

Great Teams Have These 5 Characteristics

Who's your favorite team in the NFL? How'd they do last season?

Are you proud or was it painful?

I know... we all want to win. Of course, we do. Who wakes up and thinks, I hope we lose?

Your church team is no different. It's God's church and His purpose, so positive results are important. As long as it's all about Jesus and not so much about us, let's press the pedal to the metal.

I acknowledge that we might sometimes measure long-term success differently than God does. For example, we can all agree that the Great Commission calls us to reach more people and help them mature in their faith. But I don't think that we get to determine how large our churches become. I think that's up to the sovereignty of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

As long as we acknowledge that, we can invest ourselves deeply into the mission of successful church leadership. And your church team, your staff, make all the difference.

- Your **vision** determines the direction you go.
- Your **structure** and strategy determine the path you take.
- Your **staff** determine if you get there.

Your staff (your team) may be paid staff or volunteer. And the fullest scope of your team includes all your volunteers.

(This post will lean toward your paid staff team, but again, ultimately includes many more people.)

For your team to get along and perform well, the overall environment needs to be healthy. As a rule, toxic teams do not win, and if they do, they don't win for long.

Five indicators of a healthy team:

1. Trust and morale is high.
2. Insecurity and politics are low.
3. Honesty and ownership about flaws and problems is open and evident.
4. Commitment to the vision and each other is unwavering.
5. Accountability is high, and a passion to succeed is strong.

5 Core Components of Great Church Teams:

1) Trust is at the core of all great teams.

When someone says “I trust you,” what are they saying? What does trust mean?

There are several possibilities such as:

- I trust your character.
- I trust your intentions.
- I trust that you have my best interests at heart.
- I trust that you have the ability to help me grow.
- I trust that you won't betray me (hurt me) (turn on me) (abandon me).

Trust is a powerful word and concept.

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Kevin Myers is the founding, and senior pastor at 12Stone Church and I can tell you that I trust him without question, and he trusts me. The same is true among are full senior leadership team. Trust always starts there.

Trust can break down further out in the organization, but trust will never span the full scope of your team if it isn't solid at the top.

Three core components establish trust:

- First is **character**, (trustworthiness). You are who you appear to be, and people can count on you.
- Second, is **competence**. You have the ability to lead and the skill to succeed.
- Third, is **caring**. You demonstrate that you have their best interest at heart.

When it comes to trust, your team will catch what is modeled.

2) Unity in vision and alignment in strategy is essential.

Narrow your focus.

Your vision will help unite your team. A great vision draws your team together in such a way that makes it possible to achieve together what you could not accomplish alone.

What is your clearly defined purpose or goal? How will you measure your progress?

It's very easy for your church vision to be so broad and all-encompassing that you accomplish far less than you hoped to and certainly less than your potential.

The point isn't to see how much you can include under the banner of your mission statement. You are better served to think through and decide what few things will help you reach farther and more effectively than ever before.

Narrow your focus.

What will you all agree on as your central target, that if accomplished, God will be pleased and you can celebrate your intentional efforts?

3) Uniqueness among a team is something to embrace.

I love people and the uniqueness of their personalities. The different temperaments and wiring among the people on your team makes life interesting and work fun. It's important to create an environment where people are free to be themselves. They will lead better and enjoy their work more when they are their true selves.

There are so many possibilities. Introverts and extroverts. Morning people and night owls. Planned and spontaneous. Detailed and big picture. Grace and Truth. Risk takers and play it safe. Dominant and easy-going. Which ones are you? Do you know your team well?

This doesn't give anyone the license to have a bad attitude, behave with insecurity or in general – be a jerk. That's not what freedom means. Freedom to be you at its core includes your responsibility to do your part well and in the best interest of others. That kind of freedom is life-giving.

4) Conflict resolution is an ongoing endeavor.

The best teams experience conflict, and they're not afraid of it. However, they don't live in a perpetual state of unresolved conflict. Great teams learn how to resolve conflict quickly, grow from it, make better decisions and greater progress.

A good test to discern if your team is maturing is similar to the test of a maturing marriage relationship.

A husband and wife are a team of two. All couples experience conflict, and the way to test their growth is two-fold.

First, when you have that occasional argument, it's about something new. That means you are moving forward in life and experiencing new territory. You are thinking and growing.

If you're arguing about the same things you were arguing about last year, that's not growth, and it might be immaturity.

Second, you resolve those arguments faster and easier than before. That's also a sign of growth and maturity.

That guideline also applies to your team and will serve you well. Don't hesitate to have the difficult conversations, even if they lead to tough decisions. You and your team will be better for it. Unresolved conflict, or worse, conflict that is ignored, is toxic to a healthy and productive team

– just like it is in a marriage.

5) Results matter.

Just because church teams ultimately win and lose in a spiritual realm, doesn't mean that measurable results don't matter. In fact, they matter more.

It's all about Kingdom-based stewardship. The combined time, resources and talent of your team are God-given and God-provided. They belong to Him, and we are the servant-leaders that steward what has been entrusted to us. If we bury it or use it poorly, we have missed the opportunity. If, however, we multiply what we have been given, God's Kingdom is expanded!

How do you measure results on your team?

One of the best ways is to intentionally mine stories of life change. Tell the stories and thank God for them!

> [Read more from Dan.](#)
