

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH FROM STUDENT AT THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE TO AND INCLUDING SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Church is increasingly recognising the importance of leadership and effective team working.

This brief discussion paper outlines a leadership development programme for students at theological college, for those recently ordained, for those ordained some years ago and for ministers in senior appointments. It is hoped that this paper is equally relevant and helpful for leaders and all who support them in all Christian denominations.

Our aim is to bring together key trainers and educators from the denominations to begin a process of integrating the learning and formation opportunities which are on offer. This could prevent competition, identify gaps in provision and begin to establish a continuing ministerial education highway. Our work might become a resource for the new Regional Training Partnerships which are being developed across the country.

We will ensure that each learning and development programme is (a) written in the context of Christian theology and ministry; (b) forms part of an ongoing programme of reflection and learning; and (c) covers what a leader needs to be (character and calling) as well what h/she should do (skills).

The programme is structured around the key transition points in ministry i.e.

- A: Undergoing theological training
- B: Entry into public ministry
- C: Minister in charge
- D: The next transition
- E: Senior appointment
- F: Planning for retirement

In section G there are some stand alone 1 - 2 day programmes

A: UNDERGOING THEOLOGICAL TRAINING

A 1: Foundational Theological Training

Leadership can be woven into most of the subjects covered in the theological colleges.

Topics that might be covered include:

Christian roots of leadership and how they still influence today's leaders

Relevance and importance of leadership to ministry

The differences between leaders in the churches and leaders in business

Understanding the context in which leadership takes place

The importance of character as well as calling, gifts and skills

Levels of leadership – personal, team, area, overall, community

Functions of a leader – planning, briefing etc.

Essence of servant leadership, collaborative leadership and community building

Leadership and change and transformation

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B: ENTRY INTO PUBLIC MINISTRY e.g. curate or probationer minister

Introduction: Concept of a threshold, of lay person to ordained. Shaping the participant's expectation of the culture; continuous learning; discernment and from hereon in using a consultant or mentor, peer support, self managed learning.

B1: Personal Leadership Programme (360° feedback plus 3 day workshop)

Primarily, covering the attitudes and skills of personal effectiveness. Topics might include:

Adapting continuous learning to match preferred learning styles and multiple learning intelligences; the learning cycle and learning journals; shifting mental perceptions; creative thinking and problem solving techniques; self limiting beliefs; balance; proactivity; generating choices; meditation; introduction to EQ; managing own energy level; sense of uniqueness; clarifying what is important; preparing a personal vision; using time effectively; setting goals; planning the week; dealing with time stealers; personal action planning.

B2: Developing Effective Working Relationships (2 days) - For all individuals and intact teams

This workshop focuses on issues which participants bring along. Subjects might include:

Building rapport, trust and credibility

What motivates me and other people

Contextual listening

Seeing situations from multiple points of view and generating options

Mirroring other people's preferences in the way they think, communicate and make decisions (possibly Myers Briggs Personality Types and their relevance)

Win-win thinking and outcome thinking

Persuading and influencing

The roles that suit me best

Handling conflict

Tips on building up networks

Celebrating diversity

Personal action planning; sustaining the learning

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C: APPOINTMENT AS A MINISTER (a challenging transition)

Introduction: Moving to the next team working position. Now the person in charge. The team leader. An opportunity to reconnect with one's own personal vision.

C1: Being the New Leader (2 days)

Discerning, perceiving, communicating
Finding your feet
Understanding the parish as a family system
The importance of discussing the purpose of the local ministry and the benefits of a shared mission, vision and values
Clarifying roles
Leading and enabling others including volunteers
Getting support e.g. coaching and mentoring
Bringing more than one parish together
Leading change and transformation
Giving and receiving feedback
Handling difficult situations and complexity
Representing the local church beyond the parish and relating well to the wider church and with other faith leaders

C2: Team Leading (2 days) – For team leaders

The programme is built around participants' learning objectives. It includes exercises in team leading. Topics likely to be included are:
Types of teams and groups
What a team leader needs to be and do
The functions of a team leader
Team charter (mission, vision etc)
Team roles
Stages of team development
Situational leadership
Team mapping
Practical problem solving on e.g. managing expectations

C3: Communicating Effectively (2 days) – Intact ministry teams

Effective communication at its best
Current reality and the things I/we need to improve
Intention, behaviour and impact
Win-win-win thinking
Creating synergy
Contextual listening
Giving and receiving feedback
Communicating to a range of audiences
Consulting and influencing
Chairing meetings effectively
Managing good communication channels
Developing, managing and using an effective network of contacts.

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C4: Coaching and Mentoring (2 days) – For incumbents, ministers in charge, other team leaders and external coaches

Definition and benefits of coaching
Why a coaching system is being introduced
The coaching model we will use
Appreciating the context and roles of the person being coached
Types of questions
Giving feedback
Contextual listening
Practice sessions
Personal coaching styles
How people see the world - Facts and interpretations
Other models e.g. situational leadership, the learning cycle
Use of cards, objects, movement
Ethical guidelines; coaching v counselling
Administrative matters and on-going training and support.

C5: Valuing Diversity (2 days) - For all individuals and intact teams

Defining diversity and what it means in local ministry
Exploring differences of attention, learning preferences and work focus, in yourself and others
Identifying the consequences and implications of this diversity in teams and for your team
Exploring diversity of basic drivers, assumptions and blind spots
Identifying a vision of valuing diversity and your own level of skill
Working to improve relationships within the team
Identifying cultural differences which can influence effective team working
Identifying ways of working to make more effective use of the diversity within the team.

D: THE NEXT TRANSITION

Introduction: May be to a different context, to a more complex role, renegotiating where you are, moving to a different type of ministry

D1: Personal Transition at a Time of Change (1 day) For any individual going through major change

Change (external) and transformation (within)
Key models and processes
Personal and group exercises
Tools to facilitate problem solving
Strategies for handling future changes

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D2: Leading and Managing Change in the Church (1 day introductory) – Also suitable for senior ministers

Ample time is given for reflection and discussion. Topics will also include:
Change and transformation at the personal level
Key models e.g. four states of 'being'; the change curve
Ecclesiology – building the church and engaging with the community
Creating the need and the desire to change
A process for leading and managing change in the local church
Case studies, including turning round a declining church, leading two or more parishes

E: SENIOR APPOINTMENT

E1: Area Leadership (2 days) – for senior clergy. [Also suitable for ministers who lead large congregations]

The functions of an area/strategic leader
Discerning and deciding the journey; creating a shared mission, vision, values and plan
Aligning the capabilities, structure and communication channels with the plan
Developing and maintaining a culture conducive to building trust, learning and personal accountability
Creating a talent valued culture, succession planning
Communicating effectively within and outside the church
Building alliances, partnerships and effective networks
Supervision; coaching colleagues and being coached
Developing strategies for decline, growth and risk

E2: Building and Sustaining Effective Partnerships and Alliances with other Churches/Organisations (2 days) – For senior ministers. Also suitable for ministers who lead large congregations or who are involved in new forms of church

Facilitator inputs, personal work and working in small groups covering.
Rationale for alliances and partnering arrangements
Effective mindsets for partnering
The need for shared objectives
Choosing balanced success measures
The role of the sponsor
Legal considerations
Key interpersonal skills
Creating an influence plan to effect change
Managing changing expectations
Exchanging insights with the partner
Evaluating progress
Strategies for exiting an alliance

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F: PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT (Age 59 onwards)

Small group discussions dealing with topics the participants want to discuss. These might include:
Strategies for keeping fresh and keeping the vision alive – for oneself and for the local church
Preparing for loss of role and other adjustments
Considering options on retirement including e.g. 'permission to officiate'

G: STAND ALONE 1/2 – 2 day WORKSHOPS and/or self managed learning aids

These could include:

Building and maintaining a talent valued culture (2 days)
Building personal networking capability (2 days)
Facilitation skills (2-3 days)
Using time and energy effectively (1 day)
Effective motivation and delegation (1 day)
Effective presentations/proposals (1 day)
Effective meetings
Handling difficult situations
Communicate well
Optimise your decision making
Influence positively
Creating and sustaining an action learning set
Counselling skills programme
Disability equality training
Recruitment and selection skills
Assertiveness
Effective learning and memory skills
Emotional intelligence
Capitalising on using the internet
How stories and metaphors facilitate learning
Decision making and problem solving
Working with volunteers
The supportive spouse
Gender issues

With financial support a wide range of learning options could be made available including: Learning by phone; One to one coaching; action learning sets; e-courses; CDs; web based audios of live classes; special interest groups

This paper is based on an initial draft by Richard Fox. Richard is a partner in The Learning Corporation LLP, Guildford. He has worked with over 200 ministers on leadership, change, working well together and coaching. Several senior ministers have contributed to Richard's draft as have other training providers to the churches and also members of MODEM's Leadership Committee

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