

2015 Church Planning – 7 Things to Think About

1. Church Strategy

The economy has taken its toll on churches and the changing environment has been very challenging. That makes it a great time to revisit the strategy and direction for your church. This should include planning for the predictable as well as the unpredictable.



For example, look at those things that might be standing in the way of your church fulfilling its mission. Devote some time to do a SWOT analysis and talk about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and how your church can build on its strengths and address its weaknesses. Strategy and planning is how churches continue to grow and develop members.

2. 2015 Church Goals

The unpredictable economic climate has forced more churches than ever to spend time strategizing for the future. Effective church management is about devoting time to strategy and writing goals. Writing church goals is time well spent because goals help to provide direction and the steps to achieving strategy.

Goals that are managed through a performance management process are how successful organizations achieve strategy and move to the next level.

3. Church Budget

It is a sad fact, but many churches are experiencing a decrease in donations and are struggling financially. This makes it even more important to go through a formal church budgeting process that designates funds to support strategy and mission.

This process should include looking at how the ministry spends its resources and plans to invest in those things that further its mission. It is also a good time to look at those capital equipment needs and put a plan and budget in place to ensure the funds are available when needed. For example, if your soundboard is on its last leg, reserve some resources for next year now so you don't end up having a Sunday to remember!

4. Church Volunteers

Volunteers are the engine of the church, and without them, most churches would have to close their doors. Develop a volunteer strategy and spend some time soliciting feedback from your volunteers so you can put a plan in place to improve the volunteer experience.

Volunteers have a great perspective and can offer insight into improving operational efficiencies. Take advantage of this collective knowledge and spend the time and resources to support their efforts!

5. Church Employees

This is also the perfect time of year to write church employee goals for 2015 and to update church job descriptions to reflect those goals.

Church employees facilitate the church experience and have special needs. Talk to your employees and look for ways to keep them engaged and committed. Burned out employees simply go through the motions, so spend some time finding ways to keep them focused! Church volunteers and members rely heavily on church employees—be sure to take care of them!

6. Church Members

Members have a vested interest in the church so take the time to understand their experience so you can incorporate their needs into strategy. Spend some time focusing on church members and identifying their spiritual and social needs. After all members fund the church so talk to congregants and make sure the church is meeting their needs within the boundaries of the church mission.

For example, if there is an aging demographic in the church body, make a plan and budget to start a program for people over 60. Investing in these groups can pay off big time in donations.

7. Emergency Preparedness

Every church should have a plan to activate in the event of an emergency. Now is a good time to review and update the emergency preparedness plan to ensure your church is ready for the unexpected. Who more than the church should be prepared?

The recent recession is forcing church leaders to think about what they are doing and how they can sustain church growth. There is no secret formula, but good planning and fiscal responsibility, coupled with a well-structured performance management process is a great way to start!

Have you mapped out a plan for 2015 yet?

Source: smartchurchmanagement.com