



ENGAGE YOUR CHURCH



A three-part
module to
starting,
scaling and
sustaining an
orphan care
ministry in
your church.



MODULE 1 OF 3

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Introduction

MODULE 1: Engage the *Core*

- Building a Leadership Team
- Gathering the Interested and Involved
- Clarifying Vision

MODULE 2: Engage the *Crowd*

- Articulating a Consistent Message
- Engaging the Whole of the Church
- Establishing a Discipleship Pipeline

MODULE 3: Engage the *Community*

- Forming Strategic Partnerships
- Collaborating with Other Churches
- Building a Holistic Model

This resource accompanies a webinar of the same title.
To view the webinar recording, visit www.cafo.org/resources.

Engaging your church from the inside out.

The goal of your church is to be both internally healthy and externally impactful.

An inward focus with no external engagement breeds a lack of impact and vitality. An external focus with no internal health produces a lack of depth and sustainability. However both, working in tandem, bring about a measured flow of growth - both in internal ministry strength and in external ministry effectiveness.

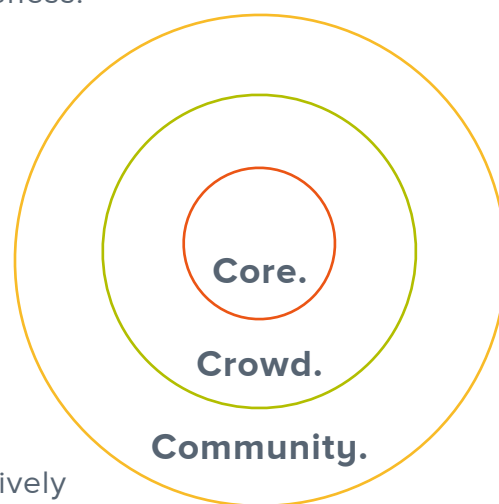
This resource is designed to equip you to engage your church from the inside out with a thoughtful and strategic approach that helps facilitate that measured flow of growth in your ministry - both internally and externally.

The three parts of this focus include:

- 1) Engaging the **CORE** of your church.
- 2) Engaging the **CROWD** of your church.
- 3) Engaging the **COMMUNITY** around your church.

Whether you are building a new foster care and adoption ministry or leading and growing an existing one, progressively working through these three distinct yet interconnected areas of focus will help you in two primary ways: 1) To build stable and effective internal ministry structures in your church while, 2) Simultaneously engaging the community around you in more effective and sustainable ways.

While there is no “prescription” to ministry - what works sometimes doesn’t work all the time, and what works for one church might not for another - the goal of this resource is to present principles and practices you can take, adapt and contextualize most effectively in your own unique context.



These are not steps to follow, but simply key strategic areas of ministry to recognize, plan and prepare for. They do not necessarily happen in a sequential order, nor will they always happen in the same order all the time.

To effectively engage your church through the paradigm of “Core”, “Crowd” and “Community”, you first need to identify where your greatest point of impact and influence is, then work from there.



It might be the case that your current engagement in the community outside your church will act as the primary driver behind forming a core group of committed leaders inside your church. Or perhaps you will engage the crowd of your church with an opportunity to form a core group of committed ministry leaders that will then help organize and implement opportunities for the church to engage the surrounding community more strategically.

The important thing is not the order in which these three distinct and strategic areas of your church are engaged - but that they are engaged at all, and effectively leveraged into one another for the purpose of establishing a measured flow of growth, both internally and externally.

MODULE 1:

The Core

Whether launching a new ministry or leading an existing one, establishing and reinforcing a core base of community and leadership is essential to the long-term sustainability and vitality of the ministry.

In this section we will discuss three key aspects of engaging the “core” of your church:

1. Building a Leadership Team
2. Gathering the Interested and Involved
3. Clarifying Vision



1

Building a



LEADERSHIP TEAM



The importance of building a leadership team early on in the ministry cannot be overstated. No one person, or couple, can carry the weight of the ministry long-term alone. A team is required, however formal or informal you choose to set it up.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING A TEAM INCLUDE:

- Tasks are spread out over a few, not isolated to one or two individuals to carry the whole. (**responsibility**)
- Growth is not dependent upon the capacity of one, but on the collective energy of a team. (**scalability**)
- The ministry's long-term impact is shared, not dependent upon the stamina of one. (**sustainability**)
- A healthy environment of support encourages creativity, passion and commitment. (**community**)
- The unique gifts, passions and perspectives of a team minimize bias and promotes creativity. (**diversity**)
- A leadership team communicates "where to go and who to talk to" for others in the church. (**clarity**)

What other benefits of building a strong leadership team can you identify?

How have you experienced some of these benefits in your current team?

What changes do you need to make to maximize these benefits through your team?



THREE KEY ROLES OF A LEADER

MULTIPLIER In the early days of Jesus' ministry, all activity was centralized to Him - He preached, He healed, He performed miracles, etc. Yet, at a critical point in His ministry (Matthew 10), He began to decentralize the work by empowering His disciples to do those things. In essence, He multiplied Himself through them - thus multiplying the spread of His ministry.

A multiplier doesn't just tell people what to do; they trust people with what needs to be done. They understand that if they keep doing everything, no one else will do anything. For a multiplying leader, it's not simply an issue of delegation; it's a matter of discipleship - creating space for people to a) identify their their unique gifts, and b) use them for the good of the whole (2 Corinthians 12; Romans 12).

VISIONARY A visionary sees what does not yet exist, yet communicates it as if it does. They not only believe certain things should happen, they also show people how they can happen. A visionary leader doesn't use team members to fulfill a mission as much as they empower team members to live out their mission most fully.

It's not about them helping you do something, it's about you empowering them to own the vision and act on it. A visionary leader understands that the vision is bigger than them and can only truly, effectively and sustainability be fulfilled through the collaboration of others.

CATALYZER Nitrogen + Hydrogen = Nothing. However, Nitrogen + Hydrogen + Iron = Ammonia. Once Iron is introduced into the N+H equation, a different outcome is achieved. Oddly enough, when tested, Ammonia has no traces of Iron - just Nitrogen and Hydrogen. Iron is nowhere to be found. It is a catalyst - taking two things and fusing them together to produce an outcome they otherwise would not have been able to produce on their own - and then it gets out of the way. It's not a central ingredient in the final product.

A catalyzing leader creates environments in which the ideas of others can flourish. They promote collaboration, creativity and empower others to do work beyond what they ever imagined they could have done. Like Jesus with His disciples, a catalyst teaches, models, empowers and then steps back and let's the team go!



A low-angle, close-up shot of a person's leg in khaki pants and a brown boot stepping onto a wooden plank. The background is a dense forest with tall trees and green foliage. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**A catalyzing
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FAQ'S

ABOUT FORMING A NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM

Who should be on the team?

You're not looking for experts, but for passionate people that have the ability to harness that energy in strategic ways for the good of others. One of the best things you can do for the ministry is provide clear direction. Build a team that has the ability to do that - not according to their own biases or agenda, but for the good of those in your church God is calling you to serve.

How many should be on the team?

There's no magic number, but a general principle is to build slow and small. The effectiveness of your team is not determined by the quantity of voices at the table but by the quality of each voice at the table. Rally those who can be trusted to steward the development of the vision well. At first that might be just a few, and that's okay. You don't need everyone involved, just the right ones involved for the good of everyone.

What should our team do?

First and foremost, **pray**. Ask God for clarity, unity, direction and empowerment. Then, **dream big**. What are all of your great ideas? What would you love the ministry to do? Now, **plan small**. What are the few things of highest priority? What things can you realistically implement now and what things need to wait? Your goal is sustainability, not speed. You'll eventually be casting vision, building infrastructure and implementing strategy, but for now pray hard, dream big and plan small. We'll talk about those other things later.





QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUILDING AND LEADING A MINISTRY TEAM

It's important that a leadership team is clearly defined. Right now, who is that team for your ministry? Who would you like for it to be?

What goals do you have for the ministry that those listed above can help cast vision for and implement strategy around?

What are three things you believe the team is currently doing well? What are three things you believe the team could improve on?

What will you do differently in the next 3-6 months to improve on those areas that need growth?

How Do I Approach My Church Leadership?

You've got a great vision for a great purpose and want to get the support of your church staff/pastoral leadership. Now what? What's the best way to approach them with this? Consider the following principles and practices:

ESTABLISH PROOF OF CONCEPT

You are not the only person in the church that is passionate about a particular area of ministry. You are also not the only person in the church asking your church leaders to spend time and energy on a particular area of ministry. The more you can demonstrate how much the ministry is already working and functioning, the better. It provides "proof" that the work is already being done effectively and is meeting a crucial need for people in the church.

PRESENT A STRATEGIC PLAN, NOT JUST A PASSIONATE IDEA

This ministry is highly emotional, filled with deeply passionate people in the trenches of foster care and adoption on a daily basis. If we're not careful our emotion and passion can cloud our ability to think methodically and strategically. Church leaders are looking for reasonable, actionable plans for how a ministry focus can be best executed in a way that serves the body best. Put the work in to present a plan that harnesses the passion in a strategic, helpful way.

DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF THE LARGER PICTURE

Church's are complex, having many different moving parts being pulled in many different directions. Often times when pastors are "pitched" great ideas it feels like another pull in another direction. Be mindful and respectful of the fact that church leaders are continually weighing in balance a number of different things. When they say, "This is just another thing," perhaps they don't mean it negatively - they're simply asking you to consider the larger picture.

FLIP THE SCRIPT ON YOUR ASSUMPTIONS

If you assume your church leaders don't care about this ministry, you place the burden on them to care and the burden on you to convince them to care. However, if you assume that they do care but that they simply don't know how to care, you place the burden on you to help them know how. It's often the case that a wrong assumption going in creates a wrong approach. Start by flipping the script on your assumptions and see what happens. You might be surprised.



How to Handle a Church Leader That Doesn't "Get It"

This sentiment is a common one: "We really want this to be a part of our church, but our pastor just doesn't get it." Is that your current reality? One thing to know is that you are not alone. Another is that there's hope. Before you bail to another church, try to aggressively force the issue or just lose hope and give up, here's five alternative ways to respond to the "my pastor doesn't get it" problem:

1 BE PRAYERFUL

Your responsibility is to pray for a movement, not push an agenda. Pray for the heart of your pastor, that God would stir it in new ways towards the plight of kids in crisis.

2 BE FAITHFUL

Demonstrate the necessity of an orphan care ministry to your pastor and your church through your actions, not just your words. Continue to be obedient to the call God has placed on your heart and be faithful to fulfill that. In other words, lead by example.

3 BE HUMBLE

Don't try to implement something good in your church by pointing out all that is bad in it. Communicate with your words and actions that you are committed to serving the vision and mission of your church - both publicly and privately.

4 BE HELPFUL

Don't use your information about this ministry as ammunition against your pastor, but as encouragement for your pastor. Share good books, practical ways to engage and opportunities to connect with other pastors/leaders who have a shared heart for this.

5 BE PATIENT

Don't expect things to change overnight. Do what you can with what you have today then do what you can tomorrow with what you have tomorrow. In the end, these kids are worth the long, hard work it may require of you.



To dive deeper, watch this 9-minute talk on "[How to Handle a Church Leader That Doesn't "Get It"](https://vimeo.com/126966037)". (Direct Link: <https://vimeo.com/126966037>)





2

Gathering the



INTERESTED AND INVOLVED

There is power in community, and any effective and sustainable ministry will understand and utilize this valuable tool in their church. Creating safe spaces centered around shared experiences among those interested in foster care and adoption as well as those already involved is central to building a strong care within the ministry.

Among other things, the benefits of building healthy community include:

- Encouragement: Families walking through unique experiences and emotions can relate to one another along the way.
- Sustainability: When the work gets especially difficult the community around us is there to help carry the burden and keep us going.
- Support: No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. Community creates natural wrap around support environments for families.

COMMUNITY FIRST, THEN MINISTRY


People are always more important than processes.

Your leadership is more an issue of stewardship - caring for people - than it is of strategy. Our ministry strategy is only as effective as it is at creating environments in which the needs of our people can be stewarded most faithfully. It's easy as leaders to get so focused on the ministry strategy that we lose sight of the actual people it's intended to serve. So, let's focus on the people.

Has there ever been a time when everyone in your church that has adopted, is adopting, has been adopted, has fostered, is currently fostering or has ever been in foster care been in the room together? What about those that are interested in adopting or fostering? If not, start there. Begin forging a sense of community and comradery among them. Share stories, find ways to serve and support one another. Make it abundantly clear that they are not alone, but there is a community of people in their church that understands them and wants to rally around them.

Would those involved in your ministry say they feel connected to a strong community? Why? Why not?



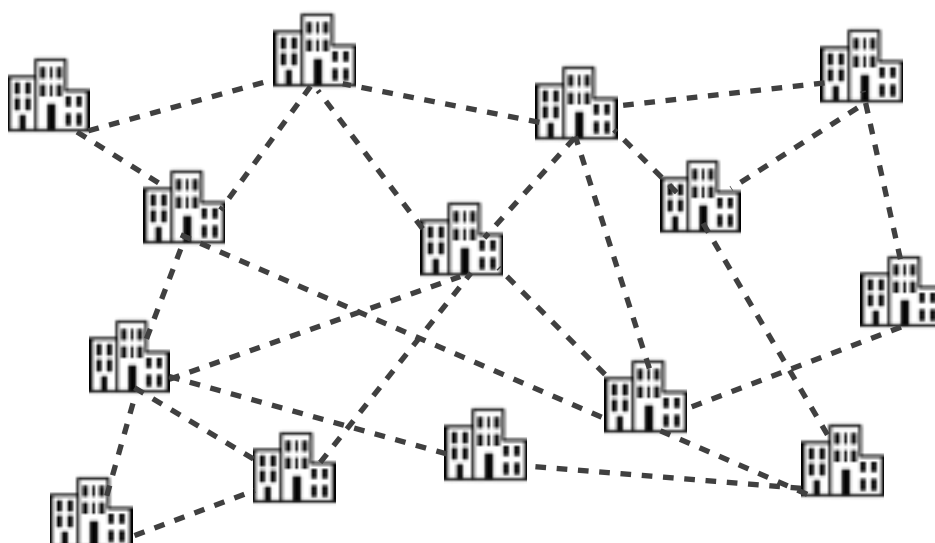
A group of five people are sitting on a grassy area, having a picnic. They are silhouetted against the bright, low sun. In the background, a city skyline with several tall buildings is visible across a body of water. The sun is positioned between the people and the city, creating a strong lens flare and backlighting the scene. The overall mood is warm and peaceful.

**People are
always more
important than
processes.
Always.**

Pave the Paths!

It's been suggested that when developers were building The University of California, Irvine campus, they constructed all the buildings but did not install sidewalks until the following year. They were testing the "path of least resistance", or "desired line" theory - the idea that people will naturally find the shortest, easiest and most desired path between point A and point B. We've all seen it - a trail cut in a field from where people have naturally created a walking path across it. That's the "desired line" - the path of least resistance to the other side of the field.

The following year, UCI identified where students had naturally cut paths between buildings and constructed sidewalks on top of them. In essence, they "paved the paths" - identifying where students were already walking and laying some solid foundation there.



Before you begin laying ministry foundation, perhaps the best thing you can do is identify where people in your church are already walking - then lay some foundation there. Community first, then ministry. Before we tell our people what we are going to do, let's first find out what they are already doing, then find ways to serve and support them in that. Ministry practices will naturally and inevitably flow from environments where the interested and already involved are connected in community and encouraged to walk together along the paths God has already laid out for them.

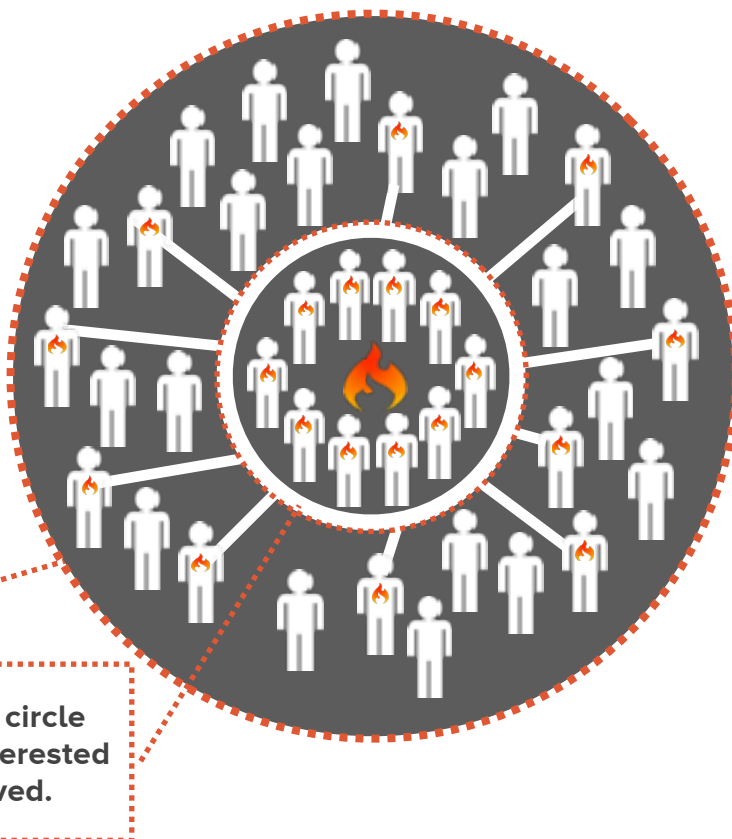
In what ways do you need to "pave the paths" of your ministry?



Creating Smaller Circles

This simple graphic is a visual of what it could look like when you engage the crowd of your church (larger circle) and gather the interested and already involved into smaller circles of community together (smaller circle).

Whatever passion was once isolated within each one of them individually is now given the opportunity to collectively burn together – better, bigger and brighter. Ask God to continue to put kindling around it. See what happens.



The larger circle represents the whole church.

The smaller circle represents interested and involved.

Suggestions for how to engage people in community:

- Invite them to a social event – a BBQ, family day at the park, etc.
- Host an informational luncheon after church. Share stories, cast vision and connect.
- Form a small group where you'll read a book or walk through a study together on the subject of God's heart for the orphan.
- Research local and national orphan care conferences, workshops or forums and take a group from the church with you.
- Simply meet one-on-one over coffee with people who share a similar heart as you.

These are just a few examples of the endless amounts of opportunities you have to begin connecting people into community around God's heart for the orphaned and vulnerable. Be creative!



PLANNING A “BRIDGE” EVENT

“Bridge” events are mid-size gatherings that create a pathway for people to move from the crowd into community. It’s an important pathway to build, as many people might find that journey daunting. It can be intimidating to move from a place of anonymity in a church service, let’s say, into a place of intimacy with people you don’t know very well. That’s a pretty big leap, and why bridge events are important.

As we’ve discussed, there’s power in getting people that share a similar passion in the same room together. It takes individuals and turns them into community – a place where they can find support, encouragement and clarity along their journey. It also helps create critical mass for ministry growth. If you can get 10, 20, 50, 100 people in a room around a common cause it speaks volumes to those attending – “We’re not in this alone!” – and to the leadership overseeing – “People are getting involved!”

How to Promote a Bridge Event

Generally speaking, you should allow approximately one month to promote your bridge event. The most ideal scenario is when the whole church is engaged with a sermon or announcement or promotional video, etc., and then the bridge event is the clear and simple follow up action item – “In response to today, sign up for this event.” Even if you are not able to have the event announced church-wide, it is still imperative to have a promotion plan in place, and to work the plan as diligently as you can.

It is important you not just announce the bridge event once, but that you continue to announce it every week leading up to the event in a variety of ways – i.e. stage announcement, postcards/flyer/bulletin, website announcement, emails, personal invites, etc. Every church chooses to promote key events in different ways. Find out how your church does it and take advantage of as many of them as you can every week leading up to the actual event.

The following chart is a sample of what your promotion strategy might look like:





For many church leaders, announcements are the “Achilles heal” of their worship services - when’s the best time to do them, how, and are people really listening? But perhaps they don’t have to be so bad. With some simple changes and a little bit of strategy behind them, announcements can become one of the most impactful components of your worship gatherings. Be strategic in how you announce your bridge event. Consider “giving” people the following five things in order to broaden the effectiveness of your communication and maximize the impact of your event.

GIVE PEOPLE...

1

Something to look at:

Some people learn audibly, many others learn visually. Consider the reality that in an average church service you have a variety of different types of learners that process and retain information differently. One person may simply need to hear the announcement; another may need to “see” it. This can be easily accomplished through a well-designed slide on the screen that is being projected while the announcement is being made. Very helpful.



2

Somewhere to go:

It's as simple as, "We're hosting a luncheon, and if you have any questions we'll be at the info table in the hall after service." Or, "We're hosting a gathering and there's more information on the website." They've now heard an announcement about your bridge event, but they've also been told where they can go to learn more about it. Very helpful.

3

Something to hold onto:

Don't just give people something to listen to, but give them something to hold onto that reminds them about what they've heard. It could be a blurb in the bulletin or a postcard in their seats. By giving them something tangible you've extended the life of your announcement – they heard it once that day, but now they'll be reminded throughout the week every time they see what you've given them. Very helpful.

4

Someone to talk to:

Announcements, events and scheduling can often sound very logistical and organizational; all the more reason to help make it personal and relational for your people. It can be as simple as, "We're hosting a luncheon, and if you have any questions you can talk to Sue Smith at the info table or email her at sue@suesmith.com." You've given them a real life human being to connect with. Very helpful.

5

Something to sign up with:

The point of all of this is to get people to attend your bridge event, which is why you should never announce any details of the event without having an opportunity for people to immediately sign up for it. It could be a portion of the bulletin, on the postcard you left in their seats, at an info table in the hall after service or an online form – or all of the above! By giving people some easy and immediate way(s) to sign up for the event you increase your chances of capturing them in the moment and the likelihood of them attending. Very helpful.

Throughout the 4-5 weeks you are announcing the event, continue to reinforce these five critical connection points. In other words, before you tell everyone in your church what the event is and how they can get involved make sure the appropriate mechanisms are in place for them to actually do that.



What's the Best Bridge Event to Plan?

While we've suggested a variety of different things you could do for your bridge event – an info meeting, a social gathering, a luncheon, etc. – we want to strongly suggest that while anything you do to connect people with each other will be beneficial, there's one that seems to be the most impactful. **A lunch after your worship service.**

Why is a luncheon so impactful? Here's a few reasons:

- **Free food.** No explanation needed!
- **Once they leave it's much harder to get them back.** Take advantage of the fact that people are already at church that morning. (This rule applies even for those churches that only have evening services - replace "lunch" with "dinner" or "coffee and desserts".)
- **Child care can be offered.** Whether you meet in your own building or use a rented facility, you most likely have classrooms for children set up on campus. Recruit volunteers (or pay professional childcare workers) to manage classrooms so parents can attend the luncheon and know their kids are being watched and fed.
- **Sharing a meal is a natural form of fellowship.** Rather than sitting people in rows of chairs for a "meeting" they can sit in circles together at tables to eat, connect and get to know one another.

It's for reasons such as these that we strongly suggest you host a luncheon (or some variation of that) for your bridge event. It helps to remove barriers to attendance (food provided for free, childcare provided for free, immediately following church) and creates a relaxed, welcoming environment for people to connect and be encouraged to take the next steps.



Four Things to Do at a Bridge Event

The goal of your bridge event is to help people feel connected, inspired and informed. On average you will have 60-90 minutes together in a luncheon setting. Of all the things you can do during that time, here's four strategic and essential things you **MUST** do:

1 **SHARE STORIES**

Set aside as much time as necessary to allow people to introduce themselves. They can answer a few simple questions for the rest of the room or small group at their tables: Who are you? Married? How long? Kids? How many? - Why are you at this luncheon today? What has your involvement in orphan care been?

2 **INTRODUCE LEADERSHIP**

Generally speaking, when people don't know where to go or who to talk to about something, they won't go anywhere or talk to anyone about it. It is important you use the bridge event as an opportunity to introduce your ministry leadership. It could be one point person or a full-blown ministry team. Either way, in introducing the leadership in front of the group you answer those two very important questions for people – where do I go and who do I talk to? Now they know.

3 **CAST VISION**

Vision is painting a picture for others of what the future looks like in a tangible and concrete way. It is important you answer three fundamental questions when sharing the vision of your orphan care ministry: 1) Why are we doing this? 2) How are we going to do it? 3) What are we going to do?

4 **DEFINE NEXT STEPS**

It's imperative to spend time during a bridge event letting people know what they can expect to happen after the bridge event is over. They should leave the room with a very clear understanding of what is coming next, when it's coming, where it's coming and why it's coming. When you increase clarity you reduce anxiety. The goal is for people to leave with a clear, actionable plan.





QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN GATHERING THE INTERESTED AND INVOLVED

In what ways are you valuing the role of community in your ministry - not just in theory, but in practice? Name a few actual, current examples:

In what ways is your ministry “paving the paths” - specifically responding to and meeting the needs of those on the foster care or adoption journey?

What specific things would you like to see implemented in the next 3-6 months and 6-12 months to intentionally reinforce the value of community?

3-6 MONTHS

6-12 MONTHS



A person wearing a white glove holds a vintage car headlight against a background of a ship's mast and rigging. The headlight is silver and has a textured surface. The person is wearing a dark jacket and has long hair. The background shows the mast and rigging of a ship, with a blue sky and clouds visible. The overall tone is warm and nostalgic.

3

Clarifying **VISION**



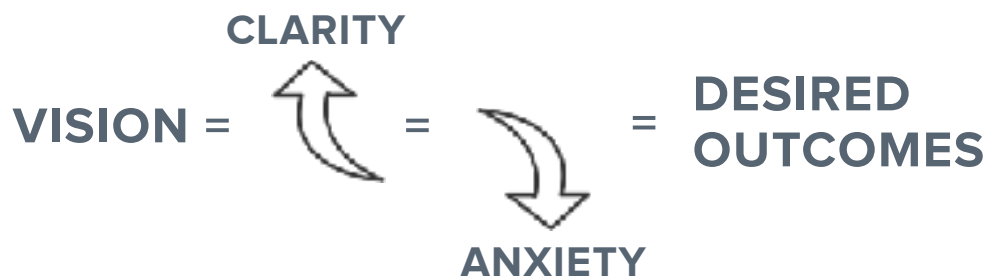
As has already been stated, a visionary sees what does not yet exist, but communicates it as if it does. They not only believe certain things should happen, they also show people how they can happen.

What do want to see happen? What steps do you need to take in order to make those things happen?

Your answers to these questions provide the framework for the vision of your ministry - a framework that is essential to construct as you build a leadership team and grow your ministry. If the vision isn't clear, then people won't know where you're headed - and if they don't know where you're headed, they'll start heading in their own directions. Clarifying vision, values and focus is essential to long-term effectiveness and sustainability of your mission.


INCREASE CLARITY, DECREASE ANXIETY

It seems no one gets lost anymore. When was the last time you stopped to ask for directions? With GPS tracking technology and little "Siri" voices in our phones, there's rarely a lack of clarity about how to get to where we need to go. Because technology has increased our clarity, our anxiety levels decrease - even when traveling to places we've never been before. Why? Because Siri will tell us how to get where we're going.



The vision of your ministry should increase clarity and decrease anxiety. It should communicate values, mission and direction in such a way that those involved in your ministry know where you're going, why you're going there and how you're going to get there.



A blue public telescope is mounted on a metal stand on a rocky cliff. The telescope is pointed towards the ocean. The background shows a vast, blue ocean under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Vision is not
just seeing
where you're
going; it's also
showing
others how to
get there.

THE “SHOULD” VS. “CAN” PRINCIPLE

Part of clarifying your vision is understanding the difference between “should” and “can”. **Not every “can” is a “should”, but every “should” must have a “can”.** Let’s break that down.

Just because you “can” do something doesn’t necessarily mean you “should”. Can you run through the grocery store with a gorilla costume on screaming at the top of your lungs? Yes, you probably can. But should you? That’s right, you probably shouldn’t (please don’t)! What you “can” do is not always what you “should” do, but what you “should” do must always have an actionable plan to actually do it - a “can”.

Should you mow your yard so that it doesn’t turn into the neighborhood jungle that attracts all the wild animals in the area? Yes, you probably should. Can you? Now, that’s a great question that’s a bit more complex. There’s factors to consider - do you have the time, the right equipment, are you healthy enough to do it, etc.? Answering the “can” question is a bit more complex than the “should” question - it requires some creativity, planning and strategy in order to accomplish the task at hand. Should your yard be mowed? Yes. Can you? Well, yes, I have the right equipment, but there’s more to consider. When I have time I’ll do it on my own. However, if I don’t have time that week, or I’m not feeling well, I have the number of a lawn service I can call to step in and take care of it. That’s the plan.

Mission Critical Ministry

“Shoulds” are mission critical - if you don’t do them you ultimately won’t see the vision of your ministry materialize. They are, as the name suggests, critical to fulfilling what it is God is calling you to do. A clear vision creates parameters through which every opportunity can be filtered through the following questions:

Is this opportunity mission critical? Does it ultimately point us back to the vision of our ministry and help that vision become a reality? Or, does it distract us from it - or even worse, derail us from it?

If it’s not mission critical, then whatever opportunity it is in front of you, although likely a “can”, is definitely not a “should”.



THREE PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER

The more complex something becomes, the harder you have to work to create clarity within it. We all understand how to plug a lamp into a socket. From our perspective on one side of the wall, it's clear. Get behind the wall, however, and things become far more complex. Very few of us understand how electricity actually works.

As your ministry grows it will become more complex, and therefore that much more difficult - and important - to maintain clarity. If you're in the early formations of your ministry, or are taking a step back from an existing ministry in order to redefine values and refocus efforts, here's three principles to consider as you set strategic priorities moving forward:

1 Start SIMPLE

The temptation is to say yes to every good “should” and launch or lead the ministry with as much impact as possible. Yet, simplicity and focus are essential to effective, sustainable ministry. That requires being willing to say no at certain times, not yes all the time. Everything can't be a “should”. **It's more important to do the right things than it is to do many things.**

2 Start SLOW

The goal of your ministry is sustainability, not speed. Moving too fast too soon can end up doing more harm to the ministry than help. The last thing you want to do is inadequately equip and prepare people only to have them burn out in the end. We have to develop realistic expectations for what we can accomplish effectively with what we currently have to work with.

3 Start SMALL

Starting small is not meant to imply that we don't want to set big goals for our ministry and believe God for big things. It's simply suggesting that in order to see both those things happen there may be some things we need to consider doing first. If we put the time in learning how to crawl, we'll eventually learn how to walk - and then run! But we have to start somewhere. Build a strong foundation first!



Download the FREE “[Three Principles to Consider](#)” eBook to take a deeper dive into what these three principles mean for your ministry.

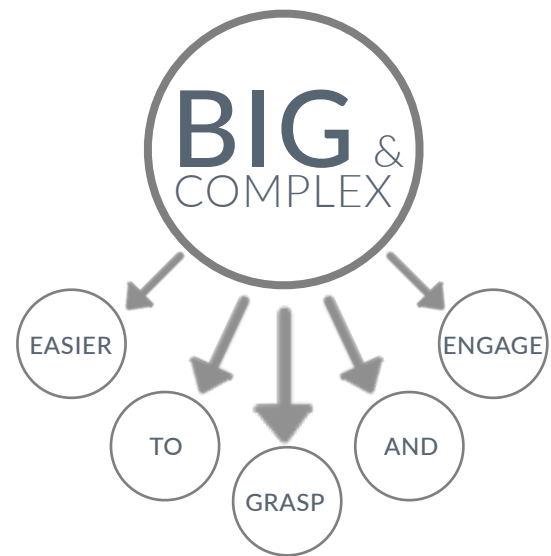


THE ART OF “SCALING” YOUR VISION

To “scale” something simply means to take something big and complex - like the foster care crisis in your city or the global orphan crisis in our world - and make it more manageable for people to wrap their minds around. It is essential for your leadership team to “scale” the vision of your ministry in such a way that people in your church can see it, understand it, grasp on to it and engage with it. The goal is not to minimize the magnitude of the crisis at hand, but to provide a platform upon which your people can more easily see the problem and more readily identify their role in helping to solve it.

A “SCALED” STATEMENT

For example: “We want to eradicate the foster crisis” is not a vision. It sounds good and noble, but doesn’t paint a clear picture for people. It’s too big and heavy and lacks direction. The average person would buckle under the weight of a statement like that. It needs scaling. Perhaps something like this: “Our county needs 60 more foster families; we want at least 30 new families in our church to open their homes in the next year.” That’s clear and bold, but more manageable, actionable and achievable. People can wrap their minds around that vision.



MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

This includes casting vision for the different ministry activities you hope to accomplish over the next year, like “We want to open a foster family supply pantry, host an informational luncheon for people interested in getting involved and recognize Orphan Sunday”. Clear and achievable goals.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

It also applies to how you message your ministry to your people. While the needs are overwhelming, it's far more realistic - and more personally challenging - to focus on how each individual can change the world of at least one. Everyone can do something to change the world of at least one. That's the message. A clear vision much more difficult to discard.

If vision is painting a picture of the future then in these scaled statements, the future is clear.





QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN FORMING AND CLARIFYING YOUR VISION

What is the vision of your ministry?

In one or two sentences, communicate the values, objectives and direction of your church's orphan care ministry.

Where are you going in the next 6 months?

What are your most "mission critical" activities or objectives over the next 6 months?

Why are you going there?

How do those mission critical activities point back to and reinforce the overall vision and values of the ministry?

How are you going to get there?

What resources do you need in order to achieve those objectives over the next 6 months? Do you already have them? If not, how will you get them?

ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE FOR ORPHANS

The Christian Alliance for Orphans (CAFO) unites 190+ respected organizations and a national network of 650+ churches. Our joint initiatives inspire and equip Christians to live out effectively the Bible's call to care for orphans and vulnerable children.

CAFO Membership is an opportunity to join in a vision for God's glory and the care of orphans that is larger than any one organization or project. Together, we seek to inspire, interlink and equip God's people to reflect His heart for the orphan. To a watching world, the Alliance is an all-too-rare picture of the church unified, serving the fatherless in both word and deed, bearing poignant testimony to the character of our God.



THE NATIONAL CHURCH MINISTRY INITIATIVE

Through the National Church Ministry Initiative, CAFO helps churches build effective, sustainable ministries across the country – serving local leaders with essential knowledge, best-practice models, practical resources, strategic coaching and networking opportunities.

Visit www.cafo.org/ncmi to learn how your church can be a part of this national movement.



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In his role at CAFO, Jason works to equip and mobilize churches nation wide through coaching, resourcing and networking of church leaders within the National Church Network of 650+ churches.

ENGAGE YOUR CHURCH

A THREE-PART MODULE TO STARTING, SCALING AND
SUSTAINING AN ORPHAN CARE MINISTRY IN YOUR CHURCH

- MODULE ONE -

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