

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

How to Define Reality for Your Team - Episode 189

Creating Alignment in Your Church (Part 1)

In 2019, 85% of churches that took our free online [Unstuck Church Assessment](#) self-identified as being in the “declining” stage of the life-cycle. Now, having survived 2020, more churches than ever are feeling stuck. So we’re kicking off a four-part series on how to create alignment in your ministry strategy and among your staff and volunteers. In this episode, Tony and Amy unpack the first key to alignment: clearly defining your current reality.

Misalignment Is One of the Main Reasons Churches Get Stuck

- On the left side of the bell curve that represents the typical church life cycle: A church’s mission and direction are clear, but they often lack alignment around strategy and structure (clarity of roles and responsibilities).
- On the right side of the life cycle: A church is married to its strategy and structure (in an unhealthy way), but lacks alignment around mission and future direction.
- To achieve alignment leaders must define reality by reminding others:
 - This is why we exist (our mission)
 - This is why we are stuck
 - This is why we must change
 - This is why we will change (Hint: It’s your mission!)

A Practical Example

- **Mission reminder** → God’s mission for our church is to help people move from where they are to where God wants them to be.
- **Acknowledge we’re missing the mark** → Though we continue to see people take their next steps toward Jesus at our church, we know we should be seeing more fruit.
- **Explain why we know we’re stuck** → We are seeing fewer new people connect to our ministry and fewer people say “yes” to Jesus. Because of that, we’re hearing fewer stories of life change.
- **Explain why change is needed** → We want to help as many people as possible move from where they are to where God wants them to be. Our current approach is not working. We will likely need to pursue some new strategies. That may make us feel a little

uncomfortable. It makes me uncomfortable. But we will never let our methods get in the way of our mission. The way we do church will never be as important as why we do church.

Leading Change

- The 8 Steps of Dr. John P. Kotter's model:
 - Create a sense of urgency
 - Build a guiding coalition
 - Form a strategic vision and initiatives
 - Enlist a volunteer army
 - Enable action by removing barriers
 - Generate short-term wins
 - Sustain acceleration
 - Institute change
- Embrace the "DTR" moment to create a sense of urgency, begin to build a guiding coalition and begin to cast vision for a strategic shift in your ministry strategy to become the best church *for* your community.
- Why don't pastors often embrace DTR moments?
 - Senior pastors are often optimists.
 - Senior pastors are often people pleasers.
 - Senior pastors tend to view the need to change as admitting failure.

Next Steps

- Take our [FREE Unstuck Church Assessment](#) to see where your church sits today in the typical church lifecycle.
- To learn more about building alignment, register for our Unstuck Masterclass: [4 Keys to Align Your Strategy and Your Team](#).
- Check out Tony's book, [The Unstuck Church](#).
- Take a look at John P. Kotter's book, [Leading Change](#).

Listen to the episode on iTunes or at theunstuckgroup.com/episode189.