



Healthy Church Solutions

BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Do people accuse you of not listening?

It is not unusual to hear lay people make statements concerning the pastor's unwillingness to listen to their needs or ideas. Some of these comments have to be taken with a grain of salt and obviously, serious accusations need directed to the person accused for biblical, one-to-one confrontation. Common statements that our consultants hear are: "my ideas are discounted," "I don't sense any appreciation for my effort," "the pastor/leadership is not willing to address sin/conflict in church," and "I don't trust the pastor/leadership any more."

The resulting conflict will undermine church vision, community outreach, and the church's financial base. Several proactive steps can be taken by the pastor and leadership a church to improve the overall communication climate.

The following steps are recommended and can be Christ honoring and fruitful no matter the health of a church.

- Address unresolved conflict.
- Establish clear communication lines throughout the church.
- Recast shared values, mission, and vision (Regularly articulate shared vision).
- Emphasize undisputed values (Missions, Fellowship/Family, Biblical Authority, Evangelism, Local Community Involvement, Christian Education, and Family Ministries).
- Clarify the existing lay team or establish one that is the champion of the pastor by encouraging him, identifying his needs, and holding him accountable for personal and ministry goals and objectives.
- Reinforce open communication with staff and church with greater delegation, flexibility, and clear acknowledgment of alternative ideas. Intentionally work on such basic listening skills as maintaining eye contact, giving time to people who have something to share, repeating back in your own words the idea(s) someone is sharing, and acknowledging other's ideas publicly.
- Embrace flexibility as a key ingredient in team building. Low team moral is usually involved in communication issues. The more disciplined a pastor/leader is the more he needs to work on being flexible. Sometimes a person's greatest strengths can be their greatest weaknesses. Having deep fellowship among team members is an important part of pastoral leadership. Incorporating times of fun and laughter are part of successful team building.
- Temper perfectionism with faith in God to raise leaders and workers to delegate assignments and ministries. A pastor's perfectionism deprives others of the ability God has given them to put their gifts and talents to use in the body of Christ when he does not delegate and he stifles the growth of the church. This is also often seen as a communication issue.
- Consciously look for responsibilities to delegate and continuously look for ways to give away responsibilities within the overall ministry to streamline and effectively expand ministry effectiveness. The pastor/leader needs to continuously ask, "Is this something I need to do myself or can I delegate it?"

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