Leadership Development: A Working Model

Summary
Churches are always in need of more volunteer leaders, but many pastors are so busy keeping everything running that they haven’t had the time or capacity to dedicate to creating a leadership development process. Steve Stroope, senior pastor of Lake Pointe Church in Rockwall, Texas, believes that this problem cannot be ignored, because ministry is not meant to be done alone. In this issue of Defining Moments, Steve joins host Lisa Hartman to share his church’s leadership development model and offers practical how-to’s to help overworked pastors bring others in to share the load.

Outline
I. The Importance of Leadership Development
   A. Churches are always in need of more leaders.
   B. If pastors do not develop leaders, they will end up doing everything themselves.
      1. Pastors who do it all themselves limit the potential of the ministry.
      2. These overworked pastors will eventually burn out.

II. The Process of Creating the Leadership Development Model at Lake Pointe Church
   A. Every year, Lake Pointe would face a shortage of leaders.
   B. This continuing shortage convinced the church’s leadership that they had to do something different.
   C. The leadership development model was crafted through experimentation over a period of time.
   D. At first, leadership development was relationship driven, through coaching leaders one-on-one.
   E. Eventually, one person was not able to work with everyone, so the team then focused on fostering a culture of leadership development that was supported by systems.

III. Tips for Applying this Model to Your Church
   A. Customize leadership development to fit your own context rather than copying this model exactly.
   B. Listen for transferable principles that may apply to your situation.
   C. Realize that leadership development needs to be both relationship driven and content driven.

IV. Components of the Lake Pointe Leadership Development Model
   A. Some of the components are sequential, some are not, and some are overlapping.
   B. There are six components:
      1. Discovery
      2. Connection
      3. Training
      4. Resourcing
      5. Mentoring
      6. Celebration

V. Component One: Discovery
   A. Discovery involves finding the people who have the God-given gift of leadership.
B. Look not only for today’s leaders but also for tomorrow’s leaders, who are often found among your volunteers.
C. To find a good leader, recruit and develop more volunteers.

VI. Component Two: Connection
A. Connection involves helping people find their sweet spot.
B. Volunteers who have the gift of leadership will rise to the top when they are working in their individual areas of strength.
C. A volunteer center is one way to connect people to their place of ministry.
   1. Every weekend, Lake Pointe has a kiosk in the church lobby staffed by volunteers who help people discover their sweet spot.
   2. The kiosk has a list of the top ten areas of need for volunteers in the church.
   3. A spiritual assessment tool is available to help potential volunteers find out what they are good at and passionate about.
   4. This kiosk provides the effect of having a ministry fair every weekend.
D. New member orientation is another place to connect volunteers.
   1. One of the requirements for church membership is serving somewhere.
   2. New members receive information about all the ministries and have the responsibility to take the next step.
E. Incremental placement is another connection technique.
   1. Volunteer roles are divided into three levels (M1, M2, and M3), with M1 involving the least amount of skill and responsibility and M3 involving the most.
   2. A ministry leader can continue expanding a volunteer’s sphere of influence, increasing their role level, as long as the volunteer demonstrates faithfulness and confidence in that area of leadership.
   3. No committee dictates who serves where or how long they will serve.
   4. The volunteers themselves are in the best position to determine what they are good at and how they will serve.
   5. A culture of experimentation allows those who don’t like their role to quit without guilt.
   6. Once someone finds a role that fits, they’re welcome to stay there.
   7. Those who feel burdened by serving are asked to find only one or two areas to serve that really fit.
   8. Sometimes, people need to serve where they are not spiritually gifted in order to help out where help is needed, but long-term volunteering should be in roles that do fit.
   9. The role that fits is one that energizes rather than drains.
F. Every member is called to be a volunteer, but not every volunteer is a potential leader.
   1. While everyone is called to witness, some individuals possess the spiritual gift of evangelism.
   2. While everyone is commanded to give of their money, some individuals possess the spiritual gift of giving.
   3. Similarly, while everyone has influence and is called to use that influence to further the Kingdom, some individuals possess the spiritual gift of leadership.

VII. Component Three: Training
A. Potential leaders need task-specific training as well as general leadership training.
B. Lake Pointe provides training through Lake Pointe University, offered on Saturday mornings.
   1. The university has a theology school, a discipleship school, and a leadership school.
   2. The leadership school has four basic courses that every leader needs to take in sequence.
      a. The first course is “Vision and Values,” a three-and-a-half-hour course that reviews what Lake Pointe is about as a church.
      b. The second course, “Biblical Leadership,” is a Bible study of key passages that talk about leadership.
c. The third course, called “Leading a Team,” is very practical and uses some of Ken Blanchard’s material.

d. In the fourth course, “Becoming a Leader of Leaders,” the staff shares their latest learnings.

C. General leadership training enables the best communicators to present the same message to all the leaders in the church.

D. Although the courses in the leadership school are sequential, leadership training is more about being in an environment of learning rather than about following a prescribed path.

E. Individuals are accountable for their own growth.

F. Training is ongoing, never completed.

VIII. Component Four: Resourcing

A. Resourcing leaders means continually exposing them to what the senior staff leaders are learning.

B. If leaders throughout the church are exposed to the same ideas, they have context for the decisions being made.

C. Taking leaders to conferences and paying for their registration fees can be a means of affirming and investing in them.

D. Recommending and giving books to leaders is another means of resourcing them.
   1. Each leader at Lake Pointe is given at least one book a year.
   2. Lake Pointe’s bookstore has a leadership section, which contains only the books that the staff has recommended to help volunteers be better leaders.
   3. Having leaders read the same books provides a common language.

E. A pastor of a church with a limited budget still has options for resourcing volunteer leaders.
   1. Regularly recommend books to volunteer leaders, and those with the means can purchase the books themselves.
   2. Make room in the church budget for a leadership library.
   3. Go to conferences and then teach on what you’ve learned.

F. Focused resourcing — sifting through the available material and identifying which resources are most helpful — is one of the greatest gifts you can give to your leaders.

G. Don’t limit the task of choosing and recommending leadership resources to only one person on the team.

IX. Component Five: Mentoring

A. Mentoring includes the benefits that come from coaching and on-the-job training.

B. Most positions at Lake Pointe require having an apprentice.
   1. For example, in Lake Pointe’s Bible fellowships, both the teacher and the care leader each have an assistant.
   2. A new Bible fellowship cannot start unless all four positions (teacher, assistant teacher, care leader, and assistant care leader) are filled.

C. Doing ministry requires preparing the next generation for ministry.

D. Although those in M1 roles may not have apprentices, those in M2 and M3 roles must recruit an assistant who will eventually take over their role.

E. Lake Pointe also asks key leaders to look for potential leaders outside of their ministries and invite them into their lives.

X. Component Six: Celebrating

A. Because leaders tend to be task focused, they often neglect to take time to look back and celebrate.

B. During creation, each time God finished creating something, he stopped and said, “That’s good.”

C. Leaders need to stop regularly and say, “That’s good.”

D. Some celebration happens corporately, like at a quarterly leadership huddle or an annual leadership celebration.
E. Some celebration is on a more personal level as leaders individually affirm those whom they lead.
F. It’s important to pay attention to how a leader wants to be affirmed, whether through private or public recognition.
G. Giving a leader an opportunity to give input is another form of affirmation.

XI. The Role of Group Life in Leadership Development
   A. The greatest vehicle for leadership development is the small group.
   B. Small groups that take responsibility for leadership development will have a greater impact than preaching alone.
   C. Small groups help people start volunteering, and through volunteering, individuals can find their place of leadership.

XII. Help for Overworked Pastors
   A. Senior leaders who feel they have too much on their plate to do leadership development have the most to gain from doing leadership development.
   B. The Bible calls pastors to equip the saints to do the ministry.
   C. It’s unbiblical for leaders to do everything themselves.
   D. Take a first step by developing as a leader yourself.
   E. As you restart your own leadership development, invite others to join you.
   F. Give greater responsibility to those who are faithful with little.
Process Questions

1. At the beginning of this issue, Steve advised the listeners to customize leadership development to fit their own context. Below, write down the top two or three transferable principles or ideas from this session that you could apply as you develop a leadership development model for your specific environment.
2. Leadership development happens best in an environment that emphasizes serving and learning. Take five minutes to reflect on the presence or absence of these characteristics in your church environment, and journal your thoughts below. Use the questions in the box to help stimulate your thinking.

- Are your church members expected to find a place to serve?
- What tools are your church members given to help them find their ministry sweet spot?
- How are your volunteer leaders encouraged to continue learning and honing their skills?
- Are your current leaders on the lookout for tomorrow’s leaders?
- Have you overlooked the potential that groups have to raise up volunteer leaders?
3. Although the nuances of a leadership development model need to be adapted to each church’s unique context, the basic principles of leadership development are consistent everywhere. With the six components of the Lake Pointe’s leadership development process as a guide, use this time to evaluate how well your church does leadership development.

   a. Circle the appropriate numbers below to rate how well your church does at each component.

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<th>Component Description</th>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
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<td>Preparing the next generation for ministry</td>
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   b. For the component that you rated the lowest, write down at least one action you will take to begin to improve in this area.
4. Leadership development in a church needs to start with the senior leader.

   a. Take five minutes to examine your dedication to raising up leaders around you. Are you ever guilty of trying to do it all yourself? Journal your thoughts below.

   b. As a first step for overworked pastors, Steve suggested investing in your own leadership development. Below, write down one thing that you will do in the next two weeks to invest in your leadership.
c. The next step Steve suggested is to invite others to join you. Write down the names of at least one or two people that you will consider inviting into your leadership development process.

d. Finally, spend three minutes brainstorming leadership development activities that you could do with the people whose names you listed above. Some ideas are provided to help you get started. After brainstorming, commit to inviting them in the next 30 days to at least one of the leadership development activities you listed.

☐ Attend a conference or workshop together.

☐ Read a leadership-related book and meet to discuss it.

☐ Have lunch together so I can share what I’ve learned from this issue of Defining Moments.

☐ Listen to a future Defining Moments together.
5. Bonus: Steve mentioned how Marcus Buckingham’s books have been influential in how he approaches connecting volunteers with their sweet spots. Visit www.simplystrengths.com to find out more about Marcus’s research, or consider purchasing *The Leadership Summit 2007 Team Edition on DVD*, which includes Marcus’ session titled *Go Put Your Strengths to Work*. 