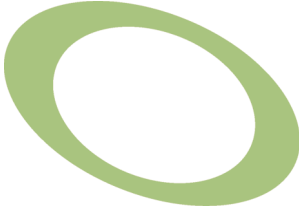




# GROWING LEADERS



- **Introduction to Additional Sessions**
- **Leaders' Guide**
- **Handouts 1-5**

**12**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Welcome to Growing Leaders Additional Sessions

We recognise that the existing course is only the starting point for growing leaders, and so each of the additional sessions provides an opportunity to reflect on how things are going and to explore another aspect of leadership development.

There are currently six additional sessions. They can either be used instead of some of the original sessions as part of the ten-session course, or they can be used following the completion of the initial course, for example, one session a term over two years.

However, the structure of these additional sessions is a little different from the original course. They reflect the following aims:

- To provide an opportunity for participants to reconnect and review how they are getting on in their leadership role/development.
- To stimulate one another to keep on 'leading diligently' (Romans 12:8).
- To address an additional aspect of leadership.

All the material you need for each session is downloadable from the 'Additional Sessions' section of the Growing Leaders webpages, [www.cpas.org.uk/growingleaders](http://www.cpas.org.uk/growingleaders). Each session includes:

- Leaders' guide.
- Participants' handouts.
- Session PowerPoint.

We hope that this material will provide stimulus to keep on investing in leaders. Leaders need constantly encouraging and developing. It is easy to slip from what we intend to do, to forget important priorities, and to struggle with difficult situations. We all need ongoing opportunities for reflection, input, support and encouragement. These sessions will provide just that.

As always, please send us your ideas of how to improve the material, or suggestions for other things to do.

Please contact us if you would like further help.

James Lawrence

## For Help

Please contact us at:

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# OVERVIEW: GROWING LEADERS

<b>EXPLORATION</b>	June or July	A relaxed exploration of Growing Leaders (BBQ?) with an explanation of its aims and how it works, and an invitation to consider taking part.
<b>Part 1: Firm Foundations for Christian Leadership</b>		
<b>SESSION 1</b>	September 24 hours away	<b>INTRODUCTION: LEADERSHIP MATTERS</b> In this opening session we define leadership, identify the distinctives of Christian leadership, and focus on participants' leadership styles.
<b>SESSION 2</b>	October	<b>ESTABLISHING IDENTITY</b> Christian leadership is rooted in our relationship with God. This session explores the basis of that relationship (God chose us/grace) and the priority of spiritual disciplines in the leader's life.
<b>SESSION 3</b>	November	<b>CLARIFYING CALL</b> Many Christian leaders struggle with how to use their time. This is an issue of call. We look at biblical principles for discerning God's call and identify a practical tool to help with this.
<b>SESSION 4</b>	December	<b>DEVELOPING CHARACTER</b> The Bible places a clear emphasis on character issues as 'qualifications' for leadership. What are these qualities and how do we grow them?
<b>Part 2: Key Skills of Christian Leadership</b>		
<b>SESSION 5</b>	January 24 hours away	<b>DISCERNING DIRECTION</b> Leadership is about going somewhere, but how do we know where? This day explores how we discern God's direction for a group and how to implement it.
<b>SESSION 6</b>	February	<b>DEVELOPING LEADERS</b> Jesus developed leaders around him. Christian leaders will need to do the same. This session focuses on how we help others to grow as disciples and leaders.
<b>SESSION 7</b>	March	<b>LEADING TOGETHER</b> Leaders work with people, often in teams, groups or committees. We consider group needs, common dysfunctions of teams, and how to work well together.
<b>Part 3: Keeping Faithful in Christian Leadership</b>		
<b>SESSION 8</b>	April	<b>EMBRACING COST</b> Too many people have unrealistic expectations of Christian leadership. We identify costs and how to handle them well.
<b>SESSION 9</b>	May	<b>STAYING FRESH</b> Leadership is a marathon not a sprint. How do we run a marathon well?
<b>SESSION 10</b>	June	<b>CONTINUING WELL</b> This is a celebration and commissioning event to end Growing Leaders.
<b>Additional Sessions</b>		
<b>SESSION 11</b>	September	<b>SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS</b> The first priority of the leader is his or her own spiritual life.
<b>SESSION 12</b>	January	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b> Further insights on how to turn vision into reality, including insights into vision barriers and communication issues.
<b>SESSION 13</b>	April	<b>FINDING RHYTHMS</b> Three rhythms exist in the life of a leader – church, leadership and personal. How do we make sense of these?
<b>SESSION 14</b>	September	<b>GROWING WELL</b> A willingness to grow is a mark of a healthy leader. How do we continue the journey of growth?
<b>SESSION 15</b>	January	<b>SHAPING CULTURE</b> Leaders are cultural 'architects'. We consider how to read the culture of a group and how to shape it to be more kingdom like.
<b>SESSION 16</b>	April	<b>FACILITATING COMMUNICATION</b> Communication is the oil that keeps things running smoothly, but is often neglected.

# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

'Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.'

WARREN BENNIS

## Session Overview

- Aim (10 mins).
- Way in (25 mins).
- Activity (25 mins).
- Refreshments (10 mins).
- Input (15 mins).
- Activity (20 mins).
- Input (10 mins).
- And finally (5 mins).

## Session Aims

- To reconnect with one another.
- To review how we are doing as leaders.
- To explore where we are in discerning God's direction.
- To identify why we don't fulfil vision.
- To explore communication as a key to good strategic planning.

## Bible Base

Read Nehemiah 1 (and if you have time chapters 2-4 as well). Reflect on the way Nehemiah responds to the gap between what God wants for his people/city and the reality of how things are. Note any insights you gain from your reading and weave them into the session as a way of rooting the session in the Scriptures.

## Background

In Part 2 of Growing Leaders we explored 'Key skills of Christian leadership'. Session 5 was called 'Discerning direction'. We considered how important it is for people we lead to know where they are going, why they are going that way, and how they are going to get there. In all of this we emphasised the priority of going God's way. However, the busyness of life and the competing demands of leadership often mean that the big picture direction is squeezed out. We end up reacting to whatever is the most pressing need or demand, rather than leading people into God's future.

Recently I was chatting with an able, active member of a church. She and her husband have loads to offer, and their attitude is both gracious and humble. Yet the lack of clear direction for their church is driving them 'crazy'. The church lurches from one thing to the next without any clear sense of where it is going, why they are going in that direction, how they are going to get there, and what role each member of the congregation has to play. Consequently, many of those leading small groups within the church are equally confused about what they are doing and where they are going. Without clear God-given direction churches suffer from confusion, competing agendas, and growing frustration. They also tend to stop making disciples, neither growing those who are already in Christ or helping others to come to faith in Christ.

This session will reconnect with these themes, and encourage participants to reflect on how they are doing. Although 'strategic planning' may not be the most exciting title we've come up with, it is a vital part of leadership. Without action, vision is merely 'pipe-dreams'.

Several factors have led us to focus on this topic:

- **Vision leaks** Think of vision as a bucket. There is a hole in the bottom and as we pour vision in at the top it goes out at the bottom. This is a reality we can't change. So we have to keep on sharing God's direction in ways that capture people's imaginations.
- **Excitement wanes** Even when people have caught the direction, inevitably there are difficulties and problems that occur on the journey that mean



# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

initial excitement is diminished. Leaders are responsible for helping people through the obstacles and providing encouragement and affirmation to keep going.

- **Action stops** It is always easier to talk about things than to do them. Yet if direction is to make a difference we will need to keep taking steps that lead us in that direction. Action is essential.

When you approach this session be aware of a range of possible reactions within the group. Some may feel guilty: 'Oh no, I meant to do x and just haven't got round to it.' Some may feel they've failed: 'I tried, but I couldn't find a way through all the obstacles. Maybe I am not a leader after all.' Some may feel hassled: 'If you knew how many other things I've had to do over this year you'd know I just couldn't take one more thing on.' Some may feel excited: 'Just look what has happened over the last year. It is so exciting to see God at work.' Be open to helping each participant to articulate their feelings. Remember, part of the purpose of these additional sessions is to create space for leaders to talk through how things are going. You might be able to set an example by speaking of a time when you struggled with implementing God's direction.

## ? Your Own Preparation

Think about your options for this session. Do you want to use it to review how things have gone since you last met, and address issues raised by the participants? Alternatively, you may want to focus on introducing new material.

Both approaches are valid. But you will need to be clear about where the focus lies. You could spend all your time on one or the other, or on a mixture of both. Here are some suggestions to help you plan your approach:

- Are there any big issues with which individuals may need some help?
- If you haven't met for a while, it may be worth giving space for review.
- The larger your group, the more difficult it is to do the review part of the session well. It will help to use small groups within the larger group.

Adjust the timings according to your decision.

'As important as vision is, most people don't get it, and vision without implementation is just words.'

LEITH ANDERSON

### Materials

- Refreshments.
- A1 flipchart paper.
- Marker pens.
- Blu-Tack.

### HANDOUTS

- Handout 1 Discerning direction.
- Handout 2 Questionnaire.
- Handout 3 Stopping.
- Handout 4 Communication.
- Handout 5 Feedback form

### ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

- Session 12 PowerPoint.



# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Outline



### Background

Slide 1

As always, be sure to prepare the venue well to ensure a warm welcome. If you are running this session with people from more than one Growing Leaders course it might help to prepare name badges.

You will need to decide how much of the session is going to focus on the issues the leaders have brought from their leadership roles, and how much you are going to focus on new material. Be sure to communicate clearly where the balance of the session will lie and adjust the timings accordingly.



### Aim

0-10 MINS

Slide 2

Slide 3

Slide 4

Slide 5

Welcome people and thank them for coming. Remind people of the aims of the termly sessions. Remind people of the model of leadership development at the heart of the course, and explain that this session will focus on an area of competency in Christian leadership, strategic planning. It will enable us to:

- Reconnect with one another.
- Review where we are in discerning God's direction.
- Identify why we don't fulfil the vision.
- Explore communication as a key to good strategic planning.

Explain the format. Make sure people know any practical arrangements. Pray for the session.



### Way In

10-35 MINS

Slide 6

Slide 7

Slides 8-9

Handout 1

On this occasion the way in is a brief act of worship/reflection. The idea is to remind people of who God is and of what he wants for his church.

- Sing a simple song/hymn or two. You could take a well-known chorus and sing a cappella, for example 'He is Lord', or you could ask a musician to lead you in a couple of well-known songs or hymns, that focus on the lordship of Christ.
- Read out Ephesians 3:14-21. You could read it in a different version from normal to bring a freshness to a well known passage, for example The Message. Make a few comments from the passage about the nature of God and his church. These do not have to be long, and should be inspirational in style.
- Show the Lifesaving Station video, available from [www.sermonspice.com](http://www.sermonspice.com). We read the story during session 5, and this is a visual way of reminding participants of how easily vision gets lost.
- Invite participants to get into groups of three or four and spend a few minutes sharing their response to the passage and video, and then praying together.

Remind people of the two diagrams from session 5 that capture the heart of that material. Briefly talk through the slides on the terms and process of discerning direction and on how to implement vision.



# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Outline



**Activity**  
35-60 MINS

Slide 10  
Handout 2

This exercise is to help participants review how things are going in their area of leadership. Because we all have the capacity to delude ourselves this exercise involves talking with someone outside our area of leadership responsibility.

- Explain that you would like them to form pairs with a partner from a different area of leadership. Invite them to use the questions on the handout to help them get some perspective on how things are going in the area of implementing God's direction. Each person will have ten minutes in the answering role. This could be a little daunting for some, so point out the following guidelines:
- Don't be defensive or daunted. The exercise is designed to help us 'define reality', to see things as they actually are rather than how we would like them to be.
- It is dialogue, not an interrogation, so help each other out by asking and answering questions freely and fully.
- The person asking the questions should take a few brief notes as they listen, and at the end of their time feed back to help clarify what has been said.

Check that everyone has understood the exercise. You will need to call time after the first ten minutes, perhaps giving a one-minute warning at nine minutes, so they can swap roles. At the end of the exercise invite the partners to pray for one another.

Acknowledge that some may have found this a sobering experience, others exciting. Emphasise that the purpose was to offer some clarity about how things are going as part of Growing Leaders' commitment to building accountability into leaders' lives. There is no need to take feedback from the exercise, but if you want you could take a straw poll of how people are doing to get a feel for where the group is.

If you think anyone has particularly struggled with the exercise make a mental note and try to have a word with them during the refreshment break.



**Refresh**  
60-70 MINS

Slide 11

Time for some more of those delicious refreshments.



**Activity 2**  
70-85 MINS

Handout 3

Slide 12

The next section looks at why people don't sign up when the direction is clear. There are two options:

### OPTION 1

Invite participants to get into groups of four, ideally from similar areas of leadership responsibility. Ask them to explore the question: why don't people 'sign up' or 'get on board' when direction is clear? Someone will need to be a scribe in each group and write down their answers to be shared with the whole group at the end of the exercise.

### OPTION 2

Explain the following reasons for why people don't sign up when the direction is clear:

- **Apathy** This is very common. It helps to remember that apathy is a symptom not a cause. It is nearly always the result of something else. Yet often church leaders talk about this ('the people are so apathetic') without asking 'why



# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Outline

- does it exist?'
- **Belief** If people are not yet disciples of Jesus they may have little internal motivation to care about the priorities of Jesus. For example, it is hard to excite people about the transformation Jesus brings if they have never experienced this transformation themselves.
  - **Culture** If, as Peter Drucker says, 'Culture eats strategy for breakfast', people may be resistant to the new direction because the prevailing culture of the group is working against the strategy. Culture can be defined as the observed or approved behaviour within a group, organisation or society. It can be defined more simply as 'how we do things round here'. If the culture of the group we lead is working against the strategy, the strategy won't survive. Ideally culture is made up of identity, purpose and values (slide 13). It is driven by beliefs and values, expressed through symbols and rituals, communicated through stories and legends, and observed through behaviours (slide 14). If identity, beliefs and values are strong they drive behaviour (arrow going out on slide 14). If they are weak, they are influenced by behaviour (two headed arrow on slide 14). If they are non-existent, they are determined by behaviour (arrow going in on slide 14). If we want to find out what the culture of our group is, ask 'if someone visited our group and was a part of all our activities for a month, how would they describe the way we do things?' (for more see Additional Session 15).
  - **Disagreement** If people disagree with the direction they won't commit themselves to it. Leaders need to listen very carefully to those who disagree, rather than become defensive. Those who disagree may be right! However, if the disagreement is over some of the fundamentals of identity, mission, values or vision, those disagreeing may need to be involved with another part of Christ's body. If the disagreement is over strategy/structure/ approach, work with them to find the best way forward.
  - **Energy** People may lack energy for two main reasons. (a) You've just completed some project in the life of the group/church that has required a large amount of energy. They are experiencing the natural dip that occurs after any major expense of energy. (b) They may be exhausted because of personal circumstances, for example family illness, life stage with young kids/elderly parents.
  - **Fear** This may be a right fear of change, for example 'it's going to be tough, not sure it will work.' Or it may be an unhelpful fear of change, for example 'I want things to stay just as they are so my personal tastes aren't upset.'
- Slide 13
- Slide 14
- Slide 15
- Slide 16
- Slide 17
- Handout 3b
- Get people into groups of four, ideally of people from similar leadership responsibilities. Invite them to use the questions on the handout to explore the issues they are struggling with. Encourage them to be honest and specific in their conversations.



### Activity 3 85-105 MINS

Slide 17  
Handout 3b





# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Outline



### Activity 4 105-115 MINS

Slide 18  
Handout 4

#### COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Three problems commonly occur when communicating vision.

##### 1. We focus on vision-casting while neglecting problem-casting.

Nehemiah avoided this by outlining the problem clearly. Remind people that the change 'equation' is  $DxV=C$  where  $D$ =Dissatisfaction  $V$ =Vision and  $C$ =Change. If there is no  $D$  then no matter how much vision, you still end up with zero change. People need to understand why the new direction is necessary.

##### 2. In our communication we tend to focus on 1/3 of vision and neglect 2/3.

We focus on what we want to see happen (1/3), and neglect to communicate what we want to preserve and what we want to avoid (2/3). We need to assure people there are values to preserve and problems to avoid. This helps people to feel the past is not being either rubbished (they are positive things we need to take with us) or ignored (we have learned from past mistakes).

##### 3. We fail to combine urgency with simple clear next steps people can embrace.

Use the quadrants on the slide to illustrate this point (the slide is copied on the back of Handout 4).

- **Bored** Without urgency or clarity people are bored, vision is just another announcement.
- **Sceptical** A call to action without any urgency or explanation of why we need to act now leaves people sceptical: 'why are we doing all this activity, what is the point?'
- **Frustrated** Urgency alone can leave people frustrated, it stokes up passion but doesn't help people to know what part to play.
- **Inspired** A compelling reason to act combined with practical next steps inspires people to act, especially if the action is clear, doable, challenging, and rewarded.

Slide 19

Pause and ask participants to form pairs and identify which of the three approaches they are most likely to adopt under pressure. Then allow a few minutes for questions and comments.

Slide 20

You may like to use the following material to finish off this section. It offers a way of thinking about communication that enables people to take action.

- Information – what is it about?
- Imagination – why should I be involved?
- Inspiration – why do I want to be involved?
- Instruction – how can I be involved?
- Immediacy – what can I do now?

Try to end with an example of a good piece of communication; it might be a brief video, a recording of a speaker, a beautiful image or picture.



### Finally 115-120 MINS

Slide 21  
Handout 5

Thank people for coming and let them know the date of the next termly meeting. Let people know you are available if anyone would like to explore any issues raised by the session.

Pray and ask participants to complete the feedback form before they leave.



# SESSION 12: STRATEGIC PLANNING

## Before Next Time

### Preparation

There are several things you might like to do before session 13.

- Make a note to send out a reminder to participants at least one month in advance of the next Growing Leaders session.
- If at all possible, take time to meet each leader or group of leaders with the same areas of responsibility. Ask them to share their vision for where God is leading their group, and how that fits with the wider vision of the church as a whole.
- Over the coming months, choose one Sunday service per month when you interview one of the leaders about their role and the direction God is taking them. Then invite the whole congregation to pray for them.
- Meet your co-leader and plan the next session.

