

Where are we going?

As a Conference-wide movement, Effective Structures currently scores the lowest.

The questions in the survey related to Effective Structures are defined as “the degree to which the organisational structure of the church actively contributes to the healthy growth of the church”. The higher the question’s result, the greater its contribution to the effectiveness of the structures.

As we look at the questions related to Effective Structures in the survey, the questions can be grouped into 4 main themes and we will pick up from the previous article and look at the last 2 themes.

1. Effectiveness of existing organisational structure
2. Planning
3. “Are we heading somewhere?”
4. Empowering individuals to play their part

1. “Are we heading somewhere?”

Q 23 – Our leaders actively support church development

Q 67 – I know the goals we are working towards as a church

Q63 – In our church we often try new things

Some leaders will define success as things running smoothly. They will give the impression that as long as the church is basically “ticking over” from week to week, year to year, without any major incidents then they are satisfied that all is going well. This would suggest that we believe that future healthy growth will come from more of the same.

Most people however, need a strong sense that the church is going somewhere and that its leaders are committed to determining where that is and taking them on that journey. It affects the sense of hope and the commitment of energy to church life. *A static view of church structure ends up producing entirely static people.* We will flesh that statement out more when we get to Empowering Leadership, as Leadership and Structures work hand in hand.

2. Empowering individuals to play their part

Q 40 – The volunteers of our church are trained frequently

Q 64 – The small group and ministry leaders in our church each mentor at least one other person

Q 24 – My contributions to church life are reviewed regularly

These questions speak to a fundamental dynamic of church structures – the equipping and empowering of the lay people to do the works of service in the life of the church.

The basic elements are there: training to do tasks well, the value of mentoring, the multiplication of ministry, and reviewing how people are going regularly so that they can be encouraged and equipped further where necessary.

That requires planning!

A word that we don't seem to hear often in church circles, especially when it comes to volunteers is "accountability". Because we are afraid of being or expecting accountability for the things we do at church, nothing ever seems to get done. There is nothing wrong with setting out some boundaries or giving a volunteer a job description so that they at least understand what the expectation of the role is. Often we blindly accept a ministry role in the church, never knowing exactly what the expected outcome should be and all too often a year goes by and you have achieved nothing.

If you are a church leader I would like to encourage you to spend time with your ministry team and give them a clear vision of where you would like to see your church in a year and their part in getting it there. Ask for their input, don't just tell them how to do it, encourage new ways and ideas. Change or do away with things that are proven not to be effective, help the body grow and adapt to a changing environment.

Ephesians 4:16 – From Him the whole body is fitted and held together by every supporting ligament. And as each individual part does its work, the body grows and builds itself up in love.