

Things That Make for Effective Church Councils

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Your effectiveness as a leader
depends on...

1. Who you
are

2. What you
do



It Starts With People...

(who you are)

- What kind of people serve on church councils?
- What kinds of leaders are we looking for in Christ's church?

It starts with people...



- Persons who are living as disciples of Jesus Christ
- Persons who pray, worship, read the Bible, cultivate connections with believers, give generously, serve willingly

It starts with people...

Controllers? Or Permission-Givers?



Permission Givers

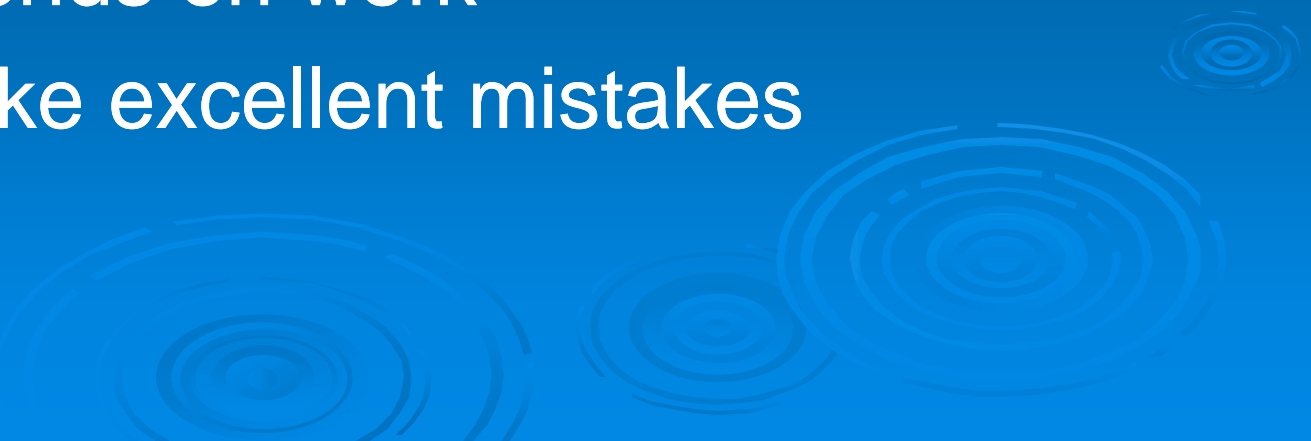
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Controllers


- Trust people
- Risk takers
- “Why not?!”
- Future more important
- O.K. with uncertainty
- Learn from mistakes
- Confident not cocky
- Set free
- Open to Holy Spirit
- Open to surprise
- Suspicious of people
- Play it safe
- “Why do that?”
- Past more important
- Want guarantees first
- Don’t make mistakes
- Fearful
- Keep hands on
- Lock on own agenda
- Screen
- Want all predictable

It starts with people...

Living out of God's Abundance:

- Audit the assets God has already provided
 - Expect the best assets to be right under your noses
 - Assume goodwill in others
 - Pray as if it all depends on prayer; work as if it all depends on work
 - Plan to make excellent mistakes
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Before you build the agenda... (what you do)

- Understand governing documents
 - Follow your strategic plan
 - Work from a yearly calendar
 - Follow-up on past actions
 - Scan the horizon; anticipate the future
 - Use executive committee or other smaller groups
 - Collaborate with church staff
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1. Understand governing documents

- The Bible
- The Confessions
- Constitutions & bylaws
- Parish agreement (if multi-point)
- Policies and procedures (e.g. personnel, budgetary, building/grounds, minutes, etc.)



2. Follow your strategic plan



3. Work from a yearly calendar



4. Follow up on past actions

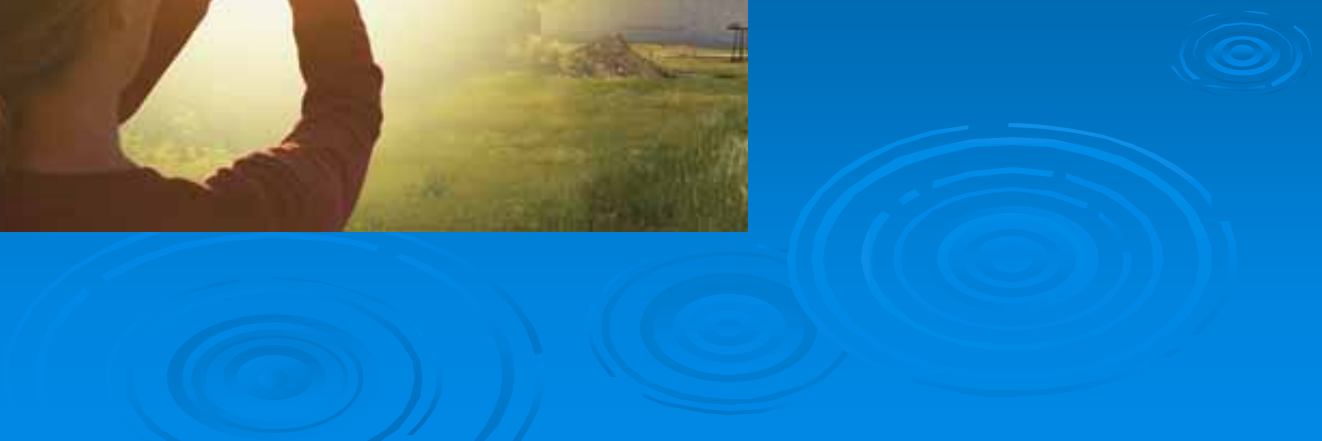
➤ WHO?

➤ *WILL DO WHAT?*

➤ *BY WHEN?*

➤ *(And who will check up on this task, on behalf of the council?)*

5. Scan the horizon... anticipate the future...



6. Use executive committee or other smaller groups



7. Collaborate with church staff



Keys to Effective Agenda Building

- Review prior minutes and elicit input from committees
- Identify team-building, education and business components of the agenda
- Distribute agenda in advance—for study, prep, prayer
- Front-load action items...anticipate the items that will require your best discussion and action
- Craft wording for motions in advance
- Allocate an amount of time for each agenda matter
- Integrate breaks/snacks/meals into the agenda
- Anticipate and assign follow-up responsibilities
- Provide reflection/evaluation time at end of meeting

Effectively managing meetings

- Be punctual (start and finish on time)—state a start time and end time
- Eliminate (or at least minimize) distractions
- Follow the approved agenda
- Establish reasonable debate rules/protocols
- Frame issues for decision carefully
- Listen actively
- Address the relevant issues
- Recap decisions and assign follow-up responsibilities
- Obtain timely feedback
- Expect chairperson to function as a chairperson—fairly facilitating full discussion by all

Roles of Leaders Between Meetings (back to who you are...)



1. Listen...take the pulse of the congregation



2. Clarify, share accurate information



3. Provide helpful feedback to other leaders



4. Impede disease processes or “viruses” in the church



5. Avoid triangulation



6. Speak for yourself... take stands!




7. Stay connected with those who disagree



8. Think US, not THEM



Roles of Council Leaders in Between Meetings

- Listen, take the pulse of the congregation
 - Clarify, share accurate information
 - Provide helpful feedback to church staff and elected leaders
 - Impede disease processes or “viruses”
 - Avoid triangulation
 - Encourage people to speak for themselves
 - Take stands
 - Stay connected with those who disagree
 - Think “US”, not “THEM”
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For discussion...

- Recall a leader you have admired. What personality traits made him or her a good leader?
- What's one thing you and others could do to make your council more effective?

