

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

# Hacks for Gaining Traction on Priorities

## - Episode 191

### *Creating Alignment in Your Church (Part 3)*

One of the most common frustrations we hear from church leaders is that they invest time praying, dreaming, talking, and planning around what God has next for their ministry, but then nothing happens. There's no follow-through. A distraction, or a crisis—something that feels more urgent—consistently derails the leader and the team from executing on the real priorities. Sound familiar?

In this episode, Tony and Amy discuss seven hacks leaders can use to align the team around executing on the ministry priorities.

#### ***#1 Calendar: Put strategic planning on your calendar.***

- Put an ANNUAL strategic plan refresh on the calendar, and make sure it occurs before annual budget planning.
- Put QUARTERLY strategic plan check-ins on the calendar.
- PUT WEEKLY strategic time on your calendar. Aim to block out 20% of your time (that's one full day a week) for strategic work vs. 80% of time to handle the "whirlwind."

#### ***#2 Sprints: Consider 90/30 sprints.***

- 90-day action steps on priority initiatives, followed by 30-days to review/refresh plans... and breathe/rest.
- Schedule those 30-day windows around the major holidays and the busy ministry seasons (December, April, August).

#### ***#3 Project Managers: Add project managers to your team.***

- The biggest gap we see on church teams: There's lots of relational-wiring and a void when it comes to strategic/administrative/systems-minded people. We are the body of Christ. God has uniquely gifted people in his church to shine in this role.
- You need to identify one project manager for every priority initiative team.

#### ***#4 Technology: Find an online solution to help you manage initiatives.***

- You can't effectively manage projects and tasks through paper, email and text messages.

- Use a tool like Asana, Monday.com, Wrike, etc.
- Some people will need more training, but don't make it optional. When someone says, "I can't or won't learn how to use that web app," it's like they're saying, "I won't answer my phone. I won't check email." What we hear: "I won't do the job that you are paying me to do."

### **#5 Humility: Start with "I Don't Know."**

- Before you tackle a new initiative, admit what you don't know. Do your research. Ask questions outside your team and outside your church.
- The bigger the church, the more there tends to be an unwillingness to learn from other churches or organizations outside the church.
- When leaders stop learning, the organizations they lead stop learning.

### **#6 Time: Lead pastors, give the plan enough time.**

- Sometimes the enemy of traction is your next shiny new idea. Sabbaticals, conferences, books, podcasts, coffees with other pastors... lead pastors often get new inspiration and move on to the next thing before the team has had time to execute the last idea.
- You'll have a chance to introduce that shiny new idea during the next refresh of your strategic plan. Taking more time to evaluate it will also help to confirm it's worth the investment of your team's focus.

### **#7 Pause: Know when to pause action and pivot.**

- Strategic plans have to pause when we face a new, significant crisis.
- Systems people can get lost in efficiently working their systems and miss the fact that the world around them is experiencing a disruption.
- Sometimes the pivots you make as you respond to the crisis actually help you gain traction on your long-term mission and vision objectives.

## **Next Steps**

How would your church grow if your whole team was pulling in the same direction?

On May 13, join us for a 1-day livestream Masterclass to equip you to align your team: Register to participate in the [4 Keys to Align Your Strategy and Your Team](https://theunstuckgroup.com/masterclass) event at [theunstuckgroup.com/masterclass](https://theunstuckgroup.com/masterclass).

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