Practical Skills For Spiritual Leaders

Beginning to Think Strategically

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Strategy vs Planning

- Strategy is defined as the means used to achieve the ends (objectives).
- A strategy is a plan that is:
  - *Unified*: it ties all the parts of the enterprise together.
  - *Comprehensive*: it covers all major aspects of the organization.
  - *Integrated*: all parts of the plan are compatible and fit together well.

Strategy vs Planning (cont.)

- A strategy requires analyzing an organization's strengths and weaknesses.
- The focus is on:
  - The long-run
  - Effective use of resources
  - The overall direction of the organization

Strategy vs Planning (cont.)

- Strategic planning challenges us more than other types of organization and planning.
  - In typical planning the objective is already known.
  - Strategic planning <u>determines</u> objectives.
    - The focus is on determining <u>what</u> to do, rather than <u>how</u> to do it.
    - The view is towards what kind of organization you want to become in the <u>future</u>.

Types of Strategies

- There are three general types of strategies:
  - Stability
  - Growth
  - Contraction

Stability Strategies

- A stability strategy provides the same product or service to the same market.
  - The focus is on incremental improvement.
  - Stability strategies are pursued:
    - When a company is doing well
    - To avoid risk
    - When the company's environment is stable

Growth Strategies

- A growth strategy adds products or services and/or new markets.
  - The focus is to expand the company's business activity.
  - Growth strategies are pursued when:
    - The company's environment is volatile
    - There are great societal benefits
    - Management is innovative

Contraction Strategies

- A contraction strategy reduces products or services and/or markets.
    - The focus is on functional improvement through reduced activity and/or cost.
    - Contraction strategies are pursued when:
        - The company's environment is threatening
        - The company is not doing well

The "Best" Strategy

- No one strategy is always the best.
- Example: In his book, <u>Marketing Management</u>, Philip Kotler showed that auto tire manufacturers in the early 1980's successfully pursued very different strategies.
  - The industry leader: cost reduction
  - Number 2: technical innovation of its products
  - Number 3: expanded by diversifying
  - Number 4: contracted by specializing in specific markets
- At the same time, stability, expansion and contraction strategies were being employed.
- Different strategies can be equally successful.

The Analogy for the Church

- A good strategy for one church may not be good for another.
  - Size, culture, and local economy may lead to different strategies.
  - "Growth" is not always the best strategy.
- Sometimes the best strategy is a combination.
  - Combination strategies pursue different strategies simultaneously or different strategies at different times.
    - A church might pursue growth, followed by a time to rest.
    - They might grow in one area, while reducing in another.
  - The latter is more likely in larger churches.

The Need for Effective Implementation

- Sometimes good plans fail because of poor implementation.
  - Strategies may be plagued with faulty assumptions or unforeseen changes.
  - A good strategy is a realistic strategy.
  - There must be adequate resources to accomplish and implement the plan.

The Need for Effective Implementation (cont.)

- Sound strategic planning offers the following benefits.
    - It stimulates thinking about the future.
    - It inspires vision.
    - It is easier to unite everyone around a common goal.
    - More realistic goals are established.
    - It inspires confidence.
    - The likelihood of success improves.

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches

General Spiritual Analysis:

Society	Churches in general	Apostolic churches
Spiritual traits	Doctrinal positions	Changes
Spiritual trends	Ministerial approaches	Opportunities
Political issues affecting churches	Effectiveness	Threats

Specific spiritual analysis:

City/Community	Church
Traits	Strengths
Trends	Weaknesses
Politics	Ministries
Demographics	

Spiritual Vision

STOP

Prayer

Church goals

Strategies to accomplish those goals

Plan(s) of action

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- This model has been adapted from traditional strategic planning models.

- The model has been designed for <u>Apostolic</u> churches.

- There are three major categories: analysis, developing strategies, plan(s) of action.

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- General spiritual analysis includes three things:
    - Review of spiritual issues for society in general
    - Analysis of churches in general
    - Analysis of the Apostolic movement as a whole

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Review spiritual issues for society in general.
  - Trends in church attendance
  - Trends in divorce
  - Trends in the attitude towards Christianity
  - Political issues affecting churches may be important too.
    - Taxation
    - Religious freedom

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Review the spiritual conditions of churches in general.
  - Trends in doctrinal positions are important.
    - Contrast these to Apostolic doctrines.
  - What are the trends in ministerial approaches of churches in general?
    - Contrast these to Apostolic churches also.

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Highlight changes you see in the Apostolic movement.
  - This review will reveal both opportunities and threats.
    - A good strategy <u>takes advantage</u> of opportunities, and <u>overcomes</u> threats.
    - Remember Pharaoh and Joseph: they turned the threat of great famine into an <u>opportunity</u> to amass security, wealth and power.

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Specific spiritual analysis includes two things:
    - A spiritual analysis of your city or community
    - An analysis of your church

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- The analysis of your city or community is much like the general spiritual analysis, but with greater detail.
  - Local spiritual trends
  - Local political issues affecting churches
  - Building regulations
  - Traffic
  - Safety
  - Gather what local demographic statistics you can.

A Strategic Model for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Strategically important for a church are its strengths and weaknesses.
    - The congregation has strengths.
    - Every church also has weaknesses.
    - To be effective, you must be honest about both.
    - List the ministries of your church.
        - Not all ministries are formal.

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches

- There are four steps for Apostolic churches to develop strategies:
  - Spiritual vision
  - Prayer
  - Setting goals
  - Developing strategies

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Ultimately, vision is a function of leadership.
  - Primarily, it is the pastor who is responsible for the spiritual vision of the local church.
  - Identify the things the Lord has put in the heart of your leadership to do.

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- For Apostolic churches, the most important part in the strategic process is prayer.
  - Without prayer, we're no different than a secular business or a social program. Prayer makes the difference.
  - Do not go forward until spiritual leadership is convinced through prayer that it is right to do so.
  - A church's goals must be defined through prayer.

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Before we develop strategies, we must set goals.
  - The spiritual analysis identified opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses.
  - Set goals that address these.
  - After analyzing, reviewing and praying, we <u>must</u> follow the vision the Lord has put in our hearts.
    - Our logic is not enough (Is. 55:8-9).
    - It is His will, not ours, that we must follow (Mt. 6:10).
    - It is a vision of His will that cannot be ignored.

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- Now we are ready to develop strategies.
  - How are you going to accomplish your goal (s)?
    - Do you need a stability, growth strategy, or contraction strategy?
    - Do you need a combination of strategies?
  - It should be as simple as possible.

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- If you want effective change, you <u>must</u> communicate your strategy to others.
  - It should be clearly stated.
  - If you don't communicate, expect frustration.
  - People cannot support something they haven't been told or don't understand.

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- The last part of strategic planning is developing plans of action.
  - Translate your strategy into programs that can be planned.
    - Create a plan.
    - Make adjustments.
    - But most of all, get started!

Developing Strategies for Apostolic Churches (cont.)

- The Lord has put something in your heart; do something about it.

- Effective spiritual leaders do more than dream; they take action.