

MANAGEMENT  
FOR CHURCH  
LEADERS

BARRY VOSS

# Introduction

This training workbook has been developed to assist pastors, church staff, and ministry leaders in the management and administration of their called or appointed offices of ministry. While many Seminaries and Bible Colleges prepare pastors and ministry leaders for preaching, teaching, and evangelizing, their curriculums often do not include any training on basic management skills. Since most pastors and church leaders must lead people, manage resources, and administer their churches, this type of training is essential in order to prepare them for what they will be called upon to do once they begin their ministry.

The author has been training church and ministry leaders in the mission field since 1996. This workbook grew out of our recognition from several years working with pastors in various countries of the lack of management training material or resources. It was also apparent that there was not much of this material even available or being taught at present. Therefore, since many pastors and leaders in less developed countries lack access to basic management training, FaithLife Ministries has developed this material to fill this need.

The material in this training workbook has been designed to provide a basic level of understanding and training in management tools and techniques from a Church and Biblical perspective. When these tools and techniques are applied with guidance from, and reliance upon, the Holy Spirit, we believe they will produce “*fruit for the Kingdom*” (*Colossians 1:10*).

# About FaithLife Ministries

FaithLife Ministries was started in January, 2001 by Barry Voss and Kim Star-Voss in order to provide ministry training and resources for church leaders in the majority world. They have a calling and a passion for discipling, equipping and training God's people for ministry, particularly in parts of the world where there is little access or finances for such resources. They have been training pastors and children's, youth, and adult ministry leaders in various countries with an emphasis on developing ministry leadership skills. Besides conducting training conferences and workshops, they create & develop their own training materials and resources and endeavor to encourage all believers to live a life of faith.

Barry has been working full-time in this ministry since 2005 and also has over 25 years of business management experience. He is also involved in both worship and men's ministry in his local church. Kim was formerly the Children's Discipleship Minister at Christ the Shepherd Church in Alpharetta, GA where she ministered to over 500 children and adults. In addition to her ministry background Kim also worked for over 15 years as a manager of computer systems and projects in several large corporations. Kim and Barry have been married for 35 years and have two adult children.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to express our thanks to God, first of all, for making this project possible and for giving us the vision to develop this training manual. We would also like to thank Ken Jacques, Daryl Hoh, Doming Orprecio, Ayub Khayo and David Quispirroca for their assistance in editing and providing input to this material.

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*Section 1*

# MINISTRY MANAGEMENT



## Chapter 1

# Ministry Leadership

◆ *“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*

1 Peter 5:2-4

Strong leadership skills are important for every church leader. Without them, many church leaders find it extremely difficult to move ministries forward and engage people in the mission and vision of the church. As this Scripture above points out, there are 3 principles of leadership in the church. First, the leader must be willing to lead. Second, the leader must be eager to serve. Third, the leader must be an example to his followers. In other words, the Bible tells us that leadership is about attitude and servanthood. This is where leadership starts in the church.

When pastors and church leaders are asked what a leader must have to be a leader, the typical responses are traits like integrity, honesty, trust, wisdom, charisma, and other such attributes. But there is only one answer to this question. To be a leader, a person must have... **Followers!** Obviously, if no one follows you, you are not a leader. The best way to tell if you are a leader, then, is to simply look behind you. If there is no one there, then you are not truly a leader.

But what are the skills that a leader must have to be effective? Leadership can be simply defined as those skills that enable an individual to motivate others to achieve a desired goal or outcome. So first of all, a leader must have a goal. He must know where he is leading his followers. Then he must be able to lead and motivate his followers to reach that goal. Next he has to have a plan on how together they can achieve the goal. The leader must also develop people to help him carry out the plan to achieve the goal. And finally, the leader must keep his focus on the goal so he is not distracted or loses sight of where they are all going. Leadership skills, therefore, are about the use of influence, having a vision, having a plan, developing people, and focusing on accomplishing the goal. These are the 5 keys to effective leadership that we will discuss in this chapter.

# 5 Keys to Effective Ministry Leadership

As stated above, there are 5 keys to effective leadership. They are the use of influence, having a vision, having a plan, developing people, and focusing on results. These are the things that effective leaders do to move their ministries forward. Let's take a look at each one in turn.

## 1. Leaders Use Influence, Not Authority

◆ *“The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.”*

John 10:2-4

Leaders must understand that there is a difference between leadership and authority. They are not the same thing. Knowing if or when to use each one is critical to the success of a leader. Let's take a look at the difference.

Leadership is about ***influence***. John Maxwell in his book, the *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), says that “leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less.” Leadership is not a position and it is not a title. Leadership is about the ability to influence others to follow you where you are leading them. Just because your title says you are a leader does not mean that you truly are one. Leadership is measured by influence. It is your ability to motivate others to action. It is your ability to get others to willingly follow your decisions. And how exactly do you do that? You earn influence by building up trust and respect. Influence must be earned. It is never awarded or granted.

The power of influence over people is well documented. There is one story of a 26 mile marathon race in Malaysia where a group of runners all began the race together but at the half way point in the race no runners could be found. So the race officials sent someone to locate them and find out where they were. That person found them off course by several miles. When the runners were asked how they got off course, they told them that they were all following the leader of the race at a point in time when the leader made a wrong turn. So they all followed him off course! That's the power of influence!

Authority is about ***power***. According to the dictionary, authority is “the power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior.” Notice the words power and command. Authority is the ability to enforce your decisions by use of your power or control. A leader gets their authority by virtue of their position or title, and hence their power is given to them by another, whether an individual, an organization, or a group of people (via election). It is usually earned from something they did in the past, or that qualified them, for their position. It could be experience, education, or previous job performance. In any event, it is usually earned in some way (the major exception is when a leader assumes power by illegal means or through a political takeover.)

## Chapter 1

What does the Bible say about authority? The Bible says that all authority is given by God. In **Romans 13:1**, it says “**there is no authority except that which God has established.**” In other words, God is the one responsible for calling us into positions of authority. Even bad leaders got their authority from God. We may not always understand it, but it is the truth. Understanding that our authority comes from God has implications. God gives us two expectations on how we are to use the authority that He alone gives us.

He first says that we are to use our authority to teach. **Titus 2:1 & 15** says, “**You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Encourage and rebuke with all authority.**” So first and foremost we should use the authority that God has granted us to teach and train others. It is about passing along our knowledge to those who will follow us. Jesus understood this so well as he spent 3 years teaching his disciples about the Scriptures, the Kingdom of God, and what following Him meant. He was preparing them to carry on after He was gone. That’s what leaders do. They teach others what they have been taught, and what they have learned, so that the next leader can continue the ministry effectively.

Second, the Bible says that we are to use our authority to serve. **1 Peter 5:2** says, “**Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve.**” So the leader is not supposed to order his followers around, but rather he is to serve them so they can grow and mature and bear much fruit. This is exactly the opposite of what the world teaches. The world tells us that as the leader we are in control, that we have to make all the decisions, and that our followers are there to serve us, follow our directions, and meet our needs. But Jesus showed us that the correct approach – the way that God wants us to lead - is to serve those who follow us. For in serving them, they will grow and ultimately their growth will fuel the growth of our ministry. As Jesus himself said in **Matthew 20:28**, “**just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**”

One final question. Which is better to use – your influence or your authority? **It is always better to lead with your influence than your authority.** When you use your influence, people want to follow you. They come along gladly because they trust you and respect you and know that you have their interest at heart. When you use authority, however, people have to follow you, whether they agree with you or not. This has two implications. First, you will often lose people from your ministry. If you abuse or misuse your authority your followers will choose to leave your ministry if they can, leaving you with fewer followers to carry out the ministry. Secondly, you will create opposition. Often when this happens your followers will work at odds with you and try to thwart your efforts. This is particularly dangerous as it can split or divide your followers and cause conflict that paralyzes the ministry. Using your influence to lead people will always be better than using your authority.

But also know that there are times when you will have to use your authority. These are situations that you know that God wants you to go in a particular direction but your followers are hesitant. And if they will not respond to your influence you may have to use your authority to take them where God is leading you. Remember that Moses had to deal with his grumbling flock over and over again when they resisted his leadership (**Exodus 16 & 17**). Just know that when you use your authority, you will likely lose some people and some may stay and continue grumbling against you. So make sure you are following God’s direction and not your own.

## Reflection

Take a moment and think about your current position. How might you begin to use your influence more than your authority to achieve your goals? Which of those you listed can you start doing right away?



## 2. Leaders Have a Vision

◆ “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint.”  
Proverbs 29:18

There are 3 types of sight. There is hind sight (looking behind), insight (looking around), and foresight (looking ahead). Vision is about foresight, looking ahead and seeing the possibilities of what could be or where God may be leading you. A vision can be defined as a statement about the future, an imagining of something specific that does not exist today. An effective leader sees this future because God has shown it to him (a “revelation”), and he knows that this is what God wants him to do or where God wants him to go. Without a vision a church or ministry has no direction, and the people “cast off restraint”, which means to simply go their own way or do what they think is best. Without a vision a ministry is like a ship without a rudder in the vast ocean of ministry possibilities. It will keep going around in circles and won’t get anywhere. A vision provides focus for the ministry and will enable the leader to keep his followers moving in one direction towards their ultimate goal. A vision also clarifies the purpose and goals of the ministry, making it clear to everyone involved exactly what the ministry is about or trying to accomplish.

A vision also quantifies the goal and objectives of the ministry. It defines what its ultimate objective is and what specifically it is trying to accomplish. It can also indicate what it wants to be or where it wants to go. The vision has to be measurable in some way. Because if you cannot measure it then how will you ever know if you’ve reached your goal? Someone once said, “if you don’t know where you are going, then any road will take you there.” Many ministries falter or stagnate because they do not have a vision of where they are going. An effective leader is someone that has received a vision from the Lord and understands where God wants him to lead his followers. An effective leader is also able to articulate that vision in such a way that everyone understands it and wants to participate in it.

### Examples of Visions

- ◆ To build a new church facility in 12 months
- ◆ To start 10 home Bible study groups
- ◆ To establish a Christian school in the community
- ◆ To reach 10,000 people with the gospel

A vision also enables a church to achieve God’s purpose for them. A God given vision is not usually something we can achieve easily on our own. It says in **John 15:5** that “**Apart from God we can do nothing.**” God wants to be involved in our ministries and churches. He wants to guide us as leaders to accomplish what He has purposed for us. A leader can only do that if he or she is connected to the One who gives us the vision! And so, for a ministry or church, it’s imperative to seek God’s leadership first before we can lead others. And God usually has a bigger vision and purpose for us than we can ever see. **Matthew 19:26** says, “**With man this is impossible, but with God, all things are possible.**” God wants to work His miracles and show His power through us. But we have to be willing to let Him. Trying to lead on our own, or cast our own vision, will not work. An effective leader knows to look to the Lord for His vision and to continually enlist His help in achieving it!

Finally, a Vision for the church mobilizes and energizes it. When members share the vision they are more likely to get involved and want to be part of the great adventure. A vision gives members something to work towards. It gives them a mission and a focal point in their ministry for the Lord. It also helps people feel a part of something big and important, and gives them a sense of being a part of the church, not just a member of it.

One final point that needs to be made is very important. A vision is not a mission statement. A mission statement describes what you do, not where you are going. In other words, the mission is what your calling is or what you do. The vision is what you are trying to accomplish for the Lord. The mission statement is descriptive. The vision is measurable. To say that you are called to train pastors and church leaders is a mission statement. To say that you feel led by God to train 1,000 leaders in 5 years is a vision!

Here are some simple steps you can use to develop a vision for your ministry or church:

### How to Develop a Vision

1. Pray for God's leading & revelation
  - ◆ Ask how God can use you in your community or the world
  - ◆ Ask what God would have you do for Him
2. Think BIG
  - ◆ Do not limit yourself by what you have
  - ◆ Allow God to provide what you need
3. Involve other leaders in its development
4. Write the vision down and consider alternatives or options
  - ◆ Take time to think about them and pray about them
  - ◆ Ask others for input on them
5. Pray and select the vision you feel God is calling you to
6. Communicate the Vision
  - ◆ To build awareness and involvement
  - ◆ To provide focus and direction for your followers

## Reflection

Take a moment and pray to the Lord right now about His vision for you. Ask Him for revelation and clarity about your role in His global work. Write down what you hear the Lord speaking to you about.



### 3. Leaders Have a Plan

◆ “Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.”  
Proverbs 16:3

It is not enough to simply have a vision of where you are going. A leader must also have a plan on how to get there. And there is no need for a plan without a vision or goal to achieve. An effective leader knows that in order to achieve the vision that God has given to him he must also organize the resources that God has provided to him in a way that gives him the best opportunity to reach that goal. This is what we call strategic planning, and will be addressed in more detail in chapter 9 of this manual.

A leader must be strategic and plan on how to achieve the vision. Without a good plan he knows he will likely not achieve the vision that God has placed before him. The vision provides the goal a leader is trying to reach and the plan provides the means and strategy on how to get there. The plan helps him organize resources and activities towards achieving the vision. Another way of saying this is that **a leader manages God’s resources for God’s vision.** God gives leaders resources such as people, money and things to use and He expects leaders to use His resources wisely. God also expects a return on his investment (*Matthew 25:14-30* – the parable of the talents). So it is very important for a leader to develop a good plan so he can use the resources that God has given him wisely and effectively to achieve God’s purpose.

Part of a leader’s job, then, is to plan the work and work the plan. Some plans will be long and detailed, while other plans may only need to be short and summarized. But in either case, a leader must continually update the plan according to current conditions. A plan is not meant to be cast in concrete. The world is constantly changing all around us. Nothing really ever stays the same. A strategic plan is meant to adjust to current trends and changes in the environment in which it was made, so that as the situation changes the plan can be modified to take those changes into account. Failure to do so will result in completing plans that are no longer viable or workable, or fail to achieve their objective. So a good plan is flexible and changeable to allow for changes in the environment (economic, demographic, political, etc.).

There are two more points that are worthy of mentioning. First, a good plan helps the leader make better decisions. When a leader has a plan and something changes or a new opportunity arises, he can more easily assess the impact of the change based upon the existing plan. He can then determine the impact of potential reallocation of resources on the existing plan and other priorities. Second, a good plan avoids wasting God’s resources. Having a plan gives the leader the ability to put God’s resources to the best and most effective use possible at any given point in time. Without a plan, the potential exists to waste these valuable resources on activities that do not produce meaningful results or move the ministry towards its vision.

## Reflection

What are some of the ways you could achieve the vision that God has given to you for your ministry? What resources do you think you will need? Where can you obtain those resources? Make a list and begin to outline a plan.



## 4. Leaders Develop People

◆ *“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick..”*

Luke 9:1-2

The greatest resource that a leader has is his followers, or in other words, people. A leader cannot always do all the ministry work himself and will need others to come alongside of him and share the burden of leadership. Jesus knew this and is the reason he spent so much time with his disciples, teaching and training them for the work they would do in building the early church after he ascended to Heaven. A similar thing happened to Moses in the Old Testament. The burden of responsibility for feeding meat to all the Israelites was too great for him and he called out to the Lord for help. The Lord told him to choose 70 elders and that He would come down and put His Spirit on them so that *“they will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone”* (*Numbers 11:17*). God does not expect leaders to carry all of the burden themselves and often sends them other people to serve as leaders underneath them to help shoulder the workload.

So the Lord provides leaders with people to help them achieve the goals that God has given to them. Here are some principles to keep in mind when you develop people within your ministry:

**1. Leaders make disciples first and foremost** (*Matthew 28:19-20*). The role of every leader is to focus on discipleship of their followers. Leaders should teach and preach the Word in all they do. It is not just about assigning tasks or responsibilities. But it is also imparting the Word to them through that development. They should also teach them to obey the Word as well so that in everything that is done in the ministry, Christ is glorified and its leaders are examples to others.

**2. Leaders train and equip others for ministry.** One of the key roles of a leader is to develop others to serve in ministry. A leader’s job is not just to oversee the operation of the ministry, but to involve everyone in its work. To do that requires that the leader knows and uses everyone’s spiritual gifts. An effective leader encourages ministry participation by others and tries to involve them in ministries that can best utilize their giftedness. *1 Corinthians 12:27* says, *“now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”* A good leader engages his followers in the work of the ministry.

**3. Leaders recruit and develop other leaders.** It takes a leader to raise up other leaders. It is important for leaders to develop the next generation of leaders in order to grow and perpetuate their ministries. They can also raise up leaders for other ministries as well. Just as Moses laid hands on Joshua (*Numbers 27:18-20*), you too will need to identify other leaders who are full of the Spirit and commission them for ministry. The more leaders there are, the greater the chance for success there will be! A leader should always spend most of his time with other leaders.

## Reflection

Think about your ministry for a moment and write down the names of those people you think need more discipleship? Who might be ready to get involved in a ministry? Who might be a potential leader in your ministry?



## 5. Leaders Focus On Accomplishment

◆ “So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

Proverbs 16:3

In order to reach the goal that God has designed or purposed for a leader it is important for that leader to keep his focus on that goal. Too often leaders can become distracted or drawn away from what God would have them accomplish for Him. There are many reasons for this, but principle among them is that Satan is active in blocking and preventing leaders from doing the work of God. When Peter says that the devil “**prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour,**” (1 Peter 5:8), he is referring to leaders primarily. Because Satan knows that if he can bring down the leader he can bring down the whole ministry. He does not waste his time with inactive believers or mid-level disciples. He goes after the ones who are actually following Christ and trying to make a difference for God by being Salt & Light in the world.

So, first of all a leader has to maintain his focus on achieving the goals and producing the results that God desires. A leader knows that Satan wants to distract him and so he always keeps the vision in mind and keeps pressing forward. To do that, a leader measures success by the results that are produced. A leader knows that God is the one who produces the fruit (1 Corinthians 3:7), but it is through the leader and his followers that the fruit is produced. And a leader cannot be effective for God if he is drawn away, distracted, or loses his focus on the ultimate goal.

Secondly, leaders focus on areas of greatest return for their investment of the resources that God has given to them to use. A leader channels resources into areas of greatest success, because that is obviously the place where God is at work in the ministry. And a leader abandons non-fruitful ministries for the same reason – that God may not be at work in those areas. Again, effective leaders are ones that continue to see where God is at work and then working with Him to accomplish what God has called them to do. Spending time in unproductive areas of ministry generally do not move a ministry towards its goal and do not help it achieve its vision.

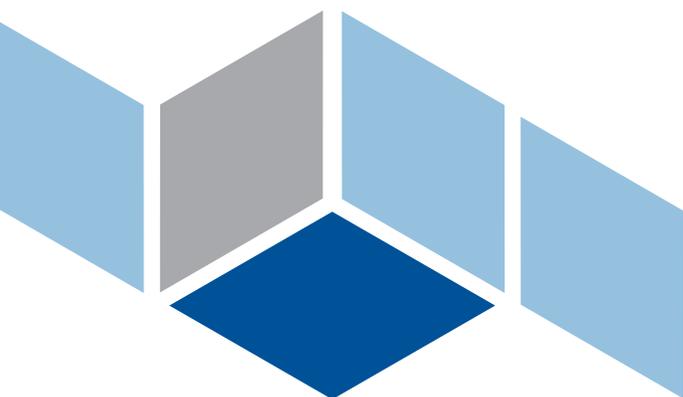
Thirdly, leaders understand that activity is not accomplishment. Churches and ministries can often be very busy and have lots of ministry activities happening. But just being busy does not mean that any fruit is being produced. Leaders make sure that they are achieving results and accomplishing something for God. A leader measures ministries by their effectiveness and accomplishments, not busyness. And a leader evaluates activities for their impact on the vision and whether or not they are helping them move forward or not. An effective leader is constantly looking at the results of ministry, at what is working and what is not, and how to create or eliminate activities that will result in true accomplishment for the Lord.

There is a great Scripture story that illustrates this point of focusing on accomplishment and not activity. It is the story of Mary & Martha in **Luke 10:38-42**. You see Martha was “busy” in the kitchen and wanted her sister Mary to help her. But Mary was “focusing” on Jesus and just being with Him. When Martha asked the Lord to have Mary come and help her, Jesus said, “**Martha, Martha, the Lord answered, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken from her.**” (Luke 10: 41-42) Martha was concerned about “activity” but Mary was concerned about “accomplishment.”

And Jesus confirmed that Mary had chosen the better thing. An effective leader also chooses the better thing, which is to focus on accomplishment and not just activity.

## Becoming a More Effective Leader

The process of becoming a more effective leader is in practicing and developing these 5 key skills. There is no simple formula or list of activities that will ensure your success. But it is in reality the day to day practicing of these skills and in asking the Lord to guide and help you as you lead. Someone once said that practice makes perfect. But in actuality it is that practice makes permanent. The reason that athletes practice before they play a game is to develop their skills so that they become habits that will help them compete at their highest level. The same is true for leaders. Using these 5 key skills daily will help leaders develop these skills so that they too become habits that lead to successful and effective ministry.



## Reflection

What activities in your ministry are moving you towards your vision? What activities are not helping you achieve your vision or producing any results? What changes can you implement to provide more focus on what you need to accomplish for God?



# Mission & Vision Exercise

Instructions: Take a moment and write down a mission statement and a vision statement. Remember that a mission statement is what you do - it is your calling. A vision statement is what God is specifically asking you to do for him.

## 1. Write a Mission Statement (What is God calling you to do for Him?)

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## 2. Write a Vision Statement\* (What *specific* ministry goal is God asking you to accomplish for Him?)

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\*The Vision Statement should be measurable.

## Review Questions

1. What are the 5 keys to effective ministry leadership?
2. Why should a leader use his influence before his authority?
3. According to the Bible, what 2 things should a leader use his authority to do?
4. Describe the difference between a mission statement and a vision.
5. Why is it important to involve others in the development of a vision?
6. Why does a leader need both a vision and a plan?
7. Why is it essential that a plan be flexible?
8. What are the 3 principles of developing people within your ministry?
9. What are some ways that you could maintain your focus on accomplishment?
10. Which of the 5 keys is most important to you and why?

# Notes

