

How to Improve Your Staff Meetings

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Profitable weekly church staff meetings are a necessity in a dynamic church. In a good staff meeting, two elements that are present are listening and delegation. Before one can delegate, he must listen to determine to what extent delegation is needed.

Good listening skills are not easily acquired, but anyone can learn to be a good listener. It takes much practice to listen to staff members and understand their points of view. How can a pastor develop a better staff meeting? By becoming a better listener.

Listening

1. Come to the staff meeting prepared to listen.

It takes effort to listen to someone. You cannot listen with a lot of interruptions. During staff meetings, no phone calls should be taken and no other meeting scheduled. Have a predetermined time set each week when the calendar is clear for the staff meeting. This lets other staff members know that their time is important to you.

2. Write down what you hear.

Always come prepared to write down what you hear. Have a notepad during the meeting to write down the ideas of other staff members. This communicates concern for what other staff members are saying.

3. Do not interrupt.

Often the tendency of the pastor is to interject his thoughts into the conversation, but he should wait. When a staff member is sharing a thought or idea, he or she may arrive at a solution. Once a person talks it out and hears his own idea, he may be able to answer his own questions. Allow adequate time for staff members to discuss issues in their ministry areas.

4. Summarize each staff member's report.

After the person is finished, summarize back to him the key points using his own words. An idea or new ministry may need further thought. Ask the staff member to further develop a few of the key points for the next staff meeting. This gives everyone time to think through the idea.

5. Ask for the input of others.

Other staff members may be able to see an idea from another angle. Ministries within a church are interdependent and not independent. It is encouraging to place an idea on the table and watch it come to life with the suggestions and help from everyone. Your staff is there to work as a team for the body of Christ.

Delegation

Upon listening to staff concerning an idea, a pastor may decide that delegation is needed to get the job done. When work is properly delegated, teamwork and increased efficiency result. There are several important principles to remember when delegating.

1. Make specific assignments.

Be clear and concise about what the responsibilities are and who owns those responsibilities. Make sure everyone understands what their duties are and when those duties are to be completed. When delegating responsibilities, do not make a general or vague assignment. Be specific.

2. Let the staff members do the work their way.

When delegating, allow for personal initiative. There is more than one way to get a task done. This allows for personal creativity within the staff.

3. Use teams whenever possible.

Assign the work to teams of two or more staff members. Let the teams work out the assignments within the team structure. Insist that the staff include church members when working on projects. The more members are involved, the more the church has ownership.

4. Keep a journal.

Once you've delegated an assignment, keep a journal of the progress. Ask for an update on the project each week. This will enable you to determine if the project will meet its deadline and is on track.

Delegation works when everyone clearly understands what their responsibilities are and when they are to be carried out. Listening and delegation within a weekly staff meeting will not only enhance the pastor's role, but they can also improve the morale of the staff team.

Do you want to have strong, profitable staff meetings? Develop the basic skills of communication and delegation, and watch your staff change from being a group of people to truly becoming a team.