

Alignment Eats Accomplishment for Lunch

When you have a vague or undefined strategy, your leaders will invent their own.

Auxano Founder Will Mancini believes that over 90% of churches in North America are not functioning with strategic clarity. Many churches have some kind of expression for mission and values, but not for strategy. The absence of strategy, as Mancini defines it, is the number one cause of ineffectiveness in a healthy church.

This map, or strategy picture, is like a container that holds all church activities in one meaningful whole. Without this orientation, individuals within the organization will forget how each major component or ministry activity fits to advance the mission.

When you don't have a strategy, or your strategy isn't clear, a threefold problem can occur:

- too many ministry or program options and no prioritization;
- ministry options that have no relationship with one another;
- ministries themselves have no connection to the mission.

Having a clear map – one that shows how you will get things done – is a strong indicator that the effectiveness of your mission will go through the roof. Strategic clarity can birth a quantum leap in your ministry.

Build for team alignment rather than individual accomplishment.

THE QUICK SUMMARY: [Execution IS the Strategy](#), by Laura Stack

In today's world of rapid, disruptive change, strategy can't be separate from execution—it has to emerge from execution. You must continually adjust your strategy to fit new realities. But, if your organization isn't set up to be fast on its feet, you could easily go the way of Blockbuster or Borders.

Laura Stack shows you how to quickly drive strategic initiatives and get great results from your team. Her LEAD Formula outlines the Four Keys to Successful Execution:

- The ability to **Leverage** your talent and resources
- Design an **Environment** to support an agile culture
- Create **Alignment** between strategic priorities and operational activities
- **Drive** the organization forward quickly

She includes a leadership team assessment, group reading guides, and bonus self-development resources. Stack will equip you with the knowledge, skills, and inspiration to help you hit the ground running!

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

If members of your team are working hard but have lost focus of the mission of your organization, you are facing a double threat: your overall mission is not being accomplished and your team members are likely heading toward burnout.

The most successful team members work together for more than a paycheck or for keeping busy. They are engaged in the mission, and feel that they are an important part of achieving that mission. They are serving with a sense and purpose of something that is greater.

On the other hand, team members who have lost focus on the mission of the organization may just be going through the motions of working together. When this occurs, the organization is entering a danger zone.

Even those who work the hardest will inevitably crash and burn in their productivity if they lose track of the mission. Help them reorient and align themselves if they've lost their focus on their mission with a 4-R Reconnection Strategy.

Reestablish awareness. Have team members evaluate their current positions by asking, "Which of my activities contribute most of my value to my organization." If they can't answer that, have them invest personal time in figuring out where they got off course and how they might fix it.

Realign them. Make sure the mission and their perception of it match up. If your team becomes misaligned, they may be wasting time on the wrong things. If that is the case, it doesn't matter how hard they work to get the job done; their productivity will crash.

Repair their connection. Once your team members know where they are and where they should be, have them make any necessary course corrections. After that, help them tweak or overhaul their workflow process to get it back on track and in sync with the mission.

Rededicate them to the mission. Have the team members reaffirm their commitment to your organization. Help them understand how each contributes to the collective effort to move the organization forward.

Laura Stack, [Execution IS the Strategy](#)

A NEXT STEP

Using the Four-R process above, realign your leadership team to the mission of the church.

First, write "Our Mission" on the top of a flip chart page and hand every person a sticky note. Without looking at phones, tablets, or printed materials, have each leader write the mission of the church from memory on a sticky note. Place all the notes on the flip chart page. Discuss the results, noting the degree (or lack of) shared knowledge of the church's mission. (Remember Howard Hendricks' ageless quote: if it's a mist in the pulpit, it's a fog in the pew.)

Now write the actual mission on another flip chart page, and with a renewed focus on the missional mandate of the church, have each leader write ministry activities that **CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY** to the mission on one color sticky note and ministry activities that while good, **DO NOT CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY** to the mission.

How can your leaders help each other to focus activity toward mission accomplishment? How can you learn from each other and lean toward God's calling for the church? Record some specific initiatives and next steps on a third flip-chart page, assigning responsibility to a team member.

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*This is part of a weekly series posting content from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** Book Summaries for church leaders. SUMS Remix takes a practical problem in the church and looks at it with three solutions; and each solution is taken from a different book. As a church leader you get to scan relevant books based on practical tools and solutions to real ministry problems, not just by the cover of the book. Each post will have the edition number which shows the year and what number it is in the overall sequence. (SUMS provides 26 issues per year, delivered every other week to your inbox).*

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