).

II.   The Situation

A.   Our world is changing faster and faster, both for ourselves and our fellow church members.

B.   Most working adults have received training in certain subject areas, but not how to manage deadlines, projects, and goals, and how to get things done.

C.   We need to be continual learners.

D. Church size demographics have greatly changed in the last 50 years. There are now over 7,000 non-Catholic churches in the U.S. with 1,000 people or more. (The average American church still has less than 100 people and 40 times more churches under 1,000 than over 1,000.)[i]

E. For any church that starts small and grows larger, there are growing pains as changes happen in areas like relationships, communication, and decision-making.

    1. Example of sports teams (see "Leadership and Church Size Dynamics" by Tim Keller[ii])

    2. Both the small church and the large church have different strengths and weaknesses

III. A Few Next Steps

A. Ask for help

B. Don't just look at your own strengths and weaknesses; look at your church as a whole and what will serve it.

C. Be willing to study up on areas, and be willing to make changes with the help of others.

D. Recognize that only God gets his to-do list done every day.

E. We are justified through faith in Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection, not our own performance!

IV. Personal Productivity & Organization

A. We pursue productivity to be able to do more good works.

B. Are your issues personal issues, or organizational issues?

C. Areas to be aware of:

    1. Planning ahead
    2. Responding to others in a timely fashion (including managing email)
    3. Handling multiple projects and goals simultaneously
    4. Aligning your work with what is most important to the church, not just most important to you – "first things first"
    5. Doing the necessary work, whether it's easy or hard (and not doing the hard last) (the sluggard - Proverbs 6:9-10, 10:5, 22:13, 26:15)
    6. Breaking down large projects
    7. Doing things in batches
    8. Your heart attitude in these areas (Anxiety? Despair? Faith?)

V. Leadership

A. What actually needs to get done?

  1. Starting questions:

     a. What does God's word require you to do?
     b. What is your philosophy of ministry (written or unwritten)?
     c. What will best serve the members of your church (not just those on your team)?
     d. What gifts has God given your church?
     e. What directives have your pastors given you? Do need clarity on that?

  2. Is there anything that you're doing that is keeping you from doing what actually really *does* need to get done?
  3. The amount of time spent on something does not always directly correlate to what actually helps people.

B. Define that vision, and communicate it often with the people on your teams.

  1. The larger the church, the smaller portion of the pie for each role.
  2. Connect their service with the larger end, in relation to God as well as to the church. This serves them spiritually and helps your team become more like Christ.

C. Care for people.

  1. Whatever your role, God still wants you to lead others to worship Him with heart, soul, mind, and strength.
  2. People didn't join your team because of your specific program. Make it about much more than just your projects, your programs.

VI. Team Organization

A. Work *in* what you're doing, also work *on* what you're doing.

B. With growth, formalize things that have been informal (oral to paper)

  1. Auditions
  2. Scheduling of musicians
  3. Annual/quarterly schedule
  4. Expectations

5. Definitions of people's roles

    a. Smaller, defined pieces
    b. Lower bar of entry
    c. For technical teams, checklists

6. Ongoing training
7. Team-building

C. Developing teams

1. If it's an experiment, tell people so
2. Core group or big group?
3. Determine meeting frequency/style
4. Let leaders emerge
5. Work hard on delegation
6. Be OK with chaos
7. Allow people to feel ownership of the teams

D. Delegation

1. Think outside of your normal boxes (staff/non-staff, musician/non-musician, high tech/low tech, recurring/occasional)
2. Be specific (task, who is responsible, details, time frame)
3. Process, not a one-time event
4. Be OK with everything not done the way you'd do it.
5. Learn what you can delegate and what you can't. Often the only way to find out is to try. Some of it just won't work. But others times it will wonderfully surprise you.
6. You may be able to do it better or faster, but that's not the point.
7. Be aware of what it frees you up to do and how each part of the body better uses its gifts!

E. Prepare your team for change

1. Address heart attitudes

    a. None of us has a permanent "spot"
    b. Joy when others are able to take our spot to serve the church more effectively

2. Develop relationships of trust
3. Consider defined service length
4. Reposition more than "cut"

VII.   Technology

All-in-one worship planning tools
www.planningcenteronline.com   organizes plans, songs, people
www.gospelsoftware.com/songbook   an online songbook for your church

Shared Documents
Google Docs (docs.google.com)   online documents & forms
Evernote (evernote.com)   capture everything, share documents

Digital music
iTunes   download music (paid)
YouTube   videos of songs
Grooveshark   ad-supported, free access music
Spotify   music streaming (paid or free)
CCLI church rehearsal license   Share songs with your team legally
     (http://rehearsal.ccli.com/)

Sharing files
Dropbox.com   Sync files with other people
Ge.tt   Easy file sharing
Getcloudapp.com   Easy file sharing (mac)
Chronosync (econtechnologies.com) App for syncing files (mac)

Church Management Sites
The City (onthecity.org)
The Table Project (tableproject.com)
Fellowship One (fellowshipone.com)
Church Community Builder (churchcommunitybuilder.com)

Chord Charts
Ccli.com/songselect   charts, lead sheets, hymn sheets
Praisecharts.com   chord charts, lead sheets, orch.

Other
www.basecamphq.com   project management & file sharing
signupgenius.com   allow people sign up for time slots

VIII. Resources

A. *Biblical Productivity* by C.J. Mahaney – a series of blog posts on the topic. http://www.sovereigngraceministries.org/blogs/cj-mahaney/post/Biblical-Priorities-For-Personal-Productivity.aspx

B. *What's Best Next (whatsbestnext.com)* – a blog written by Matt Perman, Director of Strategy at Desiring God. Matt says, "This blog exists to help equip Christians in good works, because that's what productivity is really about." He does the church a service by writing about leadership, productivity, good works, and related topics, and processing books, articles, and other resources on these topics from a biblical perspective.

Helpful post on email: http://www.whatsbestnext.com/2008/11/how-to-get-your-email-inbox-to-zero-every-day/

C. *Leadership and Church Size Dynamics* by Tim Keller. This article can help you and your church understand the changes that you may need to go through as your size changes. http://theresurgence.com/2011/02/15/leadership-church-size-dynamics

D. *Heart Attitudes for the Worship Team* by Bob Kauflin – this seminar is designed to help you help your worship team address the heart issues that arise when serving on a team, especially in times of change. http://www.sovereigngracestore.com/Product/A1195-02-59/Heart_Attitudes_for_the_Worship_Team_-_Outline.aspx

E. *Worship Matters* by Bob Kauflin. A book written for worship leaders on the theology and practice of leading God's people in song. See chapter 30, "Your Team."

F. *Seasons of a Sound Team by Dave Wilcox and Jim Cowan* – Covenant Life's former sound crew leader and current technical director speak autobiographically about all that has changed as our church size has changed. http://www.sovereigngracestore.com/Product/A2361-19-51/Seasons_of_a_Sound_Team.aspx

G. *Rescuing Ambition* by Dave Harvey - This book is intended to help you not see ambition as the opposite of humility, but as a tool that can and should be used for God's purposes.

H. *Just Do Something* by Kevin DeYoung - A helpful book on decision-making and God's guidance. Especially helpful if you're often slow to make decisions because you're afraid you might make the wrong choice. Developing biblical convictions in this area can have surprising results in productivity.

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[i] http://hirr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast_facts.html