

Four Errors of Church Strategy

A church benefits from both spiritual *and* strategic leadership. The latter must not overpower the former, as spiritual leadership must trump strategic leadership—but both serve a church well. When a ministry leader leads well, the ministry will receive strategic direction, even if a different term is used. As ministry leaders seek to organize the work of the ministry and mobilize people to serve one another, here are four common errors in church strategy to avoid:

1. An Absent Strategy

In my experience, the majority of ministry leaders can tell you why they do what they do. If you ask, you will likely receive answers like “He called me to this,” “For His glory,” or “So the Church may be built up.” Many church leaders can tell you what they are compelled to do. “Our church exists to make disciples,” for example. But very few ministry leaders can tell you how they do what they do or how their ministries are designed to make disciples.

2. A Disconnected Strategy

While an absent strategy is common, a disconnected one is worse. Mission is what a ministry or organization seeks to accomplish, and strategy is the how. If a church has a strategy disconnected from making disciples, then another mission is driving the church. Therefore, if a church’s strategy is not connected to making disciples, then the church has adopted a mission other than the one Christ gave to His people.

3. A Photocopied Strategy

Many leaders photocopy a strategy they find elsewhere and attempt to reverse-engineer it into their context. It is one thing to learn from others, and it is quite another to implement someone else’s strategy as if that context and yours are the same.

4. A Complicated Strategy

As a church grows and matures, there is an inevitable pull toward complexity. There is a temptation and proclivity to add layers of bureaucracy and to fill calendars with lots of events and programs. As a church drifts toward complexity, staff become program managers instead of equippers. A simple strategy fights against the inevitable drift of complexity. When the strategy is simple, the most important environments that flow from the mission of making disciples are emphasized.

> [Read more from Eric.](#)

If you're not satisfied with your church's strategy, [start a conversation with our team](#). We're glad to offer our input. Your vision is at stake, so let's talk.
