

Ministry in the Midst of Change

Important Considerations For
Those Who Lead

The Inevitability of Change

"Change is not the choice. How we handle it is."

Leith Anderson [Dying for Change](#)

Factors That Force Change on a Church or Ministry

External Factors

- ▶ Changing Demographics
- ▶ Rise of Postmodernism
- ▶ Technological Advances
- ▶ Shifting Moral Consensus
- ▶ Short-term Commitments

Factors That Force Change on a Church or Ministry

Internal Factors

- ▶ Aging Membership
- ▶ Declining Attendance
- ▶ Financial Difficulties
- ▶ Loss of Focus on Mission
- ▶ Focus on the "Good Old Days"
- ▶ Leadership Changes

Consequences of Not Changing

- ▶ Stagnancy Leading to Slow Death
- ▶ Cultural Irrelevance
- ▶ Missional Ineffectiveness

“If you keep doing what you’ve been doing, you’ll keep getting what you’ve been getting.”

J. Herrington Leading Congregational Change

Barriers to Change

1. Focus on Institution Rather Than Purpose
2. Social Self-Perpetuation
3. Minority Rule
4. Yesterday's Innovator
5. Unwillingness to Take Risks
6. Unwillingness to Suffer Pain
7. Inability to Distinguish Between What is Negotiable and What is Not

What Will It Take for Churches to Survive in Changing Times?

- ▶ They must be spiritually focused.
- ▶ They must be open to outsiders.
- ▶ They must be culturally relevant.
- ▶ They must be outreach oriented.

The Range of Responses Among Churches That Need Change

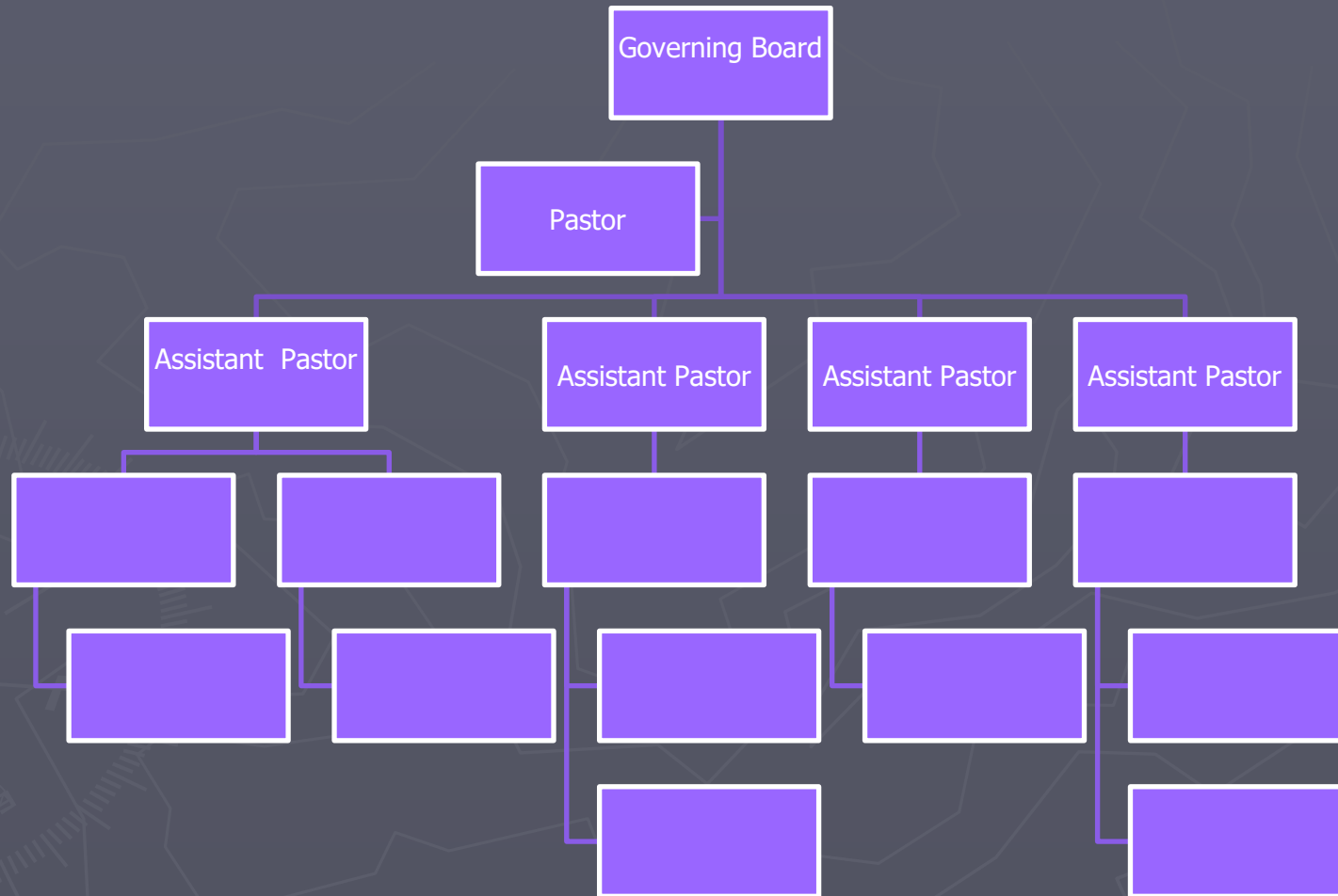
- ▶ Resistant Church
- ▶ Yesterday's Church
- ▶ Try Harder Church
- ▶ Surrender Church
- ▶ Entrepreneurial Church
- ▶ Renewing Church

Diagnostic Questions That Pave The Way for Change

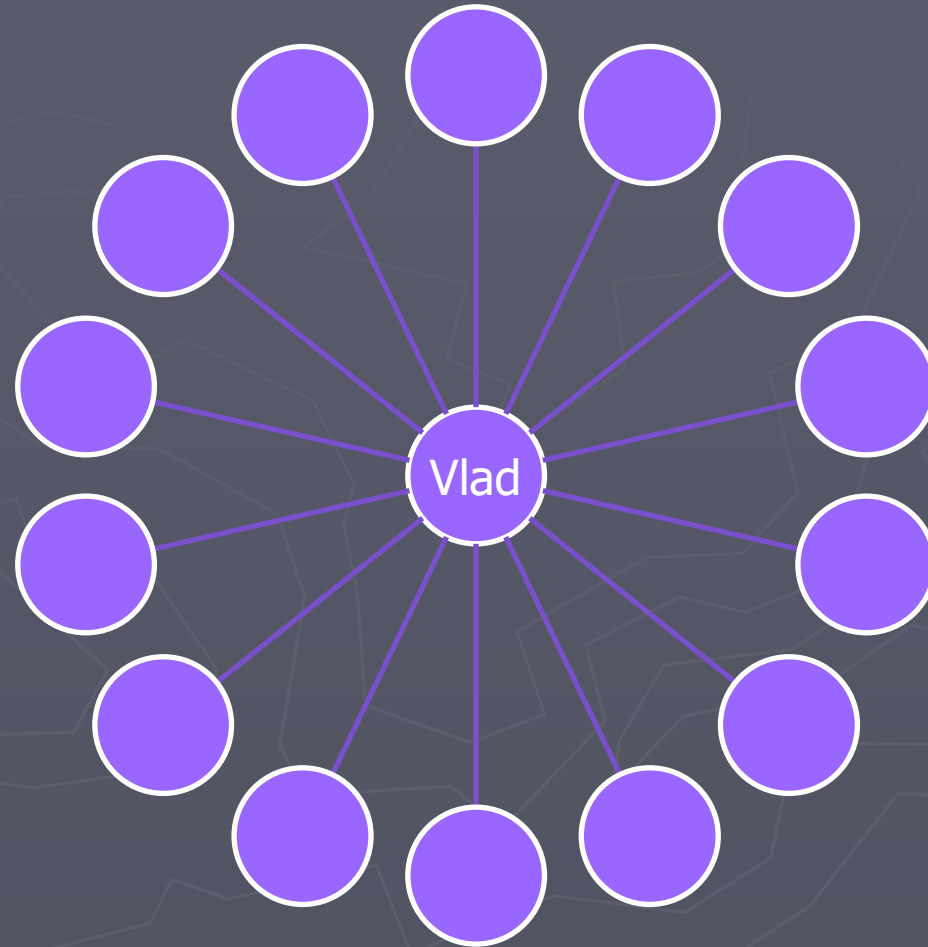
1. Why do we exist?
2. Who's in charge?



Who's in Charge?



Who's in Charge?



Diagnostic Questions That Pave The Way for Change

1. Why do we exist?
2. Who's in charge?
3. When are the best days?
4. Which way do we look, in or out?
5. Are there warning signals?

Early Warning Signals of Organizational Decline

- ▶ Excess Personnel
- ▶ Tolerance of Incompetence
- ▶ Cumbersome Administrative Procedures
- ▶ Disproportionate Staff Power
- ▶ Replacement of Substance with Form
- ▶ Scarcity of Goals and Decision Benchmarks
- ▶ Fear of Embarrassment and Conflict
- ▶ Loss of Effective Communication
- ▶ Outdated Organizational Structure

Diagnostic Questions That Pave The Way for Change

1. Why do we exist?
2. Who's in charge?
3. When are the best days?
4. Which way do we look, in or out?
5. Are there warning signals?
6. How has change been handled in the past?

Leaders Who Bring About Change

- ▶ They have vision.
- ▶ They have uncommon persistence.
- ▶ They have capacity to deal with mutiny.
- ▶ They maintain self-regulation in the face of sabotage.
- ▶ They are self-differentiated.

Why Change Efforts Fail

from John Kotter

1. Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency.
2. Not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition.
3. Lacking a vision.
4. Undercommunicating the vision.

Why Change Efforts Fail

from John Kotter

5. Not removing obstacles to the vision.
6. Not systematically planning for and creating short-term wins.
7. Declaring victory too soon.
8. Not anchoring changes in the corporation's culture.