

Board Development

In his recent book entitled, *Building Leaders*, Aubrey Malphurs quotes James Bolt, the founder of Executive Development Associates, who says, “The dearth of leadership is apparent throughout society. No matter where we turn, we see the severe lack of faith in the leadership of our schools, religious organizations, and government.” (Malphurs p 9). Malphurs goes on to suggest that the problem is not a lack of leadership candidates, but the absence of a strategy for leadership development. In fact, many who are writing in the area of leadership today would say that any definition of and practice of leadership today must contain two themes: servant and development. By development, the focus is not only on the personal development of the leader, but the process by which the leader seeks to develop other leaders.

Once again, the problem is not one of potential or opportunity, the problem is one of priority, strategy and ability. Many who are leaders today have not made leadership development a priority; they do not see it as an integral part of their leadership role. Many current leaders have not developed a strategy for leadership development; there is no intentionality even if there is the desire. Many leaders today do not have the ability to develop leaders; they simply have not taken advantage of the training opportunities available.

While these may be named amongst the reasons for the lack of leadership development, they are little more than excuses and they in no way absolve the leader of responsibility. Malphurs goes on to suggest that until this weakness of or absence of leadership development is effectively addressed, the church today will continue to flounder and stumble through the maze of ministry ineffectiveness.

Defining Leadership Development

“Leadership development is the intentional process of helping established and emerging leaders at every level of ministry to assess and develop their Christian character and to acquire, reinforce, and refine their ministry knowledge and skill.” (Aubrey Malphurs. *Building Leaders*. p 23).

Conviction: Leadership is not an option.
Leadership development is not an option.

Without leadership development...
...burnout is certain.
...effectiveness is limited.
...expansion is hindered.
...ministry is temporary.
...gifts and calling are seldom engaged.

With leadership development...
...work and responsibility is shared.

- ...potential is increased.
- ...opportunities are multiplied.
- ...ministry life is extended.
- ...gifts and calling are strengthened and engaged.

Challenge: Make leadership development a priority.
 Make leadership development part of every leader's job.

Strategy for Leadership Development

In order to engage an effective strategy for leadership development, there are a few observations that must guide the effort:

1. No one model of leadership development is all-effective and universally transferable.
2. Effective leadership development is engaged on all levels of ministry.
3. Leadership development is not optional.
4. Leadership development is a long-term priority.

Strategic Components



Board development is motivated by the following primary presuppositions:

1. Most board members are relatively inexperienced and ill-equipped
2. Most boards and board members lack clarity as to how boards are to function
3. It is the desire of boards and board members to serve in an effective way.
4. Board members want to learn and grow in their leadership role

With this in mind, it is the challenge of each individual board to design and engage a board development effort that accomplished the following:

1. A positive board and board member experience
2. Training and equipping board members to serve effectively
3. Personal and corporate learning and growth
4. Board development that properly addresses issues related to the context in which the board functions

Board Development Issues

- Spiritual formation
- Leadership
- Governance
- Responsibilities – Serve, Direct, Strategize, Monitor
- Ministry – Developing trends

Additional issues boards ought to be aware of and educated on:

1. Beliefs, Values, Mission, Vision/Strategy
2. Congregational Health – Definition and pursuit of Congregational health
3. Strategic Process – Broad stroke issues; Ends, Limited Mean
4. Legal Issues – Charitable Organization Laws, Privacy Legislation, Employment Conditions/Standards
5. Constitution – Legal requirements/Ministry empowerment
6. Governance Policies – What should/should not happen within the organization
7. Performance Evaluation – Self, pastor
8. Communication – Board issues to the Congregation
9. Pastoral Staff Hiring