

3 Things for Successful Ministry:

So you are thinking of starting a ministry? Maybe it’s a singles ministry, a women’s or men’s, a senior, a ministry to create awareness to a certain issue, etc. Whatever you feel led to do, if you have these 3 basic elements at the start, you will have no problem in succeeding.

**1) Prayer:** This should be on-going: daily, weekly, and with others. This can be done in person, phone, Skype, email, etc.

-Pray at the start for confirmation of the ministry.

-Pray for God to bring your team together.

-Pray and do the research that is needed for your ministry; talking to the powers as needed to move forward.

-Pray and ask God to bring the resources together for the ministry.

-Pray about every part from where you meet, to your finances, to your team members (by name), to your goals and vision.

-Keep track of your answered prayer and praises.

-Let your prayer ministry at your church and Sunday school/small group also know how to pray for your ministry.

Note: If you aren’t getting together to pray as a team (even if its you and your pastor at the start), your ministry will die. Prayer is the start place for everything. Prayer will help you decide the direction of your ministry, who will be on your team, goals, problems, etc. Also, letting your prayer team of your church know what you are doing and your prayer needs will help in the communication of your ministry to the whole church body.

**2) Support of Church/staff/leaders:** You will need the support of your Church/staff/leaders and others for your ministry. You may end up needing room space, prayer, promotion and/or funds and leadership that your church can help you with.

-Research is critical in making your case. For example, getting demographics from your city/town is valuable in assessing the population group you will be working.

-Work with the church secretary to get information she might have in regards to the database of the Church. Is there a real need for this ministry? Has it been done before? If so, who led it? Why did is stop?

-Educating your pastor/staff on the value of this ministry by asking for a meeting to share what you know. Be sure to be prepared when you do, having something to leave with your pastor such as your goals, purpose, list of team members, research, etc.

-Find out ways to advertise, bring awareness to your ministry to the church. Make sure you ministry gets listed on the churches website and other marketing materials.

-Ask to be apart of a church-wide ministry fair.

-Work with the city to promote your ministry (for example, you might be doing a walk-a-thon or a single mom’s ministry or folks in wheelchairs, etc.).

-Find out what other ministries are in the area that may be similar. This is a great way to make sure you are duplicating something that is already out there that is working (meaning, you could just support what they are doing or work together). You may need to do something different. This is also great when trying to figure out why things are working well. Also, its great to meet with others outside your church for ideas, support and encouragement.

**3) Opportunity to disciple/develop leadership:** A core group of committed individuals (should cover the demographic of who you are trying to reach) should be developed with an opportunity of continued training. Because people’s lives are constantly changing, it’s important to have the structure available for discipleship and training.

If you build a core team of leaders to lead your ministry, but you don’t tell them what you expect from them, you don’t train them, come along side them; pray with them, etc. then how do you expect them to lead others? You have to lead by example. So often I work with Churches and find out there is no real job description, no real start or end date, no training available, etc. Is this the way we are running our Churches? No wonder we have a hard time getting people to commit.

I look at it like this…if you were about to get operated on and your operating team was structured like your ministry, would you feel comfortable in getting the surgery? Sure, everyone might show up and have a great attitude, but would they be trained to do the job? Would they know enough to teach the next generation, and would they know enough to help each other out. Building a solid foundation with trained leaders and servants in place is never a bad thing. Even with a solid structure you can have awesome friendships. From the start of building my team I encourage my leaders to look for the person who could replace them. I don’t wait for people to leave; I get them trained before they even think of leaving. Sometimes we might train someone to take our place and they end up serving elsewhere, it’s ok, it’s life. The point is you always train, always disciple and allow God to work out the rest.

Note: Leadership training is everything from giving them a job description (have them to even help write it) to attending a leadership-training event that church is holding (or outside the church) to reading a book together and discussing on teamwork. The point is your providing what they need to do the job from tools to education to a contract.

OK, I know we need to be praying, we need our church to help and we need to develop a team, but then what?

1. Determine scheduling and facility needs. (Nursery, classrooms, etc.)

2. Determine what budget funds are available and needed.

3. Communicate through publicity and promote the specifics of the new ministry (who, what, when, where, why, cost, expectations, etc.). Start a database with the newspaper, radio, and TV contacts. Make sure the church website is up to date.

4. Take care of you. If you aren’t healthy, then you can’t lead anyone else to be.

5. Patience! Remember that God is in control. We must in our enthusiasm be sensitive to His timing and His will. In the long run, it is better to take time to develop good relationships and accountability than to rush and have to redevelop or reconcile misunderstandings. (Ensure that your leaders believe as you do and as your church does.) Reading about Nehemiah is a great way to encourage everyone.

6. Stay open to God's continuing leadership. Ministries should change as needs and methods dictate. Enjoy and remember some days will be tough but overall it can be the most rewarding ministry there is.

For more information on how to grow your church including leadership development, contact Kris Swiatocho, www.FromHisHands.com Ministries, 919.434.3611.

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