

Sierra Leadership Network: Month 12, Year 1

Participation in the Sierra Leadership Network (SLN) is a process of adult learning. It is the responsibility of the participant to do their assignments and seek out the necessary accountability. It is the responsibility of the participant to schedule time with their mentor, not the other way around. Here is a checklist of this month's exercises and space for comments. All useful generated materials should be placed in your Sierra Leadership Network binder. The mentor will look over the exercises and be given opportunity to add their own comments. Be sure you take your binder to the meetings at Granite Springs Church to also be available to the SLN directors.

Month 12, Year 1

Date Completed

____/____/____
Mentor Comments

Church Administration

[Estimated time: _____]

____/____/____
Mentor Comments

Church Budget

[Estimated time: _____]

____/____/____
Mentor Comments

Self-Starter

[Estimated time: _____]

Participant Signature

Mentor Signature

I. Church Administration

Part of what is so difficult about leading a church is that it is such a multi-faceted thing. It is a community of followers of Jesus Christ. It is also an organization that has a budget, officers, employees, and physical assets all of which need managing and directing. The majority of its “assets” are not easily deployable because they are the members, all volunteers that at any point in time can relocate to a new city, have a marriage crisis effectively eliminating them from the team, quit over something they didn’t like, or just decide they want to do something else. At the same time the stakes and expectations are tremendous in terms who the church should be and what it should accomplish. All of this needs to be accomplished by leaders, many who have had no formal training, most of whom are volunteers themselves. The point leader’s energy is often so diffused that they struggle to stay focused. Preaching sermons, visiting old members, welcoming visitors, being available for the next crisis or just to share a cup of coffee. It’s a tough challenge. Church administration is about leadership and leading through others.

Read chapters 1 through 4 in Bill Hybel’s book Courageous Leadership which we handed out at the beginning of the year. If you have time, read the whole book. Answer the following questions about your church and discuss them with your mentor.

1. What is the vision or mission statement of your church? How many people in your church can rattle it off without thinking too much? On how many pieces of church literature can you easily find the vision/mission statement? Does the mission statement function in your church? Is there an implicit mission statement in your church that everyone understands but no one can articulate or are there competing missions in your church?
2. How focused is the churches ministry? Does your church have goals, are they known and are they pursued? What kind of metaphor can you come up with to describe how your church pursues it’s goals? Is it like a football team using it’s assets to move the ball down the field? Is it like a wounded political administration that is just trying not to make a public mistake? Is it like a group of good old boys hanging out at a coffee shop who communicate to all the world “this is our place and we know how we like it...” What would you say?
3. What percentage of your church really does the work? Take out your directory and count how many people just attend vs. how many people volunteer in a significant way at least once a month? Does the church actively seek to enlarge that number? What does or could it do to accomplish this goal?
4. How does leadership development happen in your church? Who does it and how?
5. What is the volunteer climate at your church? Are they serving with joy? Are they grudgingly doing chores? How are they honored and rewarded? Is it easy to find volunteers or is getting volunteers always a chore?

6. How is the health of the highest levels of leadership, the council? Is the council the right size? How is morale? What is done to train current office bearers or to prepare future office bearers?
7. How are the staff relationships at your church? How are staff hired? Are they evaluated? Are quality staff persons encouraged to stay long or are staff positions a revolving door?
8. Given what you've learned in Hybel's book, what might be some good next steps for your church in terms of administration and leadership development?

Church Budgeting

1. Get a copy of your church budget and it's latest budget report. Can you understand it? Is your church's use of money open and transparent to anyone with questions?
2. Investigate and describe your church's budgeting process? How does it decide what to spend money on next year? What kinds of priorities does the budget reflect?
3. How would you describe the attitude towards the church budget:
 - a. We've got to pay the bills, but let's keep church as cheap as possible so we don't have to give too much.
 - b. Let's fund this thing so it's respectable and comfortable but don't take too many risks with the budget. Set it so we can easily reach it.
 - c. Let's take a step of faith and challenge this body to do the most it can so the church can do the most it can.
 - d. None of the above: describe.
4. What are your thoughts on how your church is doing with the budget. Should it be more aggressive? Conservative? Should it prioritize different elements of the church's program?
5. If possible, talk to a deacon about the upcoming budget. I'm sure they might be interested in hearing some of your thoughts. :)

Being a Self-Starter

Bill Hybels in a recent Leadership Summit spoke about what he believes a good leader must have. One of the traits he espoused was “a bias towards action.” He looks for someone who doesn’t just sit around and talk, someone who doesn’t just critique and criticize the actions of others, someone who doesn’t just have a pity party for when things don’t go well, but someone who takes action and gets involved. If you have come to this assignment, and completed all others up until this point then you are probably a good self-starter. You have taken it upon yourself to do this program which costs you time, costs you money, forces you to stretch, all for little more than a vision for what God can do with your life. I want you to talk to your mentor, and/or write a brief description, diagnosis of yourself as a self starter. What can you point to in your past that shows yourself to be a self starter? What are some failures you’ve had in this area? What are some next steps you need to take to be more action oriented, procrastinate less, and decide you want to be an active part of God’s kingdom effort here on earth? What are some obstacles that must be overcome? Discuss these with your mentor, invite him/her to hold you accountable, and pray over these things.