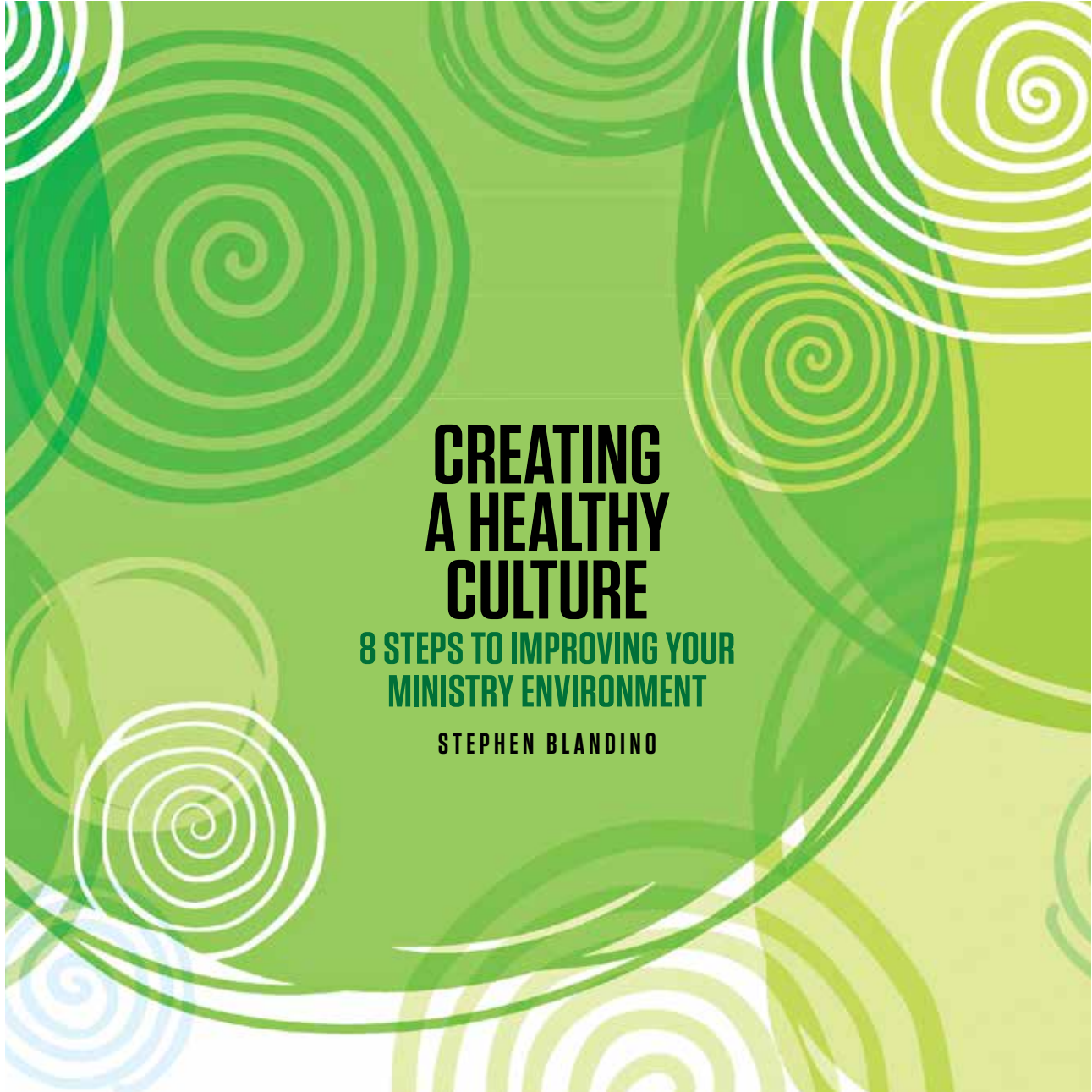


Influence
MAGAZINE

MAKE IT COUNT

An eight-week study
for leadership teams



CREATING A HEALTHY CULTURE

**8 STEPS TO IMPROVING YOUR
MINISTRY ENVIRONMENT**

STEPHEN BLANDINO

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Model Trustworthy Behavior

Assess: How does trust impact a church or organization's culture?

Insights and Ideas

First Corinthians 4:2 says, "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." The word "faithful" implies the idea of trustworthiness. Leaders are entrusted with responsibility, and with that responsibility comes a need to model trustworthy behavior. That's especially true when it comes to culture.

The creation of culture doesn't begin with the organization; it begins with its leaders. Leaders create culture when they model trustworthy behavior for others. Leaders are the magnifiers and multipliers of culture. The things they say and do cast a long shadow over the organization's culture.

Leaders are the architects of culture, with the power to cultivate health or perpetuate dysfunction. Trustworthy behavior begins with four traits:

1. **Integrity.** Proverbs 10:9 says, "Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out." A leader's integrity provides security for themselves *and* those they lead. Author Ray Pritchard said, "As important as it is to know what you are talking about, it is perhaps even more important to be what you are talking about."
2. **Respect.** Jackie Robinson, who was the first black player in Major League Baseball, once said, "I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me ... All I ask is that you respect me as a human being." Without respect, you strip your team members of their dignity and identity. People are much more willing to follow a leader when they know they're esteemed in the leader's heart.
3. **Care.** The old saying really is true: People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Caring is the human side of leadership. It lets team members know you value them as *people*, not just as *producers*. You communicate care when you express concern for the things that concern your team. Care is evident when you ask team members about their worries and their wishes. In other words, you show concern for the things worrying them (at work and at home), and you talk about their wishes (for their work and their future).
4. **Competence.** Every winning team requires a capable leader at the helm. If a leader lacks competency, the team will lack commitment. Staff members will start to question the leader's ability to reach the vision, grow the organization, and chart a courageous path forward. Your team doesn't just want to hear about your bold dream for the future. They also want to have confidence in your ability to lead them to it.

When your team members sees you model integrity, respect, care and competence, they are much more likely to trust you. This type of behavior is the catalyst to a healthy culture.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What leader do you admire because of the trustworthy behavior he or she models?
2. Which of the four traits above most challenges you? Why?
3. What other traits of trustworthy behavior contribute to the health of an organization's culture?

Apply

Take a few moments to reflect on your own behavior. What changes do you need to make to become a more trustworthy leader? If you really want to know, give your team members permission to tell you, and then humbly accept their feedback.

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Model Trustworthy Behavior

Assess: How does trust impact a church or organization’s culture?

“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2).

The word “faithful” implies the idea of trustworthiness. Leaders are entrusted with responsibility, and with that responsibility comes a need to model trustworthy behavior.

Four traits of trustworthy behavior:

1. _____.

“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out” (Proverbs 10:9).

“As important as it is to know what you are talking about, it is perhaps even more important to be what you are talking about.” – Ray Pritchard

2. _____.

“I’m not concerned with your liking or disliking me ... All I ask is that you respect me as a human being.” – Jackie Robison

3. _____.

People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. Caring is the human side of leadership. It lets team members know you value them as _____, not just as _____. You communicate care when you express concern for the things that concern your team. Care is evident when you ask team members about their worries and their wishes.

4. _____.

Your team members don’t just want to hear about your bold dream for the future. They also want to have confidence in your ability to lead them to it.

Apply

Take a few moments to reflect on your own behavior. What changes do you need to make to become a more trustworthy leader? If you really want to know, give your team members permission to tell you, and then humbly accept their feedback.

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Clarify Inspiring Vision

Team Review: What did you discover about becoming a more trustworthy leader after reflecting on your own behavior?

Assess: What role does vision play in creating a healthy ministry culture?

Insights and Ideas

For a culture to thrive, it needs a noble picture of the future around which people can rally. Without fresh and inspiring vision, culture will simply drift toward the status quo. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom’s instruction.” Simply put, when vision is missing, people run wild. They walk aimlessly into the future. In many cases, they create their own visions that produce sideways energy for the church or organization.

One of the best ways leaders can clarify an inspiring vision for the church, or for a specific ministry department, is to ask a series of questions. These questions are most helpful when they’re connected to the following four areas:

1. *God’s priorities.* God-inspired visions always reflect the priorities of God. To clarify your vision, start by reading Scripture. What does God value? What seems close to His heart? How has God moved throughout history, and what themes arise throughout the pages of Scripture? The answers to these questions will give you glimpses of God’s vision for the world.
2. *Personal passions.* If a church’s vision is not aligned with the passion of its leader (or leaders), it’s unlikely to gain long-term traction. Passions are often the default for leaders — what their hearts naturally gravitate toward. What are you most passionate about? Passion usually relates to a need, an issue, an interest or an audience.
3. *Community problems.* A church’s vision should meet needs and solve problems in the community. Otherwise, the vision will become self-serving, and likely detached from the heart of God for the world. Do some demographic studies, and then talk to community leaders to discover the most pressing needs in the city. Ask yourself, *What needs or problems in our city capture our hearts and align with our passions?*
4. *Church potential.* What kind of gifts, tools, assets and people has God placed in your church? Those resources reflect the potential of your congregation. Understanding these resources will help you discover the leverage points by which you can make the greatest impact in your city and world. The church’s potential is the resource pool that feeds vision fulfillment.

Vision is essential for culture to thrive, and it’s often born in the sweet spot of these four areas. Where priorities, passions, problems and potential overlap is where vision is usually waiting to come to life.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What is the vision of our church or organization?
2. How well does our vision align with God’s priorities, our passions, community problems and the church’s potential?
3. What can we do to bring greater clarity or alignment to our vision?

Apply

Work together as a team to clarify an inspiring vision for the future. Using the four categories above, engage in prayer, research and discussion. Let God speak to you through this process. Then craft the vision in writing, ensuring it’s clear and compelling.

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Clarify Inspiring Vision

Assess: What role does vision play in creating a healthy ministry culture?

“Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom’s instruction” (Proverbs 29:18).

Four areas to clarify inspiring vision:

1. *God’s* _____.

God-inspired visions always reflect the priorities of God. To clarify your vision, start by reading Scripture.

2. *Personal* _____.

If a church’s vision is not aligned with the passion of its leader (or leaders), it’s unlikely to gain long-term traction. Passions are often the default for leaders — what their hearts naturally gravitate toward.

3. *Community* _____.

A church’s vision should meet needs and solve problems in the community. Otherwise, the vision will become self-serving, and likely detached from the heart of God for the world.

4. *Church* _____.

What kind of gifts, tools, assets and people has God placed in your church? Those resources reflect the potential of your congregation. The church’s potential is the resource pool that feeds vision fulfillment.

Apply

Work together as a team to clarify an inspiring vision for the future. Using the four categories above, engage in prayer, research and discussion. Let God speak to you through this process. Then craft the vision in writing, ensuring it’s clear and compelling.

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Identify Compelling Values

Team Review: What progress have we made to clarify an inspiring vision?

Assess: What do we value most as individuals, as a team and as a church?

Insights and Ideas

In the Book of Psalms, David said, “LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart” (Psalm 15:1–2). A clear set of values guide the person who dwells in the presence of the Lord. These values are at their core — their heart — and shape what they say and how they live.

The same is true in churches and organizations. The things we value shape how we behave. In fact, values that are identified and exemplified in the organization are one of the biggest ways to shape culture. Creating culture through your values happens best with these four steps:

1. **Clarification.** To clarify your values, start by answering this question: What priorities and principles are more important to our organization than anything else? For example, a priority might be serving the poor, missions, the next generation or leadership development. A principle might be integrity, excellence, stewardship or generosity.
2. **Communication.** After clarifying values, communicate them broadly and deeply. When people at every level of the organization personalize and practice them, these values will become engrained in your culture. Talk about your values in staff meetings, volunteer gatherings, offering spots and sermons. Articulate your values through artwork, décor, photos, signs and images.
3. **Calibration.** Talking about values is not enough; you must also create alignment with actions. When what you do doesn’t line up with what you value, your church or organization will regularly experience sideways energy. How do you bring about calibration? Create budgets that align with your values. Create programs and services that reflect your values. Select curriculum that reinforces your values. Create systems, ministry score cards and hiring processes that are consistent with your values. Without calibration, values are nothing but words on paper.
4. **Celebration.** Behavior that gets celebrated gets repeated. When we consistently highlight and affirm the practice of values, people begin to catch on to what we consider most important. As leaders, we should publicly affirm behavior that matches our values. We should highlight testimonies and celebrate wins that clearly connect to our values.

The key in all this is consistency. Once you have identified your values, consistently communicate, calibrate, and celebrate them. Occasional communication, haphazard calibration and annual celebration is not enough.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What are our values as a church, organization or team?
2. What in our organization do we need to calibrate to our values to ensure there is alignment?
3. How can we better communicate and celebrate our values?

Apply

If you have not developed your values, identify the priorities and principles that matter most. Then streamline them to the five to seven values that are most important to the organization. Finally, develop a plan to ensure there is communication, calibration and regular celebration.

Study
3

TEAM GUIDE

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Identify Compelling Values

Assess: What do we value most as individuals, as a team and as a church?

“LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart” (Psalm 15:1–2).

Four steps to culture-shaping values:

1. _____.

To clarify your values, start by answering this question: What priorities and principles are more important to our organization than anything else?

2. _____.

When people at every level of the organization personalize and practice them, these values will become engrained in your culture.

3. _____.

Talking about values is not enough; you must also create alignment with actions. When what you do doesn't line up with what you value, your church or organization will regularly experience sideways energy.

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Study 4

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Recruit the Right Team

Team Review: What have we done to clarify, communicate, calibrate and celebrate our values?

Assess: How does a team impact what culture looks like in a church?

Insights and Ideas

Every follower of Jesus is part of the body of Christ. The apostle Paul said, “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” (Romans 12:4–5).

While we are all part of the body of Christ, we don’t necessarily fit every team in the body of Christ. We all bring different ideas, skills and relational dynamics into a team setting. To create a healthy culture, you need the right team members. The right team members usually fit in three areas:

1. *Church fit.* There are millions of churches, and billions of Christians, around the world. Yet no Christian fits *every* church, and no church fits *every* Christian. Churches differ in theology, style, cultural dynamics and strategy. Your church will fit *some* people but *not all* people. And that’s OK. Diversity is part of what makes the body of Christ so beautiful. The key is to keep this in mind when you’re recruiting leaders. Each leader should fit your church’s vision, values and core beliefs. Yes, there will always be differences and preferences, but anyone who serves in leadership should know what your church is about and where it’s going, and have the opportunity to ask questions.
2. *Team fit.* Whether we like to admit it or not, there is a chemistry component to teams, and the wrong person can significantly disrupt that chemistry. Chemistry is often undervalued — even considered unspiritual or unnecessary — until it’s no longer there. When chemistry is missing, we suddenly recognize its value. To know certain individuals fit your team, spend as much relational time with them as possible. Do they have a sense of humor? Do they connect well with others? Are they servant leaders, team players and hard workers?
3. *Role fit.* To excel, team members must fit their roles. In other words, do they have the gifts and skills necessary to do the job? Putting people into roles that don’t fit their God-given gifts will only lead to frustration and ineffectiveness. You can identify a person’s role fit by looking at past experience, conducting assessments, checking references or doing a trial run.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Why is staff and volunteer recruitment so critical to the health of your church’s culture?
2. Which of the three areas is most often ignored: church fit, team fit or role fit? Why?
3. What systems can we put in place to ensure we get the right people onto the right teams and into the right roles?

Apply

What gaps exist in your recruitment process? What questions could you ask a potential team member to ensure he or she fits the church, team and role? Put together a thorough system for recruitment to ensure each member of the team is a good fit.

Study
4
TEAM GUIDE

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Recruit the Right Team

Assess: How does a team impact what culture looks like in a church?

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Three ways the right team members fit:

1. _____ *fit*.

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Apply

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Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Cultivate Healthy Relationships

Team Review: What steps have you taken to improve your recruitment process so there's a better fit with the church, team and role?

Assess: How do healthy relationships directly impact culture?

Insights and Ideas

Relationships are the sticky factor in organizational culture. When relationships are healthy, the team can weather just about any storm.

That was certainly the case for the church in Thessalonica. The apostle Paul challenged the church to “encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). In other words, relational investments were already habits, and Paul was providing affirmation to ensure these continued. To foster a healthy relational culture, three steps are particularly helpful:

1. *Calendarize relationships.* Authors Andy Stanley and Bill Willits observed, “Our enemy’s most successful strategy is to isolate us so he can attack and destroy us. Sheep are never attacked in herds. Sheep are attacked when they become isolated from the rest of the flock.” In a world that is extremely connected, we are struggling with isolation. One way to make space for relationships is to calendarize it. I know, that technique sounds relationally cold, but that may be where you have to start to make relationships with your team a priority. We’re in the people business, but unfortunately, we often fail to make time for people.
2. *Celebrate relationships.* A good way to think about celebrating relationships is to consider milestones and moments. Milestones include things like birthdays, anniversaries, graduations and child births. Take time to recognize and celebrate these days for each member of your team. Examples of meaningful moments include Christmas parties, special outings, team-wide conferences, marriage retreats, and other events that communicate gratitude or add value to the team.
3. *Confront relationships.* This is the part of relationships most of us choose to avoid. Confrontation is not easy. Without a willingness to confront, however, relational authenticity and connectedness can evaporate. When you fail to confront, you tolerate bad behavior, and culture is ultimately shaped by what we tolerate. Don’t be a pretender in front of people and a gossip behind their backs. Confront bad behavior and issues of conflict when necessary. Doing so will actually make the team stronger.

Calendarizing, celebrating and confronting relationships will enhance the culture of your organization. These three keys disarm the three enemies of relationships: not enough time, feeling underappreciated, and unresolved tension.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Which part of relationships is your biggest challenge — calendarizing, celebrating or confronting? Why?
2. On a scale from 1 to 10 (10 being the best), how well does our team do at making space for relationships?
3. What could it look like for our team to spend more time celebrating together?

Apply

Assess the relational health of your culture. Then, create a relational calendar to map out what you can do as a team to strengthen relationships. Include relational time that celebrates personal milestones and creates meaningful moments. Finally, determine whether you need to confront a relationship, and determine how to do so in a healthy way.

Study 5

TEAM GUIDE

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Cultivate Healthy Relationships

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Three steps to fostering a healthy relational culture:

1. _____ relationships.

“Our enemy’s most successful strategy is to isolate us so he can attack and destroy us. Sheep are never attacked in herds. Sheep are attacked when they become isolated from the rest of the flock.” – Andy Stanley and Bill Willits

We’re in the people business, but unfortunately, we often fail to make time for people.

2. _____ relationships.

A good way to think about celebrating relationships is to consider milestones and moments.

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Confrontation is not easy. Without a willingness to confront, however, relational authenticity and connectedness can evaporate. When you fail to confront, you tolerate bad behavior, and culture is ultimately shaped by what we tolerate.

These three keys disarm the three enemies of relationships:

not enough _____, feeling _____,

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Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Increase Team Engagement

Team Review: What have you done to foster a culture of healthier relationships?

Assess: What makes a staff member love coming to work or a volunteer enjoy serving on a team?

Insights and Ideas

Scripture is clear about how to treat those under our authority: “Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven” (Colossians 4:1). Employees aren’t slaves, of course, but the principle still applies.

One way leaders can provide what is right and fair is to give attention to team engagement. In organizational settings, employee engagement is becoming an increasingly common topic of discussion. It’s a phrase that refers to how engaged team members feel in their jobs.

Interestingly, the factors that contribute to strong employee engagement make perfect sense. Some of the most common factors that increase engagement can be organized into four categories. Each category addresses a different dynamic of work, and can apply both to paid staff and volunteers.

1. *Being energized by work.* People who are engaged in their work are also energized by it. The vision of the organization, the opportunity to use their gifts, and the leader they work for contribute to this dynamic. All three of these — vision, role, and leader — influence how engaged a team member is at work (or in a volunteer position).
2. *Being equipped to work.* This means people have the tools and the training to do their jobs. The right tools enable them to work efficiently, and the right training enable them to work effectively. Both increase engagement, and both improve the quality of the product or service provided.
3. *Being encouraged at work.* Work is not just a task. Therefore, we can’t remove the relational aspects that make work feel human. Team members feel encouraged when their leader offers praise and affirmation (privately and publicly). They also feel encouraged when they’re connected to their co-workers. These relational variables bring joy amid the tasks, demands and to-do lists that are so often a part of work.
4. *Being empowered at work.* Finally, people feel engaged at work when they are entrusted and empowered to do their jobs. Nobody likes to be micromanaged. When a leader empowers team members with the freedom to do their jobs and the authority to make decisions, ownership naturally increases.

It’s impossible to create a healthy culture without improving employee (or volunteer) engagement. These four ingredients set the stage for engagement to increase. As a result, team member satisfaction increases, as does commitment and productivity.

Reflect and Discuss

1. How do these four categories of team engagement — energized, equipped, encouraged and empowered — resonate with you?
2. Which category do you believe our team most needs to improve? How could we improve it?
3. What practical steps could we take to create more energized, equipped, encouraged and empowered volunteer teams?

Apply

Evaluate how effectively you implement the four team engagement categories, and then create a plan to improve in each area with your staff and volunteers. Finally, create an annual survey to assess engagement from each team member.

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Increase Team Engagement

Assess: What makes a staff member love coming to work or a volunteer enjoy serving on a team?

“Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven” (Colossians 4:1).

One way leaders can provide what is right and fair is to give attention to team engagement.

Four dynamics of team engagement:

1. *Being* _____ *by work.*

People who are engaged in their work are also energized by it. The vision of the organization, the opportunity to use their gifts, and the leader they work for contribute to this dynamic.

2. *Being* _____ *to work.*

This means people have the tools and the training to do their jobs. The right tools enable them to work efficiently, and the right training enables them to work effectively.

3. *Being* _____ *at work.*

Team members feel encouraged when their leader offers praise and affirmation (privately and publicly). They also feel encouraged when they’re connected to their co-workers.

4. *Being* _____ *at work.*

Finally, people feel engaged at work when they are entrusted and empowered to do their jobs.

Apply

Evaluate how effectively you implement the four team-engagement categories, and then create a plan to improve in each area with your staff and volunteers. Finally, create an annual survey to assess engagement from each team member.



Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Develop Effective Systems

Team Review: What steps did you take to increase the engagement of your staff and volunteers?

Assess: What system in our church or organization is operating most effectively? Why?

Insights and Ideas

Author Nelson Searcy says a good SYSTEM Saves You Stress, Time, Energy and Money. Moses certainly found that to be true when he followed the advice of his father-in-law, Jethro. After facing near burnout, Moses made an important shift. Exodus 18:24–26 says, “Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves.” This new system created margin in Moses’ life, and it ensured that the needs of the people were being met. That’s the power of a good system. So, what are the traits of a good system?

First, good systems are *effective*. They get things done with excellence, and they produce the results they were intended to produce. Like it or not, the results your church is seeing (or not seeing) are directly tied to the systems you (or somebody) created. If you don’t like your results, change your systems.

Second, good systems are *efficient*. They get things done without wasting time, energy or money.

Finally, good systems *engage team members*. When systems are complex and bureaucratic, they produce frustrated and disengaged staff and volunteers.

What types of systems should a church develop to create a healthy culture? While there can be many, here are seven systems that are essential in most churches:

1. *Guest assimilation system*. This is a step-by-step system for first-time guests that includes hospitality teams, a communication card and appropriate follow-up.
2. *Discipleship system*. This system helps people take their next steps at your church, leading them to engage in spiritual growth and community with others.
3. *Volunteer system*. This system provides a clear process for recruiting, training and mobilizing volunteers to serve in ministries that match their giftedness.
4. *Worship service system*. This system involves the planning, execution and evaluation of worship services.
5. *Outreach system*. This system provides a pathway to engage the congregation in outreach opportunities locally, nationally and internationally.
6. *Staff hiring system*. This system provides a step-by-step plan to identify, assess, interview, hire and onboard new staff members.
7. *Budgeting system*. This system provides a clear process to create budgets, provide financial reports and monitor monetary health.

A church will have additional systems, but these are some of the more important ones for cultivating a healthy culture and facilitating the fulfillment of your vision.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What is our biggest challenge in creating healthy systems?
2. What systems create the greatest tension among our staff or volunteers? Why?
3. Which of the seven systems above is operating most efficiently and effectively, and which system needs the most attention?

Apply

Identify the system that needs the most work. Assemble a team to create an effective and efficient system that saves you stress, time, energy and money. Once you implement the system, monitor it monthly, and then quarterly, making necessary adjustments to maximize its impact.

Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Develop Effective Systems

Assess: What system in our church or organization is operating most effectively? Why?

Author Nelson Searcy says a good SYSTEM Saves You Stress, Time, Energy and Money.

“Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves” (Exodus 18:24–26).

Good systems are _____.

Good systems are _____.

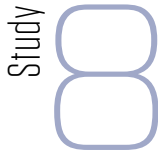
Good systems _____.

Seven systems in churches:

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2. _____ *system*. This system helps people take their next steps at your church, leading them to engage in spiritual growth and community with others.
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4. _____ *system*. This system involves the planning, execution and evaluation of worship services.
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Apply

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Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Measure Ministry Health

Team Review: What system have you made more effective and efficient?

Assess: What areas of ministry should we measure to ensure a healthier culture?

Insights and Ideas

Teams want to win, and the only way to know if you're winning is to have a clear score card. The score card for churches is the Great Commission: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19–20).

So, how do we measure ministry health as it relates to the Great Commission? While the metrics (and opinions) are diverse, five gauges are particularly helpful:

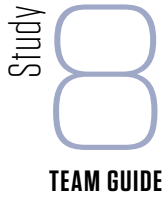
1. *Disciple making.* Disciple making should measure salvations, water baptisms, Spirit baptisms, and people's engagement in spiritual community and spiritual disciplines. Are you seeing forward movement and momentum?
2. *Leadership development.* In Acts 6, seven leaders were chosen to organize the daily distribution of food so that widows were properly cared for. What was the ultimate outcome? Not only were the widows fed, but "the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). Leadership development is critical to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. To clarify your leadership score card, track your number of volunteers, individuals in your leadership pipeline, and your strategy to invest in the growth of leaders.
3. *Local and global impact.* A third measure to consider is the church's impact locally and globally. For example, how many people are engaged in serving your community? What percentage of your income are you investing outside the four walls of the church? Are you supporting missionaries, serving the poor and planting churches? Local and global impact might measure serving projects, volunteer engagement, dollars invested, churches planted and people served.
4. *Growth.* It's important to measure growth in two forms: numbers and percentages. Numbers are fairly obvious: How many people attended, served, gave, etc.? Percentages give a different perspective on health. Take your average annual attendance, and then determine what percentage of those who are serving, giving, engaged in a small group, etc. When you track these percentages year after year, you'll discover whether your congregation is becoming increasingly (or decreasingly) engaged and generous.
5. *Stories.* Finally, how often do you hear stories of life change? What stories of transformation are you hearing in your community? Stories are the real test of change, and if you stop hearing the stories, you need to reconsider the effectiveness of your strategy.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What do we measure (and not measure) in our church?
2. To which of the five metrics above do we need to give more attention?
3. What would it look like to create a healthy ministry dashboard with key metrics?

Apply

Identify the areas that are important for your church to measure. Then organize a system to track and report these metrics weekly. Finally, carve out time monthly in a staff meeting to review your metrics and discuss key takeaways and next steps.



Creating a Healthy Culture: 8 Steps to Improving Your Ministry Environment

Measure Ministry Health

Assess: What areas of ministry should we measure to ensure a healthier culture?

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19–20).

Five metrics for ministry health:

1. _____.

Measure salvations, water baptisms, Spirit baptisms, and people’s engagement in spiritual community and spiritual disciplines.

2. _____ *development*.

“So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).

3. _____ *and* _____ *impact*.

How many people are engaged in serving your community? What percentage of your income are you investing outside the four walls of the church? Are you supporting missionaries, serving the poor and planting churches?

4. _____.

It’s important to measure growth in two forms: numbers and percentages.

5. _____.

How often do you hear stories of life change? What stories of transformation are you hearing in your community?

Apply

Identify the areas that are important for your church to measure. Then organize a system to track and report these metrics weekly. Finally, carve out time monthly in a staff meeting to review your metrics and discuss key takeaways and next steps.