Working Together:
The Pastor and Worship Leader
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How to Use This Tool
This Conference Classics process tool is designed to accompany an audio recording of a Willow Creek Association conference session. You can refer to the tool while listening to the session and use it afterward to dig deeper into the content, or you can use the tool to get the highlights without even listening to the session.

The tool consists of three parts:
- The PREVIEW section lists the problem that the session addresses and the recommendation that the speaker makes.
- The KEY CONCEPTS section breaks the session down into the core ideas most important for you to understand.
- The REFLECT section includes questions to help you practice, apply, and implement what you’ve learned. Although the questions are geared primarily to individuals, groups can use them as a discussion guide.
Problem: Many churches don’t maximize their potential because the relationship between the pastor and the programming team is weak.

Recommendation: Take practical steps to improve the relationship between your pastor and programming team so your ministry can flourish.

Key Concepts

The Relationship Between Arts and Teaching

- Finding the right balance is the goal.
  - Sometimes the reality of how it plays out is different than what was planned.
  - Pastors and worship leaders need to be honest with each other and share feedback.
  - In the past 20 years, many churches have shared the passion of recapturing the arts.
  - A new movement has developed which focuses more on teaching and moves away from the arts.
  - The relationship between arts, teaching, and worship is always an ongoing discussion.
- People have a longing for their hearts to be touched as well as a hunger for God’s Word.
- At Willow, Bill Hybels’ vision was that the power of the arts coupled with anointed biblical teaching was the best offering.
  - For each side of the equation, 30 to 35 minutes was allotted.
  - Willow still uses that formula today.
  - The spirits of the people would be diminished without the contribution of the artists.
  - By the same token, it is not just about what the artists can do; it is about the preaching and teaching of God’s Word.
- For the last 300 years people have approached faith through a focus on learning the facts about God.
- In the last 25 to 30 years, a shift has occurred in our culture in which people primarily want to “experience” God.
- It is through the arts that people experience God — but we don’t want to lose the point that the Word of God needs to be taught.

Sharing the Responsibility

- The church today wants to build biblically functioning communities that reflect what the Scripture teaches in all its fullness.
- The weekend service is the biggest front door to this goal.
- Pastors and artists need to share the responsibility, challenge, and adventure of designing these services.
- Some pastors want to micromanage and don’t give their artists enough free reign.
- Other pastors aren’t involved enough.
- The best arrangement is somewhere in the middle.
- In most cases, pastors need to be more involved.
- The pastor and the programming team have to share the same vision in order to strike the right balance between arts and teaching.