

The Church Doctor Report

www.churchdoctor.org

Your Church Staff: Asset or Liability? The Invisible Hole in Your Church's Financial Bucket

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[Kent Hunter](#) leads Church Doctor Ministries and oversees a team of consulting Church Doctors who live throughout North America. Kent is the designer of the Staffing and the Church Government Consultations used by Church Doctor Ministries.

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When is it needed?

Greetings in Christ!

The Church Doctor® Report provides a quick read of strategic and influential information. This information is free to share as long as the source is respected.

Forward The Church Doctor® Report to those in your network of influence and add value to their lives! Forward it to staff and leaders in your church, denomination, network, or fellowship.

At a time of serious recession, challenge in the workplace is a major issue. In an increasingly secular society, challenges for church staff are off the chart. What is your church doing about it? The answer for most churches falls in one of two categories: (1) nothing or (2) our budget is tight, we are talking about reducing staff—an approach that adds more stress to staff, resulting in less productivity.

If all that weren't enough, how to work as staff is a significant challenge for anyone working at a church over the last twenty years. Why? Change of epochal proportions. In the internet explosion, the amount of information has an overwhelming result: change. Not just change: rapid change. That has required three evolving reorientations. Many church staffs don't know it, don't get it, haven't made the changes, and are struggling.

(1) If you're old enough to remember the 1980s, you will recall the era of hierarchical staff. The strong focus of that decade was management. The teaching was: learn to manage your staff well.

(2) In the 1990s, with increasing technology and the accelerator pressed further on change, staff management didn't work anymore. The focus moved from management to leadership. The teaching was: learn to be a good leader of your staff. During this era, universities that taught management added courses on leadership. The bookshelf for management had to be expanded for the growing number of resources on leadership. In the complexity of a world where the speed of information and change multiplied exponentially, the one-minute manager had to become the leader with excellence.

(3) In this last decade, with the increasing speed of life, the shift has moved from leading the team to team leadership.

When you need to add staff.

When you want to increase staff cohesiveness.

When you want to gain at least 20% more efficiency from staff.

When you have a staff that is not entirely on the same page.

When you sense one or more staff members are not a good fit.

When you must reduce or rearrange staff to respond to new circumstances.

How it helps.

Uses diagnostic tools.

Focuses spiritual gifts and philosophy of ministry harmony.

Improves team dysfunctions.

Grows staff working relationships.

Helps bring missional momentum to your church.

June 2010 Emergent Emersion Experience

June 3-10, 2010, Church Doctor Ministries will lead a group of pastors and church leaders to the church that, for twenty-five years, has been the source of a spreading world revival. A movement is more caught than taught. This trip may be eligible for advanced degree credit at some seminaries, Bible colleges, or Christian universities.

Read more information on this experience in the [Sheffield Report](#).

For an application e-mail: jasonatkinson@churchdoctor.org

RESOURCES

Bechet, Thomas P. *Strategic Staffing: A Comprehensive System for Effective Workforce Planning*. New York City, NY: AMACOM Books, 2008.

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Church Doctor Ministries

Looking in the mirror your church staff members should have seen three changes:

(1) From the person who is managed to (2) the team player who is led well to (3) the person who leads, interfacing with the team.

Everyone in the recession workplace is working harder for less. This is true for your church staff, as well. They have an added challenge: during the same time, 1980-2010, the world around your church has become increasingly secular. The end result is that day-to-day ministry is two to three times harder. To run that equation the other direction, it takes two to three times as many staff to accomplish the same ministry today as it did thirty years ago. If your church is the same size in worship as in 1980, do you have two to three times as many staff? I'm guessing not. In fact, as our consultants work with churches of all brands, the common discussion we hear in this economic meltdown is about reducing staff! Like the famous words of the Apollo 13 astronaut (slightly revised), "Church, we have a problem!" However, much like the moon mission gone awry, the church has some creative opportunities.

Ministry Momentum Asset

With tighter budgets, staff effectiveness is more important than ever. As you make tough financial decisions, one of the best choices, for the sake of your church, is to invest, now, in your present staff. While many church leaders are talking about cutbacks, consider the best defense an offense. If you invest a small amount in staff, they become more effective. You don't add, but multiply a momentum asset. These staff issues give you momentum:

- Many church staffs are together concerning the mission of the church, but could be welded together 25-30% more in the area we call the philosophy of ministry. This area deals with understanding the uniqueness of your church, priorities, what we do well.
- 60-75% of those on church staffs know something about their spiritual gifts. They may also know something about the gifts of a few others on staff. However, they have never reflected on the corporate profile of the staff gift mix. They don't operate from that biblical paradigm. Staff effectiveness could grow 20% in this area at most churches.
- Somewhere close to 90% of staffs have never learned about the MinistryStyles Toolbox Analysis profile of each staff member. This issue includes primary personality type, personality under pressure, how each one learns, is motivated, has fundamental needs, makes decisions. This is about how God has uniquely created each one on the team. To function from that perspective raises effectiveness 15%.

40-50% of church staffs would have challenges with at least two of Patrick Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a

[Two Kinds of Leadership](#)

Audio Resource
www.churchdoctor.org

Lencioni, Patrick. *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Maxwell, John C. *How Successful People Think: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009.

Osborne, Larry. *Sticky Teams: Keeping Your Leadership Team and Staff on the Same Page*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

MinistryStyles Toolbox Analysis

ProApse Software
www.ministrytba.com

Conflict Management Survey
TeleoMetrics International
www.telemetrics.com

Ten Investments in Church Staff

1. Make sure staff has a balanced life: work and rest.
2. Clearly articulate a Philosophy of Ministry and use it regularly to define focus and add staff.
3. Develop a culture of team leaders. Empower everyone to lead.
4. The senior leader leads best as a playing coach.
5. Develop a staff spiritual gifts corporate file. Learn to operate from the perspective of your gifts.
6. Teach staff the dynamics of conflict management.
7. Spend time as a staff having fun, developing relationships.
8. Monitor the stress level of staff. Provide appropriate help when signs of depression and nervousness are detected.

Team (the five dysfunctions are: (1) absence of trust; (2) fear of conflict; (3) lack of commitment; (4) avoidance of accountability; and (5) inattention to results). Our Staffing Consultations demonstrate that, numbers 2 and 5 show up most often. Working through roadblock areas improves the effectiveness of a church staff another 20%.

- 10-20% of staffs with four or more people have one person who is perceived to create over 33% of the problems. 50% of the time this person can be helped. 50% of the time the person is in a wrong fit and should leave. Dealing with it improves staff effectiveness significantly, up to 30%. Using an objective, outside consultant decreases damage control by 95%.

- 98% of those on staff have never had any training in conflict management. Conflict management is a lost discipline among church staffs. This is one of several reasons over half of church workers score high in the categories of "nervous" and "depressed." (Other issues include "too much work-not enough staff," "lack of ministry finances," "poor supervision," "a problem person on staff.")

Pleasers and Dreamers

Why don't churches invest in their staffs?

- (1) The senior leader doesn't bring the need to the attention of those who could raise financial resources to get help. This may be related to ignorance that help exists, or pride-it reflects that the senior leader can't fix it.
- (2) Christians are, by nature, dreamers. Trusting God, we fail to take action, hoping the problem will "go away."
- (3) We are people pleasers. Those who are in ministry love people. The dark side of love is failure to confront problems and problem people.
- (4) We focus too much on management and too little on leadership. Leaders make the hard calls.
- (5) We spend too much energy symptom-solving, not problem-solving. We are often naïve about the complexities of life on a church staff. We are cheap and don't invest financial resources in one of our greatest assets: staff.

The Bucket Leak

Millions of dollars are lost in church effectiveness and productivity due to staff issues. If that much money came up missing on the church books, we would call in an auditor, and maybe the police. Staff losses in asset value represent a small hole in the church bucket. However, it drips continuously. This value loss is not visibly tangible. It is best measured when issues are addressed and staff functions well-by comparison to church life before the changes. It is hard to quantify the stress and energy loss of a staff functioning at only 80%. It is a bucket that drips forever. What is the price tag for the ongoing stress on the senior leader? What is the impact of

9. Get help from the outside. Objective input works best to improve staff effectiveness, and provides damage control.

10. Train church leaders that staff investment is one of the best uses of resources, even- and especially-when resources are tight.



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frustration among staff?

This can be fixed. For most staffs, it takes a process of outside intervention with a specialist. The process begins with a diagnosis, using tools that help staff understand themselves-and each other. The specialist is objective, free of emotions, fair and accepting to all. It works best when the interventionist is not a counselor to the staff or a person on staff, or a member of the church. It works best when the interventionist is a consultant who is there to help the staff for the client, the church. Sometimes it leads to a confidential recommendation for a staff member to see a counselor, but not usually.

For many churches, it is time to stop ignoring the obvious. Your staff is one of your greatest assets. In a difficult economy, it may feel counterintuitive to change your thinking from reducing staff to investing resources to increase productivity. Every church staff can become 20% more productive. What would it mean for your church if the bucket didn't drip for the next three years? Your investment in the staff doesn't cost, it pays.

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Subscribers to the Church Doctor Report will also receive a 5% discount when they contract a Staffing Consultation with CDM prior to June 1, 2010.

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