

Essentials to Leadership: Strategic Planning

Lesson designed by: Bob Turner

Course description: Strategic Planning– part 3

We continue to focus our attention in the area of strategic planning. The necessity of goals is critical to the success of the church. Too many congregations coast along hoping that everything will be different with a new preacher or once they have elders. As essential as vision is to the growth and development of the church, so is strategic planning.

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Specified 10 reasons why goals are important for the church today.
- B. Discussed a minimum of five ways we can achieve goals.

Outline of the class:

- A. Divide the class into groups of four. Ask each group to take 10 minutes to list as many reasons as possible for why we should have goals in the church today.
- B. Once they have completed this task, ask each group to share one reason from their list and go around the room until all the reasons are listed. Write them on the whiteboard. A few reasons to consider are listed below:
 - 1. Goals help us use our time more efficiently.
 - 2. Goals establish unity, order, and keep us focused.
 - 3. Goals unleash the power of potential among those achieving them.
 - 4. Goals provide followers confidence and assurance.
 - 5. Goals make it possible to measure our progress.
 - 6. Goals give followers the motivation they need to stay active.
 - 7. Goals prevent procrastination.
 - 8. Goals hold us accountable to get the work done.
 - 9. Goals help us believe in ourselves and the power of God at work in us.
 - 10. Goals are the only way to succeed and win.
- C. Ask each group to work together now to list three or four ways that will help us achieve goals (take about 5-10 minutes).
- D. Again, ask for one at a time from each group and list them out on the whiteboard. A few suggestions are listed below.

1. Begin at the end (Stephen Covey). The idea is to think about our eulogy. What do we want people to say about us when we die? If desired, ask each student to write a paragraph in answer to this question, and ask them to share with the class. If that is what we want people to say about us when we die, then we have to live that way now.
2. Understand where we are now – unless we know where we are NOW, we can never determine where to start in order to reach the goals ahead. What resources do we have available? Who are the people that will be involved to achieve this goal? What are the strengths and weaknesses we face in achieving this goal?
3. Time-management – We have to manage our time well if we are to achieve our goals.
4. Minimize distractions – distractions come but put something in place that will help minimize them when they do come.
5. WRITE THEM DOWN!! Every resource that deals with goals and goal-setting emphasizes the necessity of writing down our goals and placing them where they can be seen always.
6. Look at the goal – this is perhaps another way of restating number five, but we have to keep the goal before us visually. Put up some sort of reference point by which we can see the progress as we move ahead. A goal visual board is helpful.
7. Do not try to do it alone – the church is a family, and one of the best ways to achieve goals is to allow everyone to get involved and help achieve it.
8. Sustain motivation – if we are to achieve goals, we have to find ways to sustain motivation. This is why it is important to have both short-term and long-range goals. Achieving short-term goals helps keep us motivated toward the long-range goals.
9. Evaluate often – regular times of evaluation are essential to achieving goals because it allows for regular updates on the progress. In the end, we can make modifications, if necessary.
10. Remember the WHY – remember why you started, remember where you are headed, remember the steps to get you there, and remember everyone who is invested to achieve this goal.

Conclusion:

- A. Goals are critical to the success of the church. Goals are not always about the numbers of people sitting in the pew or converted. Goals help us have direction. We need short-term and long-range goals.
- B. This class does not help set goals, but it is critical to know why we need goals and to discuss ways we can achieve them. Make your own list of ways to achieve the goals set for the church and get everyone involved in the pursuit.

- C. Next week, we will continue our discussion about strategic planning and goal setting. We will talk about SMARTER goals and begin the process of thinking about goals for the church.

Recommended Reading:

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great*

Collins, Jim. *Built to Last*

Clinton, Bobby. *Bridging Strategies*

See the following link: <http://bobbyclinton.com/store/books-manuals/bridging-strategies/>

Hybels, Bill. *Courageous Leadership*

Kouzes, James M. and Barry Z. Posner. *A Leader's Legacy*

Maxwell, John. *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

Covey, Stephen. *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*