

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

Leadership Skills You Don't Learn in Seminary

Episode 150

Systems & Best Practices to Get Your People Organized, Aligned and Well-Led

A clear ministry strategy has never been more important than it is now. But if you fail to get your team organized, aligned, and well-led, you'll struggle to execute on even the clearest strategy. In this episode on team shifts churches need to make to thrive in the next ministry season, we unpack best practices for managing performance that will get your team executing at its highest potential.

Why Should Churches Care About Performance Management?

- Pastors frequently tell us they weren't taught the skills to lead an organization in seminary. When teams are small, it's easy to lead the staff and keep everyone on the same page. But as a team gets larger, pastors need new tools to keep the team aligned, productive and growing in their skills and abilities.
- When churches *do* try to build a performance management system, there are often issues:
 - *Over-Engineered - Cumbersome process; too much information to be actionable.*
 - *Grade-Focused - Focus solely on assessment/grading (e.g. scale of 1-10); easily misinterpreted.*
 - *Infrequent & Impersonal - Annual reviews with a focus on looking back; feels stiff.*
- Everybody needs a coach, because everybody has blind spots. The goal should be improvement and growth, but unfortunately most systems don't actually result in tangible improvement in the people being led.

Components of an Effective System

- **Define Each Team Member's One-Sentence Job Description**
The right sentence should provide a crystal-clear picture of why the role exists and why *this* person was hired. It will not describe the entirety of each person's role, but it will define what their "mission critical" contribution is to the church.

Lead Pastor example... **To inspire our staff and congregation to fully engage in the mission and vision of our church.**

- **Clarify Each Team Member's Goals**
This is typically an annual target. Goals should be specific and measurable. Each team member should be able to assess if they've completed their goals or not.
- **Assess Each Member on Character, Chemistry and Competence**
Initially, this "assessment" is private to the supervisor. As the manager, you're having an honest conversation with yourself around these three areas, and giving team members a score from 0-10 for each. This work gives you a basis for where you might need to coach them. You don't share these numbers with your direct report; it's just part of an activity to help you think through their personal demonstrations in these areas. It's your job as their leader to do this diagnostic work, and then, at the right time, praise them where they are strong, and move in on the areas that need attention.
- **Hold Regular, Effective 1-on-1 Meetings**
At least once per month, hold a 1-on-1 meeting with each of your direct reports for 60-90 minutes. (*Note: Once a week is too frequent.*) Don't miss this meeting. It should be a focused time with both listening and coaching.

Next Steps

- Click here to download our [Guide to Effective 1-on-1 Meetings](#) from the [Unstuck Church Staff Course](#) for FREE
- **Check out the Unstuck Church Staff Course**

Over the last 10 years, we've helped more than 400 churches **structure their teams to their ministry strategy, get the right people in the right seats, and build an effective performance management system.** And given these last few months, developing these skills will be more important than ever. Invest in yourself as the leader of your ministry team, and get your team pulling in the same direction to climb a new hill.

Learn about the Unstuck Church Staff Course at theunstuckgroup.com/staff.

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