

10 ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

A leader is someone who unites people and guides them toward a shared goal.

Church leadership helps to set the target, the pace and the culture within an organization.

In a church, leaders are crucial to a ministry's ability to achieve its mission.

Every church has a slightly different leadership model and terms for describing those leaders, however, the basic characteristics of a church leader should be the same.

When selecting leaders within your church, ask these questions to determine if they are the right fit to help lead your church mission.

1. ARE THEY COMMITTED TO THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH?

Anyone in a church leadership position should be able to demonstrate his or her commitment to the church by consistent attendance, volunteering and supporting every aspect of the ministry. For instance, does this person participate in church events, activities and discipleship opportunities?

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ (Acts 20:35).

2. DO THEY DEMONSTRATE GODLY CHARACTER IN EVERY AREA OF THEIR LIVES?

Church leaders need to be Godly people who set the example for desired behaviors. They need to demonstrate biblical principles of communicating, decision-making and ethical behaviors in every area of their lives. Leaders need to have a high level of integrity and adhere to honesty, moral and ethical principles. These behaviors should be the same regardless of the situation they are in or the people they are with.

“If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore, an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?” (1 Timothy 3:1-13).

3. DO THEY COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY?

Churches rely on its leadership team to help share information and communicate with members, volunteers, and staff. This leadership communication represents the church and should be fittingly delivered and in a Godly manner.

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Ephesians 4:29).

4. DO THEY HAVE A TEACHABLE HEART?

We are all on a journey and need to be comfortable with the fact that we are life-learners. Church leaders should have a teachable heart and be open to learning new things.

“If the ax is dull, And one does not sharpen the edge, Then he must use more strength...” (Ecclesiastes 10:10).

5. ARE THEY FLEXIBLE?

The mere nature of a church requires flexibility. Leaders should be flexible with what the church expects of them and willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done.

“For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

6. ARE THEY TEAM-ORIENTED?

It takes an army and a team of volunteers to make church happen. A church leader needs to have great team skills and the ability to take a group of random people and transform them into a committed workforce that supports the church mission. These leaders operate out of a win-win philosophy and help others come to an agreement and encourage collaboration in tasks.

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

7. DO THEY LEAD BY EXAMPLE?

Leadership abilities can be demonstrated by anyone. Consequently, if you have an active volunteer, or church member, who takes initiative and leads by example they are probably a good candidate for your leadership team.

“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

8. ARE THEY ACCOUNTABLE?

It does not matter how committed, teachable or flexible someone is if they cannot get the job done. Accountability is imperative to getting things accomplished and is demonstrated by successful completion of assigned responsibilities.

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

9. DO THEY HAVE INFLUENCE WITHIN THE MEMBERSHIP?

Leaders are responsible for influencing others by demonstrating a path forward. Someone in a leadership position should have relationships within the church community and have earned the respect of others.

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another” (Proverbs 27:17)

10. DO THEY HAVE A HEART TO SERVE?

Church leadership is about serving, and people appointed to positions of authority need to have a servant’s heart and commitment to be part of the team that gets things done.

“Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant...” (Matthew 20:26).

It is a natural tendency to pick the first warm body when filling a leadership role.

However, taking the time to assess, question and determine the right person for the job will help you to avoid the unpleasant task of removing the wrong person from a leadership role.

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