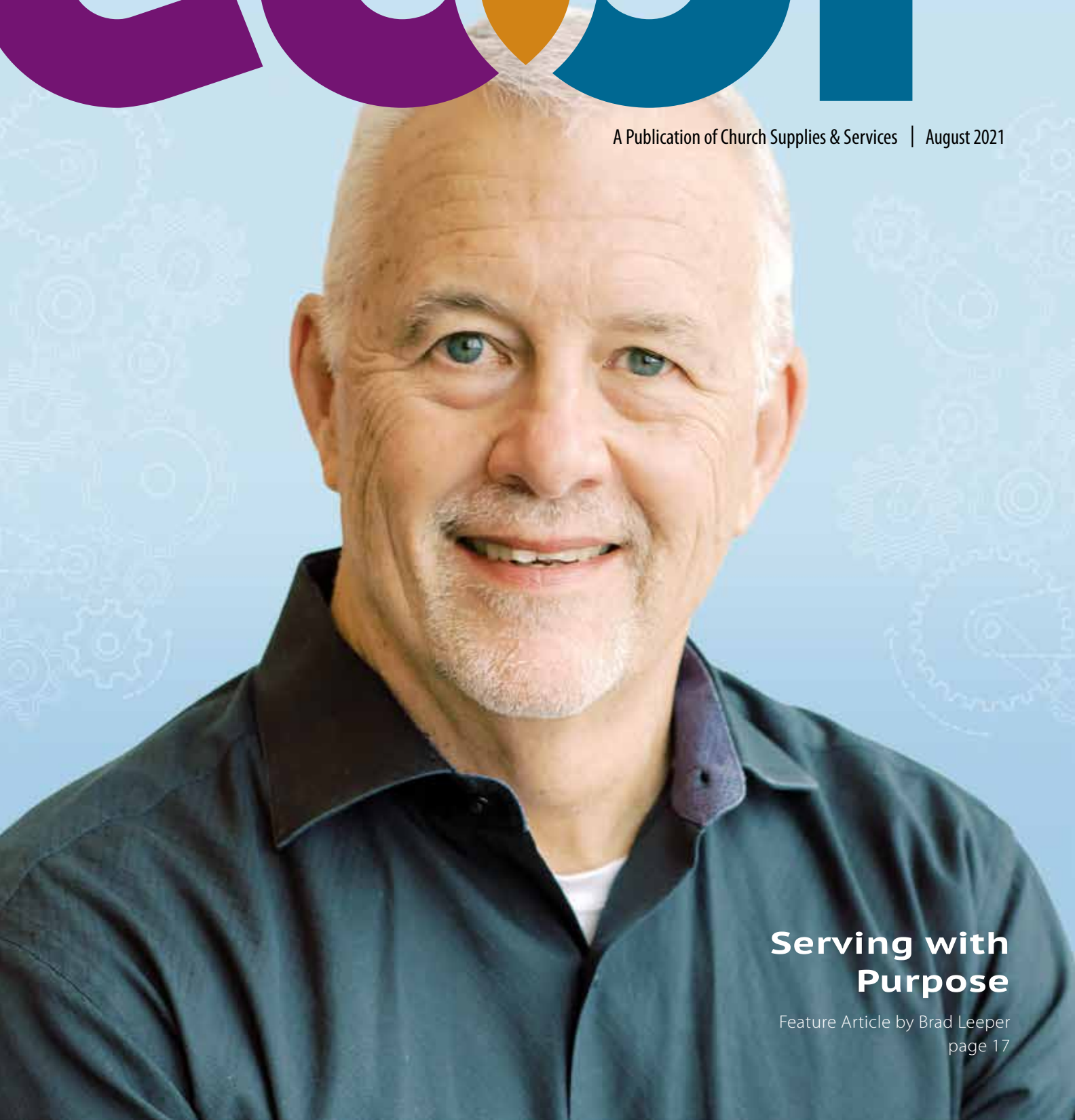


COSP

A Publication of Church Supplies & Services | August 2021



Serving with Purpose

Feature Article by Brad Leeper
page 17



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Can you articulate your inner purpose, as well as your purpose in ministry? This is a mission-critical step, as purpose must flow from the leader to the team. Infuse purpose into your organization by following these six steps for crafting a healthy staff culture.



The Purpose of Networking

Have you ever struggled to measure the benefits of personal networking? Draw inspiration from this nonprofit leader whose ministry depends upon establishing critical links in the chain.



Seeing Your Insurance with a New Purpose

Appropriate, up-to-date insurance coverage provides protection and a stable financial foundation for your organization. Explore these important areas you may have overlooked.



Because You Can't Run on Empty Forever

Dear School Leader, has the last year left you exhausted? Now is the time for change. Employ these three practical strategies to regain strength and healthy habits for the new school year.



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Keep your contact information current. The lifeline of communication to our members is through correct contact information, i.e. key contact names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Send all updates to patti@churchco-op.org. Help us keep you informed of the latest in events and savings from our vendors.

Editor's Note: For submitting articles, artwork or comments about this publication, please contact: Patti Malott at 832.478.5131 | patti@churchco-op.org

Church Supplies & Services, Inc. (CO+OP)
Issue Dates: Feb, May, Aug, Nov

AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATION Church Supplies & Services, Inc.

LOCATION 9950 Cypresswood, Suite 250 Houston, TX 77070

PHONE 832.478.5131 **ONLINE** churchco-op.org

Issue Number 61 Subscription Price \$2.00

From the Director

Some things along life's journey happen that stick in our minds forever. The year was 1977. It was a beautiful July day in our small town of Ypsilanti, Michigan. We were preparing for a family camping trip to Higgins Lake and had just returned from Fox Tent and Awning. We purchased our first big family tent with bunk beds and a screened-in awning. Excitement clearly showed through each of us.

Our two sons and our two Siberian Huskies were out in the backyard with us as the many pieces were taken out of the boxes and laid systematically on the ground. Tents were basically all set up the same, right?

About 30 minutes into trying different ways to get that tent up, my calm husband became frustrated and started flinging poles into the air. The Huskies quickly ran to their dog houses. I shouted for the boys to go inside the house where I quickly followed.

As the boys and I watched from inside the window, my process mode kicked in and I softly said through the screen, "I think the directions are in the box. They might be helpful." Not the best thing to say at that time. However, once the directions were pulled out and read, the tent went up just as the picture showed. There was indeed a purpose for those directions. We have chuckled about that day for years, but we know it would have gone much smoother had we read the directions first.

This issue of CO+OP Magazine is packed full of articles that center around purpose. Brad Leeper discusses the need for Christians in ministry to clearly articulate our inner purpose and our purpose for ministry. You can find his article on page 17.

We have included pictures of our recent CO+OP Vendor Meeting where we gathered to share ways to serve you better. I provided you a list of questions that we ask during the vetting of Approved CO+OP Vendors on page 36. Feel free to use that list in your ministry.

As our organizations grow, there is purpose in adding personnel and reviewing processes and procedures. Our newest employee, Amy Cargle, joined our team as Chief Operating Officer in June of this year. Learn more about her on page 7.

Our CO+OP purpose is to connect you with reputable vendors that save you time and money on products, services, and education. Find a quiet space, turn off your electronics and learn from these gifted authors and vendors.

Together We...Become Purposeful!

Patti Malott, CEO/Executive Director



Connecting People and Resources

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Connecting People and Resources

churchco-op.org



Mission

The CO+OP connects churches, schools and nonprofit organizations with reputable vendors and resources to save time and money on products, services and education.

Purpose

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- Saving members time by screening prospective vendors
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- Connecting members with vendors and cultivating mutually beneficial relationships
- Acting as a liaison and advocate in time of need
- Providing relevant educational opportunities at a reduced rate through the annual Texas Ministry ConferenceSM
- Providing professional networking experiences
- Providing tools to help members in their ministries

Learn more about the CO+OP at churchco-op.org or call **832.478.5131**.



Texas Ministry ConferenceSM

TexasMinistryConference.org

The purpose of the Texas Ministry ConferenceSM is to provide tools and resources for those who serve in churches, schools and nonprofit organizations. This includes both people in leadership who drive the vision and those who support them such as employees; committee, lay, council, and session members; elders and volunteers.

We do this at our annual conference by offering affordable training, educational workshops, quality vendors and sponsors, networking, fellowship and encouragement.

The Texas Ministry ConferenceSM is held the third Thursday of each February.

Learn more about how you can benefit from attending this conference at TexasMinistryConference.org or by calling **832.478.5131**.

Our COOP Team

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Chief Executive Officer
(CEO)



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Amy Cargle



Amy Cargle joined Team CO+OP in June 2021 as the Chief Operating Officer. Amy brings with her a background in the legal field where she served as a business litigation attorney for over 13 years. Her law practice focused on insurance defense, commercial litigation, contract disputes,

product liability, and malpractice defense. She also worked in higher education for Indiana Wesleyan University in Cleveland, Ohio, where she taught in the graduate and undergraduate program. Amy holds a BA in English from Kent State University, a JD from The University of Akron, an MBA from Tiffin University, and is completing her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from Indiana Wesleyan University.

Amy grew up in Kent, Ohio. She and her family moved from Northeast Ohio to The Woodlands in 2017 when her husband, Jim, joined J.B. Poindexter & Co. located in downtown Houston. Amy and Jim have four children – Andrew (28), Joshua (27), Meghan (26), and Noah (17). After moving to Houston, Amy served on the leadership team at Faith Bible Church as their Executive Director of Operations. She joined the CO+OP Board of Directors in 2018 and taught three workshops at the 2020 Texas Ministry ConferenceSM.

Below are some fun facts Amy shared about herself:

Three words to describe me would be resourceful, passionate and learner. I am an avid reader, so I am usually listening to a book and reading a paper or Kindle book. Two of my latest favorites include *Where the Crawdads Sing* and *A Quantum Case for God*. Nothing makes me smile more than having all four of my children under the same roof and playing with my dogs – Eli (a 4-year old German Shepherd) and Chewie (a Shih tzu/Yorkie mix). I enjoy being with my

husband and children, spending time at the beach, reading, playing the piano, and exploring Texas. I have been a fan of the Dallas Cowboys since I was 10 years old. I also love the Cleveland Indians and Cavaliers, and I am a huge Ohio State supporter, which will be fun when they play Michigan this year, since Patti is a Michigan fan!

The best thing about working for the CO+OP is joining this great team! Having experienced the church side as a member of the CO+OP and served on the Board, I have witnessed the benefits of this organization and its vendors. I am looking forward to serving on staff and getting to know more of our members and vendors! ✦

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Kim Whaley has assisted CO+OP members and vendors for six years. In her role as an agent and a Registered Health Underwriter, she focuses on understanding ACA regulations and what is required for an employer to be compliant. Whether you have 2 employees or 200, Kim will work hard to design a benefits program to meet your budget and your employee's needs.

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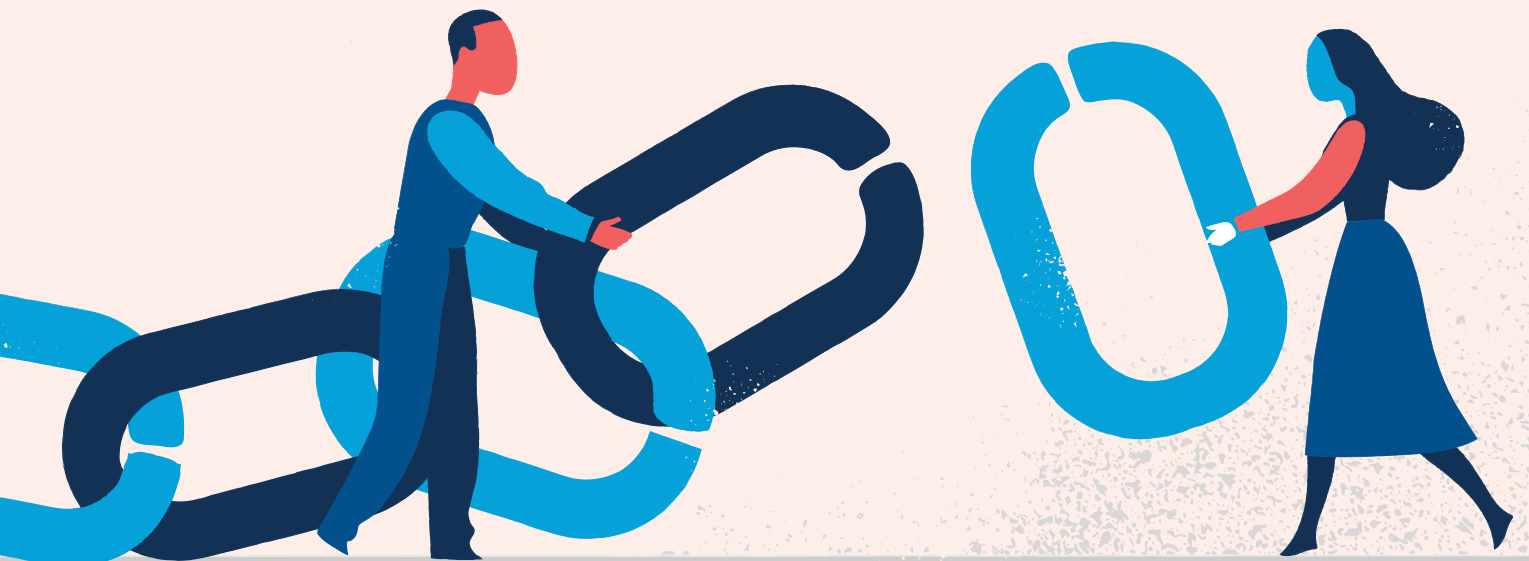
LIFE

by Jerrie Amos

THE PURPOSE OF NETWORKING

There is a general consensus that networking among like-minded organizations is a good thing. While most of us can typically provide a statement about the value of networking, what makes it important enough to invest resources into finding and developing relationships and examining the work ethics of our ministry partners? If we agree networking is valuable, how do we communicate its purpose and reasonably calculate its worth?

Our goal is to incorporate relationships in order to help us fulfill our written mission statements. The problem that surfaces is understandable. It is hard to measure the return on investment of personnel, finances, intellectual talent and time. It is easy to calculate a dollar value as a measurable outcome, but it is harder to recognize a changed life as a measurable outcome. Let's think about measuring this intangible value.



I am fortunate that my ministry position fits my strong personal desire to connect and find purpose in partnering with all parts of our Christian community. We, meaning you and I as servants of Christ, have a mandate. Our mandate is to be a participant within the fully-functioning body of Christ. Each of us is recognized as necessary for the body of Christ to function as a whole. This partnering together provides a living example to the unbelieving world that the church accomplishes much when we all work together to serve. As we share gospel good news, we love the unlovely, feed the hungry, care for the hurting, are a friend to the friendless, and teach others to walk along this journey. Can we do this alone? No, of course not. We need each other.

In my ministry at Care Net Pregnancy Center, we are called to demonstrate Christ's love and compassion and advocate for a decision for life for families facing a pregnancy decision. Like so many of your groups, we are a ministry that is a part of the greater church. Each of our volunteers comes from a local church body, providing an opportunity to take that message of truth and a gift of lovingkindness back to followers of Christ needing to be nurtured in their congregation of believers.

Meanwhile, there is a critical need that must be met. We may be the first contact or link in a long chain of help leading to an important outcome. It is our purpose to extend another link in the chain that may include housing, medical care, financial support, job opportunities and legal resources. Each link is provided by one of our ministry partners and is important in that it offers tangible assistance. Our ministry partners line up with our mission of life for our client and sharing Christ.

Consider the story of a client I will call Jane. She has come to us to receive free services of a pregnancy test and an

ultrasound. These are provided by loving volunteers who are members of local churches. She is then given a referral to follow up with a doctor who is also a Christian and who helps her see her unborn child as a human who needs life. She has no home. She and her boyfriend were living with his parents, and upon finding out she is pregnant, they have sent her away. We partner with Mission of Yahweh, who loves our client and confirms Christ to her as she applies for more permanent housing with a maternity home in Central Texas. We discover she has two other children who also need help during this time. We offer another networked ministry that will supply food, clothing and material resources for her children. Each of these contacts is supported by local congregations and businesses with a love to serve as Christ served.

By this time, Jane has been given a Bible and has begun to read about the things she has seen and heard. Along the way, someone is with her when she chooses to become a follower of Christ. We learn of Jane's full story two years after her first visit to our center, when she returns to share her love and appreciation. Why would we relinquish this opportunity to serve to government resources who cannot offer Christ's love?

In order to achieve this, it takes resources to determine what that next link should be. At my ministry, it is me, the Associate Director, who has personally connected with and walked into another ministry office, school or church to determine our like-mindedness and confirm that they will be loving and caring for my client (or as I like to put it, a little lamb that God has entrusted to my care). I feel a strong responsibility to partner with those who will continue the significant work that has taken place in our ministry for that very special person. This is just as true of any business a church decides to partner with or a school chooses to care for students entrusted to them by their parents. If you are



supplying materials, services, food, housing or truth as a link in this process, you are accountable to Christ to give your best and strengthen the body of Christ by serving each portion of the body with excellence.

Accomplishing this takes time, talent, financial and spiritual investment. We document every resource we refer to our clients, and we follow up with them. As you note measurable increases in your business, church or ministry, recognize that you are being promoted by someone who recommended you as the next link in their chain. This is someone you have partnered with through intentional meeting and vetting, otherwise known as networking.

I strongly recommend that you keep your resource connections in a fluid document that can be updated throughout your office computer network in order to eliminate misinformation given as referrals. We have found Microsoft Excel to be an excellent tool for creating a workbook for each need category.

Yesterday, I confirmed a new resource to offer our clients who have a history of incarceration. This invitation to become a resource is the result of many years of intentional connections with church staff, leaders and volunteers, ministry relationships, and hard history stories that God is using to heal. It will give me an opportunity to build another link in the chain for the many women who walk through our doors for help. I don't have to use a flyer someone collected a year ago with outdated information. I don't have to rely on government assistance that has no regard for the spiritual growth of the woman I have been entrusted with.

When you truly recognize the financial gains and spiritual gains of networking, you will benefit when someone from your organization meets with resources face-to-face. There

is a strong bond that is built between ministries, and you will have the confidence that your connection will be given high priority.

That, my sisters and brothers, is the calculated value! Our client hears the gospel planted, we offer help, and then we refer her to the next like-minded resource in our community, where she again sees the outworking of the gospel through someone's job, and so on. New seeds are being planted, watered and sprouting new life, growing the body of Christ.

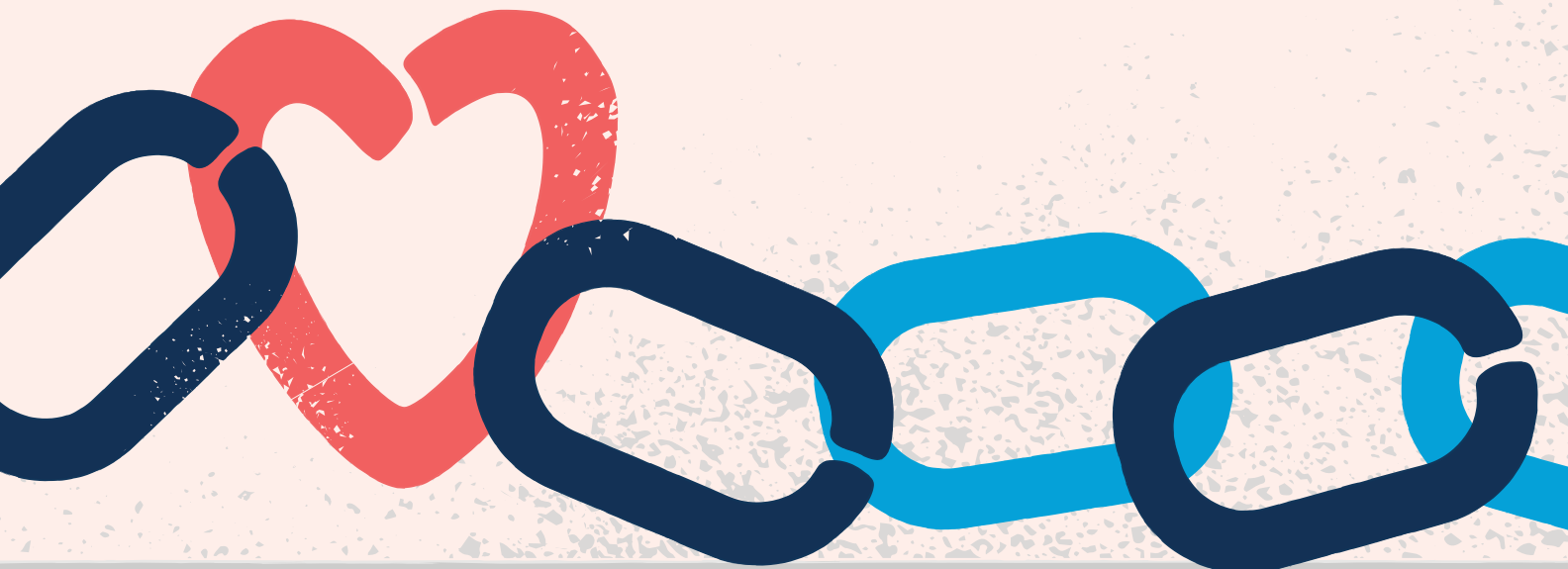
How can you not invest in this type of networking? Doing your part without a smooth handoff is a waste of your time and effort. How can you not use your most talented staff gifted at connections? How can you skimp on financial investment in the lives of those you are called upon to serve? How can you not utilize services, products and training from those whose heart's desires are to serve the body of Christ?

The chain grows and the links are strong, keeping you always within your vision statement. By serving within the body of Christ, we serve one another and strengthen our individual callings. Your returns will be strong, reliable and measurable.

Jerrie Amos



Jerrie Amos is the Associate Director for Care Net Pregnancy Centers of Houston. She was initially called to the staff of Care Net as the Community Liaison to bring her corporate experience in marketing as a Key Manufacturer's broker representative. Jerrie is licensed by the State of Texas as a Community Health Worker specializing in resource referrals for clients. She has had the privilege of speaking to numerous organizations and women's ministry groups, has trained young executives, and serves on the CO+OP Board of Directors.



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SEEING YOUR INSURANCE WITH A NEW PURPOSE

by Gary Benson

As a pastor or administrator, you not only have a responsibility to guide your congregation, but also to create a stable financial foundation for your ministry to survive. Having an effective insurance program will aid you in that important endeavor and serve a valuable purpose because *It's Not About Insurance, It's About Protecting Your Ministry*.

Most of the time, your ministry's specific needs will dictate which policies to obtain that will best serve and protect your church and the people who worship there. Since those needs almost always transcend commonly understood property and basic liability coverages, we encourage you to work with an insurance professional who specializes in the nonprofit sector and can guide you.

Often, it's as much about what is excluded as what needs to be included. Many churches assume "extra coverages" are included, when in fact they are a specific endorsement or separate policy. With that in mind, let's examine some key coverages or areas of protection that many congregations overlook that serve a valuable purpose in your church or organization.

Cyber Insurance: 5 Reasons to Get Cyber Insurance

- 1) Mitigate financial loss from a cyber incident. Cyber insurance covers many of the expenses triggered by a breach, such as forensics, legal costs, and notifications.
- 2) Data breaches are not the only type of cyber danger that can threaten an organization. Ransomware is on the rise. In 2021, the average ransomware payment increased by 43%, business interruption due to ransomware attacks increased by 10%, and almost 80% of these attacks included a threat to leak the hijacked data.
- 3) Recover quickly from a cyber incident. Cyber insurance provides expert services to help minimize disruption to your organization.
- 4) Cyber liability is typically excluded in your main policy, or the coverages provided may be nominal at best and are often inadequate in the event of an actual cyber event.
- 5) It's easy and simple to quote cyber insurance. You can get quoted in minutes and typically be protected in just a day or two.

Umbrella Liability: Choosing the Right Amount of Coverage

Use your annual budget as a reference point to determine your preferred amount of umbrella liability coverage, or if you need it at all. An umbrella liability policy (plus your base limits of coverage) should be an amount adequate to cover your annual budget until the annual budget exceeds \$10 million.

Statistically, the odds of a non-property claim to exceed \$3 million is very small, and it is almost unheard of to have a \$10 million claim. So, if your budget exceeds \$10 million, look at the activities that could create the largest liability and then make an evaluation of higher coverage.

Sexual Offenses

While it is an unpleasant topic, sexual misconduct claims have remained the #1 reason churches go to court for 9 of the last 10 years. Since I still visit many churches whose idea of a preventive program consists of only background checks,

please allow me to note some standard practices that every organization should implement at a minimum. There are additional steps to further enhance your program which we would be happy to share with you, but the following should be active in your church, regardless of size.

- 1) **Use a Written Application** – Every person working with children or youth (volunteer or paid) should complete a proper screening application.
- 2) **Interview** – Interviews do not have to be intense, but they should inquire into an individual's background sufficiently to make a determination of their suitability for working with minors.
- 3) **Two Adult Rule or Never Alone Rule** – Perhaps the most effective tool for reducing the risk of sexual molestation of minors is adopting and enforcing the mandate that no adult is ever alone with a minor, period.
- 4) **Waiting Period** – Any volunteer desiring to work with minors should have a waiting period such as six months after joining or regularly attending a church before being allowed to do so.
- 5) **Background Checks** – At the very minimum, make sure you are conducting nationwide background checks. You can get more detailed by combining a national check with a state and/or county check, but a nationwide check should serve as your minimum requirement. If you are not sure what you are currently doing, find out! National background checks are inexpensive and a must—they just cannot be the only thing you are doing. Statistically speaking, the likelihood of getting a hit on a background check is only 4%, so using that alone would classify your screening program as ineffective.
- 6) **Adequate Limits of Coverage** – Sexual misconduct/molestation coverage must be endorsed on your policy and is not covered under your general liability coverage, so work with your insurance advisor on the proper amount of coverage for your organization. We generally recommend limits of at least \$1,000,000. There could be exceptions for less, but to play it safe, carry at

least the \$1,000,000 limits. As a side note, unless your organization is doing most of the steps previously noted, you may not qualify for the higher limits of coverage, which is just another reason to implement them.

Quick Highlight of Other Coverages

- **Employment Practices Liability** – If your church has employees, you should consider this coverage to protect you against wrongful termination or discrimination claims.
- **Employee Dishonesty Liability** – Even more essential than this coverage and its limits is your checks and balances on those who handle money. If the same person controls all monies (regardless of how trustworthy you think they are), you could join the increasing number of churches dealing with an embezzlement issue, sometimes in the tens to even hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- **Workers Compensation** – If you have employees, you should have this coverage. While not mandatory in Texas, you lose any and all defenses should an employee be injured or get sick while on the clock. The State will advise you on how much and for how long the employee will receive compensation. Sometimes that can be extended for quite a while and in rare cases, even for a lifetime.

We understand that insurance is not glamorous and is typically a large line item in your budget. When the focus moves away from simply being an insurance policy to being a tool that actively protects the very existence of your church in doing ministry, it takes on a very specific purpose. If our agency can assist you in any way in achieving that goal, please do not hesitate to contact us. ✦

Gary Benson



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Serving with Purpose

by Brad Leeper

Mission. Strategic plan. Vision Intentionality. All fitting terms in the proper context, but perhaps lacking one core element—the WHY.

Purpose means the reason why something is done. Mission, vision and other assorted terms only have real meaning when the why behind each approach is anchored in solid ground.

The why of life, work and engaging others can be minimized within the rush of what we do in ministry. We can spout mission statements, but reminding ourselves of the pure joy of the why of life refreshes, restores and calibrates each waking moment.

Your purpose starts with the comprehensive why saturating your life. Ministry and team dynamics are sticky only when you as a leader are true-north in your soul. How might you as a pastor and leader infuse a healthy, sustained, organic sense of purpose into your team?

Before we get to your team, there is one vital element to consider. Skip the next section and you'll discover a good series of steps that follows, but those steps will quickly evaporate rather than stick.

Our Inner Person: The Primary Purpose of Life

The inner dimensions of life create the bandwidth from which we live life, engage in mission and take others with us on the adventure. Only when we are saturated in the love of God in our heart can we have meaning, determination and single-mindedness that sticks into eternity.

We are keenly aware how fleeting this inner purpose can be when pressed by ministry and leading others. The best leaders and pastors I have encountered have parked in consistent soul-care development. These pastors refuel and engage from a position of inner strength in the Spirit, rather than the more common driven work ethic to make ministry happen. I fight this driven tendency every day as my personal wiring and upbringing reinforces being productive.

Take a moment to recalibrate your inner purpose. We are redeemed by God, blessed by God, restored by God, and covered by God. The Psalms guide us through a myriad of personal encounters with God on the very core level of the soul.

Leaders and ministers are on purpose only to the degree that they are aligned internally with God in their very soul. Allow your ministry to start from your inner person, grounded in the purpose of God for your life. Only when we are privately and inwardly saturated and grounded in God's grace can we have true mission and lead people. This private centering solidifies our personal purpose, our reason why we exist.

We cannot lead a team into sustained, effective purpose when our personal purpose is secondary, minimized, forgotten or dormant. It all starts with personal alignment. We as Christ-followers have to understand this reality before we infuse purpose into others and our team:

...so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

(Colossians 1:10 New American Standard Bible)

This is our first and core mission-critical step to leading a team in purpose. Only when we have the internal why, that purpose that gives us grace to live and minister, can we lead others. Cheat the personal why, and your ministry and leadership of others will become much harder, losing traction and becoming less effective.

Main idea here: Personally, slow down long enough to let God speak into your life purpose.

Purpose in Ministry

Personal private strength derived from inner purpose becomes the life from which we pastor others.

Purpose in ministry is a craft and takes time to become reality. Purpose, the primary reason behind what we do, is like a master painter who sketches and sees the preferred future and then paints the magic of the colors into reality.

Purpose is slower rather than faster. More marinated than microwaved. More artful than technical. Much of what we learn in ministry comes in bullet points and a series of tactical steps. Purpose allows you as a pastor and leader to allow God to work in you first, and then lead others from the overflow. Those who rush find lesser fruit in their work.

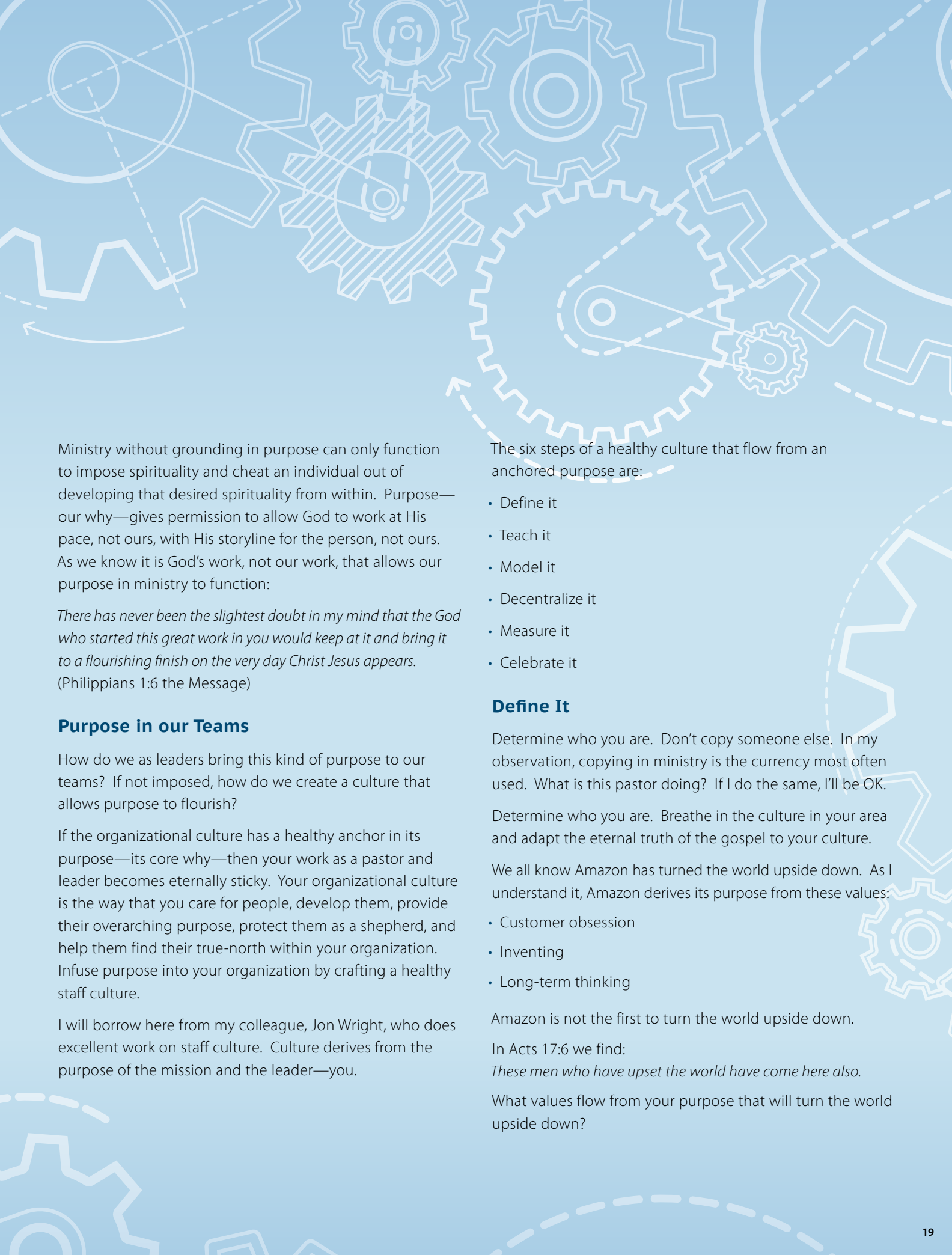
Purpose in ministry allows:

- Calm
- Steady pace
- Courage to innovate
- Experimentation
- Personal development for your team and volunteers
- Giver base to have confidence, flourish and financially invest more with joy
- Your private world to flow from strength, not anxious workloads that drain the soul
- A ministry life legacy that finishes well and with great pleasure of living in the realm of well-done faithful servant

Eugene Peterson provides shrewd counsel as he positions wisdom in a pastoral context from a life of personal purpose alignment:

...so that leading people into a life of worship and discipleship requires paying attention to all these details so that we don't impose a spirituality on them from without, but develop it from within.

(Letters to a Young Pastor Eric and Eugene Peterson Nav Press)



Ministry without grounding in purpose can only function to impose spirituality and cheat an individual out of developing that desired spirituality from within. Purpose—our why—gives permission to allow God to work at His pace, not ours, with His storyline for the person, not ours. As we know it is God's work, not our work, that allows our purpose in ministry to function:

There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.
(Philippians 1:6 the Message)

Purpose in our Teams

How do we as leaders bring this kind of purpose to our teams? If not imposed, how do we create a culture that allows purpose to flourish?

If the organizational culture has a healthy anchor in its purpose—its core why—then your work as a pastor and leader becomes eternally sticky. Your organizational culture is the way that you care for people, develop them, provide their overarching purpose, protect them as a shepherd, and help them find their true-north within your organization. Infuse purpose into your organization by crafting a healthy staff culture.

I will borrow here from my colleague, Jon Wright, who does excellent work on staff culture. Culture derives from the purpose of the mission and the leader—you.

The six steps of a healthy culture that flow from an anchored purpose are:

- Define it
- Teach it
- Model it
- Decentralize it
- Measure it
- Celebrate it

Define It

Determine who you are. Don't copy someone else. In my observation, copying in ministry is the currency most often used. What is this pastor doing? If I do the same, I'll be OK.

Determine who you are. Breathe in the culture in your area and adapt the eternal truth of the gospel to your culture.

We all know Amazon has turned the world upside down. As I understand it, Amazon derives its purpose from these values:

- Customer obsession
- Inventing
- Long-term thinking

Amazon is not the first to turn the world upside down.

In Acts 17:6 we find:

These men who have upset the world have come here also.

What values flow from your purpose that will turn the world upside down?

Teach It

Unapologetically rehearse, repeat, remind, prompt and spotlight your purpose and your values flowing from that purpose.

Ministry leadership is often grounded in assuming that your team, your volunteers and your organization know your purpose—your central why you exist.

An organization whose central purpose is vague and untethered to the daily work will drift into uncharted and unwanted seas. Without core teaching on purpose, people will fill the vacuum with something that is often quite unhealthy. Conversely, teams that are centered in their purpose, flowing from a leader that lives within purpose, find great satisfaction, pleasure, inner joy and deep meaning in their work. In these settings, people often say things like “this is not work”, “I can’t believe I get paid to do this”, and “I cannot think of doing anything other than this”.

Model It

Speed of the leader equals speed of the team. How do you model your purpose and your values? Do your team and your organization have confidence in watching your life and deeply and internally desire to live like you? If your inner purpose is healthy and you live life on purpose, your team will readily mirror what you model.

Ways to model:

- “Team, what Chantelle just did there is a perfect example of what a job well done looks like.”
- “This weekend we saw Darnell lead in such a way that our primary purpose was accelerated.”
- “What your team did this weekend, Marcel, truly showed what discipleship is about.”

Modeling must come from an authentic private world, a world thriving with personal purpose flowing from the grace of the gospel. In working with hundreds of leaders, it has become rather easy to recognize those whose private worlds and public worlds match. There is a difference often seen in the lives and energies of the team. Over time, leaders cannot mask a misalignment between their private and public worlds. Dare to ask your spouse, your mentor, or even your team if your private and public worlds match.

Decentralize It

Allow others to lead. Only when a pastor has inner purpose allowing leadership to flow from strength can that pastor be comfortable in allowing others to lead. When life purpose flows from ego, approval of others, fear of being wrong, risk of failure or overconfidence, then allowing others to lead becomes too much.

Empowering others to lead energizes an organization, even when that leadership is less than what you might do.

I am currently watching at least two significant organizations change leadership from their deep bench of experience to a younger team. The older leaders have coached, refined, encouraged and developed the younger leaders through their mistakes to allow the next group of leaders to emerge and take root. The older leaders have purposefully stepped back from the spotlight to allow others in, and the organization is much better off.

Measure It

Help your team know how to get to the finish line by defining what a job well done looks like with metrics to validate the purpose. If a team does not know what well done looks like, then getting there will not happen.

What does your fulfilled purpose look like? What is your preferred future? What are the outcomes that you seek? What does “there” look like?

Celebrate It

Consistently share wins with the entire team. Take prime time in staff meetings to draw attention to the win and celebrate that win. My colleague, Jon Wright, provides the following example of what this looks like in its fullness:

Staff Meeting

As you know, our values here at ABC Church are:

- Excellence
- Agility
- Teamwork
- Development (Teach)

It is our desire that these values be reflected in who we are and what we do. We've defined those values and taught those values throughout the year. When that happens, we want to be sure to celebrate it.

(Model)

Due to COVID, our Christmas Eve service was 100% digital and 100% live. Amazing!

I've asked Joe, our Worship Arts guy, and his team to share a bit about how that all happened.

(Decentralize)

Joe shares a few stories and shout-outs to team members, and a few other team members share. (Reflecting our values because we coached Joe to do this when he shared.)

- We had X number of people who watched the livestream
- X number reached out for prayer
- X number filled out our first-time guest info
- X number financially gave for the first time
- And X number indicated they embraced the gospel for the first time

(Measure. How cool is that? We've defined the "win".)

To commemorate this huge win, we're giving each team member a... (really cool, thoughtful symbol).

(Celebrate)

This is the hard and fun work of culture building.

Purpose is contagious. Purpose is effective and powerful. Purpose draws people into our organization because they see something there that they want for themselves and do not have. Momentum and credibility flow from purpose. ✦

Brad Leeper



As one of the Generis principals, Brad Leeper has the privilege of accelerating generosity toward God-inspired vision. He has a strong understanding of the multi-site church strategy and other pioneering church movements. Brad is drawn to larger, innovative, growing churches and the challenges of helping them expand in the area of generosity practically and spiritually. Brad earned a Masters in Theology degree from Dallas

Seminary and a B.S. in Economics from West Virginia University. He has diverse experience in church risk management, human resources, financial analysis, adult education, cross-cultural missions and strategic planning.



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Because You Can't Run on Empty Forever: Three Tactics K12 Leaders Need to Adopt Post-Pandemic

by Kim Jennings

Almost every school leader I know has a “real-life job description” dominated by leading meetings, making decisions, putting out fires, raising funds, hiring and firing, managing board relationships, recruiting new families, and so on. It’s in the DNA of a K12 school. Be encouraged, leader! It’s a post-COVID world now. Now is your chance to rewrite that real-life job description. Let’s look at why it’s important for you to seize this post-COVID opportunity and examine three real-life ideas on how to do it.

According to Christian thinker Nicholas P. Wolterstorff in *Educating for Life*, “Christian education is for Christian life.” It’s not about curriculum or job training—it’s about Christian life, future generations’ Christian life. Even with the foibles and failures of Christian education, God is shaping His people literally through teachers and administrators. God uses us despite our flaws.

But what is Christian life? Wolterstorff tells us, “The Christian life is not...the life of a mind, a rational-moral principle, that happens to be imprisoned in a chunk of flesh. Rather, it is the life of creatures who are soul and body, inner person and outer person.”

You aren’t running a school. You’re educating students growing in soul and body in God’s world.

But you knew that. ***You also know you’re exhausted.***

When teachers, students, parents and alumni see you, what are you modeling? Are you working on purpose? Or is every minute between 6:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. (or longer) dictated by others and tasks? How is that demonstrating a creature who is both “soul and body”?

COVID-19 slammed school leaders. My friend who’s a recruiter for schools shared that 2021 has been dubbed the “year of transition” with so many worn-out leaders taking a break or making a post-COVID change.

You wouldn’t purposefully demand 16+ hour workdays year-round from your team. So why are you doing that to yourself? Leader, lead thyself. Consider these questions honestly:

- Does my calendar truly reflect the priorities of my work, or is it a series of brush fires?
- How is my team? Do they trust me to support their work and give them freedom to do it professionally? Alternatively, do I trust them enough to allow them to take appropriate responsibilities off my plate?
- Does my team have the tools they need for success? Do I?

A mentor of mine who ran a global company and has served on global nonprofits’ boards once counseled me:

“Decide what must be done today and then put away the rest. Something will always be left undone. Make peace with it.” Words to live by. God did not call us to perfection. He called us to serve Him. Are we serving Him when we grind ourselves down, demanding instantaneous perfection from ourselves in all decisions and plans?

The following three ideas are gleaned from my experience in working with leaders who are every moment threatened by the tyranny of the urgent. I pray they bring you a little newfound peace.

1) Absolutely everything must have an objective.

If you can’t articulate what the objective is, find the words to do so.

- “We’ve always done xyz” is not an objective. Don’t accept that as an answer.
- If the objective of the event/program/communication piece does not fully support the core mission of your school, seize this moment to drop it.
- Constituents may push back when you drop it. They’ll come around. Stay positive and transparent.

Your time, bandwidth and energy are limited. If you spend precious hours and creative energy executing something that doesn’t support the core mission of your school, why do it? This brings me to the second point.

*God uses
us despite
our flaws.*

2) Guard your time like you guard the lives of the children you supervise.

I would say—like you guard your life—but in reality, if you're running on empty, you're not guarding your life. Time is a precious and limited resource. Guard it. You are pulled in 1,000 directions every single day. Learn to block your time with this resource:

<https://blog.rescuetime.com/time-blocking-101/>

I encourage you to really hear the following Hidden Brain podcast episode and incorporate some of the “deep work” discussed in it. This podcast may help you summon the will to guard your time against the onslaught:

www.npr.org/2017/07/25/539092670/you-2-0-the-value-of-deep-work-in-an-age-of-distraction

Stop death by a thousand meetings. Start by asking: Must we have that meeting? And then, do I have to be there? Every meeting must have an agenda. If there is no express agenda, don't have it. The agenda should be collaborative, prepared ahead of time, and each topic must have a time allotment. For example: Parent orientation - 10 minutes. Someone in the meeting should maintain fidelity to the timeframes, with flexibility.

Use the following “parking lot” concept for items that need to be temporarily tabled. This collaborative agenda method forces everyone to value their own and each other's time:

<https://masadvise.org/facilitation/using-parking-lot-effectively-meeting/>

3) Don't send emails in flurries or late at night.

This third tip may seem odd, but in my experience, it's an extremely important part of maintaining a healthy culture. Your staff does not perceive “no need to respond” as actually true. Sending staff emails late at night (just to get them off your mind) pressures them to constantly be at work. As their leader, your team wants to follow you. So lead—by example. Manage your email activity to them appropriately. Demonstrate that family time is important for everyone. Almost always, face-to-face interaction with them during work time is stronger, better and more efficient than email anyway.

When you get an email from a parent, alum or other person after work hours, do not respond unless it is truly urgent. Replying to a parent complaining about a teacher reprimanding their child for a uniform infraction teaches them that:

- 1) their feeling of urgency is warranted, even if it isn't,
- 2) you are ready and available to talk to parents about whatever they wish at their convenience, and
- 3) your family's time is less valuable than theirs.

It may be hard to refrain from responding, especially when the sender is upset. But, see item #3 above! If it can wait until tomorrow, respond tomorrow.

God's Kingdom needs Christian leaders who are living a true Christian life in the way that Wolterstorff meant it. Serve God with your whole and healthy being. Have you been doing that?

School leader, the post-COVID honeymoon will end soon.

Chances are good that you need to heal personally from the trauma of 2020-2021 and strengthen your own soul and body simply to continue being a leader. Seize this unique moment. Create a real-life job description for post-pandemic real-life work. You, your family, team and entire school community will be better for it. +

Kim Jennings



Kim Jennings, CFRE – Advancement Strategist with Generis, specializes in consulting in Christian K12 schools. Before joining Generis, she earned a master's degree in Public Relations from Boston University and ran development programs in Christian schools for more than 15 years. Kim's expertise includes strategic planning, major gifts and annual giving programs, event planning, communications and public relations, strategic volunteer management, prospect research, grant writing, coaching and team building.

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Leaving a Purposeful Legacy

by Dave Travis

“I have often wondered what else I would do,” the long-term pastor of a large congregation recently said to me. “This pandemic season has driven me to the edge. I am not quite the age when I wanted to retire, and while I think I can still be useful here, it may be time for new leadership and direction. But what can I do?”

This is not a new issue. Pastors feel a great responsibility to their congregations. Many had a hand in starting their congregation or leading it to its current season of growth and larger size. Some have reached the magic Medicare age, but some aren't quite there yet. Should they hang on? Is now the time? What would you advise?

For the last 20 years, I have been coaching and consulting with pastors of larger churches about their succession plans. As of this writing, I have engaged over 120 of them. Each has its twist and turns, but there are patterns to recognize.

First, a definition. Succession is the intentional transfer of leadership, authority and power from one primary leader to another. When I created that definition in a workshop with Dr. Warren Bird and William Vanderbloemen, we realized we had hit on something.¹ Succession is different from search. Often churches, businesses and nonprofit organizations focus on the wrong question: “WHO will be the next leader?” Succession is focused on the current leader first.



Let's move back a step. William Bridges² uses a model of transition where he describes three phases. There should be healthy endings, productive neutral zones, and THEN new beginnings can happen. All three are needed. Bridges said: "It's not the change that gets you; it's the transition." He meant the change was the organizational/structural elements, but the transition is psychological and emotional. You must deal with both.

Ideal succession processes deal with all three zones. There are multiple purposes for all three zones. The purpose of starting with healthy endings is to create healthy finishes for the current leader. This enables the organization to thrive in the neutral zone and move confidently into new beginnings.

Good endings mean helping the current leader decide what their future could look like. Most leaders have to lead something to fulfill their callings. Most recognize that the pace and weight in their next season of leadership must look different. The leader must satisfy their passion and purpose to be meaningful, not just hold an honorary or figurehead role.

Good endings also mean that the organization should celebrate and mark the ending season appropriately, while also viewing it as a purposeful preparation season for its next chapter of ministry. As I work through my Pastor Smart Succession Process, I help the leader, teams and board sketch these following chapters to realize their organization's ultimate purpose.

The neutral zone season also needs purposeful direction, or it becomes stuck. The leader and their family begin to wrap their heads and hearts around what the next chapter could look like

in multiple domains of life. In my recent book, *Pastor Legacy Life Plan*, seven areas are outlined for examination. There are more, but starting with the seven helps leaders imagine what could be the reality for their next chapter.

Organizations need to use this neutral season purposefully, considering:

- How the current mission field context informs the next chapter
- Staff evaluation of priorities and roles
- Board priorities for the next chapter
- The desired role the next pastor will play

In my experience, churches that gain clarity on the points above are more successful at finding the right leader for their next chapter. Too many rely on overly broad role descriptions or expect hero leaders to recharge the church. It is much better to be clear on directions and find a fit for what the church sees as its productive next chapter and a leader who desires to go there with them.

It is also vital during the neutral season to help the current leader through the process of release. While we all desire to finish strong and keep running "right through the finish line," it is essential for the current leader to begin adjusting to a new season and for the church to process that change.

Finally, there is a season of new beginnings. This includes the timing of the celebration of the transfer of power from one leader to the next. The celebration season is just as much to help the congregation as it is to thank the past leader and their family. It is important for the body to help them mentally prepare for its next chapter.

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The new beginnings season also includes the orientation and installation of the next leader. When I work with churches, I use proprietary tools to help them derive a staff operating manual that fits the particular church's team and its new leader. We script the first 100 days of a game plan to get started on the right note. When there is both a micro purpose in the first 100 days that moves towards a long-term macro purpose, we can see significant progress. Likewise, helping the past leader with their new beginning is critical to helping them release the adrenaline of leadership once focused on the church.

The opening excerpt from my leader conversation comes full circle here. Many leaders and churches have worked to find new roles for leaders who remain connected with their former congregation. These roles have a clear purpose and meaning and contribute to the life of the whole. At the same time, they have clear boundaries and safeguards to recognize that the congregation is now led by a new pastor and is headed to new places and priorities.

I have several free tools to share with interested readers:

- A free 40-page eBook on Pastor Smart Succession
- A two-page list of tools that churches can use in their planning process
- For pastors, a copy of my new book – *Pastor Legacy Life Plan: Ground Your Present to Build for Your Future*

Feel free to drop me an email at dave.travis@generis.com to request any of these tools for your use. ✦

Dave Travis



Dave Travis has a wealth of experience from pastoral ministry and the business world. Through Leadership Network, he has had the privilege of learning from many esteemed mentors and working with some of the country's leading pastors. Dave earned a Masters of Divinity in Pastoral Ministry from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a B.S. in Management from Georgia Tech.

He also did a short course at the Harvard Business School in Strategic Perspectives for Nonprofit Management. Dave is the author of three published books and a noted speaker and consultant to megachurches across the country.

¹ Bird and Vanderbloemen, NEXT: Pastoral Succession That Works. Baker. 2020.

² Bridges, Managing Transitions, 25th Anniversary Edition: Making the Most of Change. De Capo Lifelong Books. 2017.

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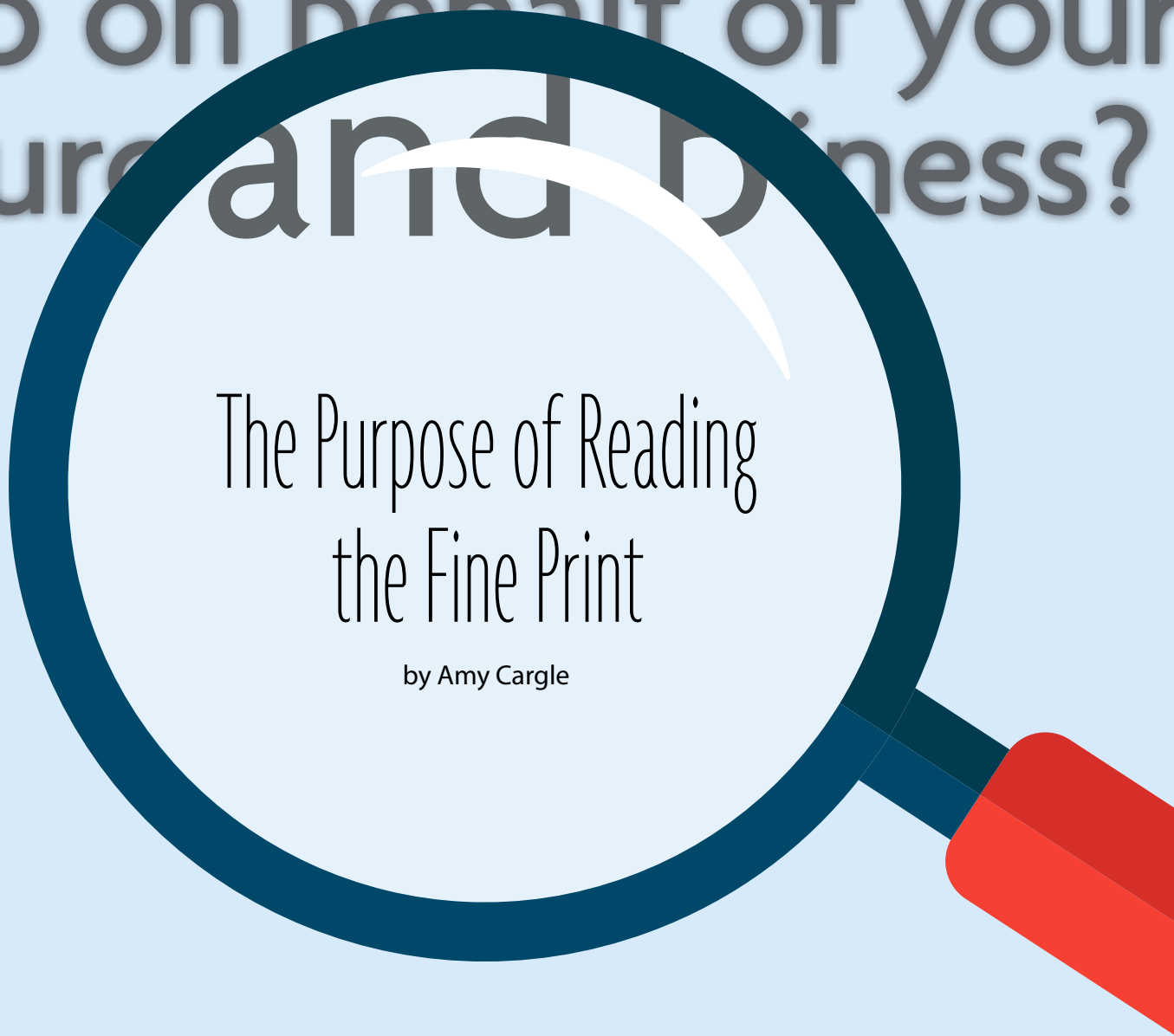
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The Purpose of Reading the Fine Print

by Amy Cargle

Did you know you can negotiate the terms of product and service agreements you enter into on behalf of your church and business? When working with vendors and contractors, one of the most important protections you can have in place is a contract, but it can also be one of the biggest impediments. Knowing what to look for in agreements and what to negotiate are key to a great working relationship. When you take time up front to ensure your agreements cover important areas and protect both parties, it will save you future headaches and possibly future litigation.

Some companies may present a preprinted form with fillable blanks, listing out terms and conditions in fine

print, but do not let those preprinted forms prevent you from entering into negotiations. In fact, these types of agreements are even more important to review and negotiate because most, if not all, of the terms are favorable to the company presenting them.

When negotiating with a fiber provider, I raised a concern over a term in their contract because it was neither applicable to the service I was contracting, nor favorable to the church where I worked. I asked for the clause to be removed and the provider graciously agreed. In fact, they mentioned that they had not read their own contract in quite some time and did not realize that clause was in the contract.

One basic, but very important, element needed in an agreement is a listing of all parties with their legal names, mailing addresses (physical location is important), and phone numbers. If you inadvertently leave out a party to an agreement, you may have no recourse against that company should something go wrong. Additionally, that party may not be bound to the terms that were negotiated because they were not involved in discussions (and therefore unaware of the agreed-upon terms), or you have no written evidence of their agreement to those terms. This becomes a “he said/she said” situation, which does not provide strong evidence in contractual disputes.

Also, confirm the contract lists the authorized representative for all companies to the contract and that the authorized representative is signing on behalf of each party. This name may differ from the person with whom you are negotiating, but if you do not have the authorized representative sign the contract, the contract may not be valid.

All terms should be clearly explained in the contract, including pricing, service terms, delivery, warranty, indemnifications and discounts. Clearly writing out all terms in the contract demonstrates that the parties had a meeting of the minds, one of a contract’s most important elements. When terms are missing, the discussions held by the parties may not be considered by a court because courts expect that all terms are included within the four corners of the document.

Normally, the length of a contract will be agreed upon by the parties (6 months, 1 year, 2 years), but it is extremely important for your church or business to look for automatic renewals of the contract. Automatic renewals are often referred to as “evergreen” clauses. Usually, evergreen clauses will state the automatic renewal time period and provide for an out if the contracting party gives notice within a certain amount of time. Sometimes, evergreen clauses will include automatic price increases or other additional terms that are not discussed at the inception of the contract. As such, it is extremely important for parties to discuss automatic renewals and their terms in advance of signing. If your organization does not believe such a clause is in its best interest, ask to have it removed.

When purchasing products, consider how volume can impact pricing. Even though your church or business may not have a need for large volumes when you enter the contract, consider building in a clause that will allow for future discounts should your volume increase over time. Volume discounts can include tiered pricing on individual purchase orders or discount pricing when your company hits certain dollar thresholds within the contract timeframe. If you have negotiated those discounts, you may be able to realize a percentage after you hit the minimum volume to drive down costs should your demand increase over the life of the agreement.

Another important aspect to consider is the payment terms. Terms can vary, but you want to confirm the parties agree upon the timeframe in which the invoice will be paid, including net 30, 45, 60, etc. Additionally, consider whether you want to include discount terms for early payments. For instance, rather than paying the full invoice within the 30 days required by the contract (if net 30), ask for a 2% discount if you pay within 10 days of receiving the invoice.

You will also establish payment terms for service contracts. Often, businesses will make an initial percentage payment to start the work and reserve a higher percentage payment at the end to ensure completion of work, quality of work, and that the work passes all inspections. Typically, in a service contract, you should negotiate a minimum of two payments to ensure you build in these safeguards.

If COVID-19 taught us anything, it is that business operations can be unpredictable. Considering what terms are needed in unforeseen circumstances should be discussed in advance and memorialized in the agreement. For instance, parties should establish termination provisions for situations if one of the parties does not perform or deliver, files bankruptcy, or there is an Act of God (a pandemic or weather-related emergency). Additionally, there are numerous shipping terms to consider, but one important factor is establishing who is responsible for shipping until it arrives at your location. Also, when discussing shipping, consider who pays for it and how the items will be delivered.

With service contracts (construction, cleaning, IT), many of the terms discussed above will be included in the contract.

However, parties will want to ensure they clearly define the scope of the agreed-upon services to avoid any confusion or dissatisfaction. Another important consideration is discussion of safeguards such as insurance and bonding. These two factors protect your church or business from situations such as a worker or subcontractor getting hurt on your premises or the servicing company damaging property on your premises. Terms should be included as to who covers these injuries and damages. Also, parties should discuss what happens if a contractor fails to pay its subcontractors. Without proper provisions in the contract and safeguards in place, subcontractors may be able to seek payment from your organization if the contractor fails to pay.

Often, there will be a provision for conflict resolution (mediation/arbitration/litigation) and choice of law (the location where these will take place). Parties to a contract should decide on a mutually agreeable location. Some larger companies may have locations throughout the United States, so it is important to establish that any conflict resolution will take place in your home state, rather than requiring your church or business to mediate or litigate in an outside state.

Take these points under consideration before you sign on the dotted line. While this list is not comprehensive, it includes important contractual aspects that are often overlooked. Investing time to review the details of contracts can save churches and businesses considerable time and money. Never hesitate to engage in conversations with a potential vendor or servicer to review terms. These discussions will protect you and possibly avoid contract disputes or conflict resolution. ✦

Amy Cargle



Amy Cargle recently joined the CO+OP as COO. She began her career as a business litigation attorney in NE Ohio, representing companies in a wide variety of matters including contract disputes, product liability, and insurance defense. After moving to Texas, Amy served Faith Bible Church in The Woodlands as Executive Director of Operations. Amy has a BA in English, a JD, MBA, and is completing her PhD in Organizational Leadership. She is married with four children and lives in The Woodlands.



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Be Purposeful in Asking the Right Questions When Engaging a Vendor

Zig Ziglar once said, "If people like you, they will listen to you, but if they trust you, they will do business with you." From a customer's standpoint, we may or may not feel too comfortable with the person trying to sell us a product or service. It may be a personality difference. So how do we move past that and trust the vendor enough to use them?

Knowing more about the organization producing the product or service can guide you in making the right decision on who to use. Knowing what questions to ask is key. Here are three categories of questions that are important to seek answers to before utilizing a vendor's services:

1. General questions to ask all vendors.
2. Specific questions to ask vendors who sell products.
3. Specific questions to ask vendors who provide services.

Several questions are provided below for each of the categories above. In some areas, the questions are broken down into subcategories to keep it simple. The first section lists questions to ask every vendor, regardless of whether they are providing products or services.

GENERAL QUESTIONS TO ASK ALL VENDORS

Liability Insurance

1. How much liability insurance do you carry on your policy?
2. Can you provide me with a copy of your liability insurance certificate?
3. When was the most recent time you had to use your liability insurance?
4. Was the resolution acceptable for your customer?

Contracts

1. Is there a Mediation Clause in the contract?
2. Who conducts the mediation if needed?
3. Where does mediation or litigation take place?
4. How does one get out of the contract?
5. Does the contract automatically renew?
6. Who has the authority to amend the contract?

QUESTIONS TO ASK VENDORS WHO SELL PRODUCTS

1. Who will be our key contact with your company?
2. How will I communicate with our contact (text, email, phone)?
3. What is the turnaround time for orders?
4. What happens if I need to cancel an order?
5. Can you provide a list of your current customers that are most like our organization?
6. What are your payment terms (net 20, net 30 etc.)?
7. Are the payment terms negotiable?
8. What happens if the product(s) do not arrive?
9. What happens if the product(s) arrive after the event?
10. Under what circumstances could prices change?
11. Do you provide a volume rebate or price cut?
12. As our purchases grow, can you scale prices?
13. Who do I contact regarding defects?

QUESTIONS TO ASK VENDORS WHO PROVIDE SERVICES

General Questions to Ask Service Providers

1. What is the company's culture?
2. When will I meet the rest of the staff?
3. Who are your partners?
4. What is your business roadmap?
5. Do you have references from organizations like ours?
6. Who are your competitors?
7. What is the standard implementation and response time?
8. What are your payment terms (net 20, net 30, etc.)?
9. Are the payment terms negotiable?



Questions to Ask Vendors Providing IT Services

1. How long have you been in the managed service business?
2. Who have you worked with in the past?
3. How often would you communicate with me if I use your services?
4. Explain how you take a proactive approach to IT.
5. What is your process after I sign on the dotted line?
6. What is the price difference between paying by the hour versus a retainer fee?
7. Can I move from a retainer fee to an hourly rate before the contract ends?
8. How do you respond to emergencies?
9. What are you doing internally to deal with technology changes and new cybersecurity threats?
10. Can you provide a sample invoice?
11. How are IT issues addressed?
12. If you host our data in the cloud, do you backup our data or are we responsible?

Questions to Ask Vendors Providing IT Services

1. How long have you been in business?
2. Can you provide a list of churches and nonprofits you serve?
3. Do you screen your employees and run background checks?
4. Do all of your employees go through a training program?
5. Do you have a quality assurance process that addresses problem reporting and inspections?
6. What is your employee turnover rate?
7. What will you do to ensure any new or substitute cleaner will know what is expected when cleaning our facilities?
8. Can you provide a sample copy of your contracts?
9. If you have various fee packages, can you provide me the rates?
10. What methods of payment do you accept?
11. What system do you have in place to communicate problems and requirements to your cleaning crew?
12. How can I reach you after hours if I need to report a problem with your cleaning crew?

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If you are a CO+OP Member, you can be confident that we secured answers to the questions above, plus many more, during our vetting process when considering an organization to be an Approved CO+OP Vendor. Due to space, the above is not an exhaustive list, and I did not make comments or expound on each question. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact me at patti@churchco-op.org or 832-478-5131. ✦

Patti Malott
CEO/Executive Director, CO+OP



For a complete list of our Approved CO+OP Vendors, please see pp. 44-45.



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Vendor Meeting Recap

On May 26, 2021, the CO+OP Team and a large group of our Approved Vendors gathered at Champion Forest Baptist Church for our first face-to-face Vendor Meeting since COVID-19. Everyone was excited for the opportunity to meet in person! Attendees enjoyed a hearty lunch catered by Spring Creek BBQ and delicious dessert. Executive Director Patti Malott facilitated an insightful brainstorming session on strategy and gave away fantastic door prizes. CO+OP's Relationship Team and new Chief Operating Officer were introduced, and a panel of experts representing BEMA and Insurance One shared valuable industry updates. Thank you to our participating Vendors! We look forward to seeing all of you at our fall meeting.





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