

HIGHER THINKING

SUMMER 2015

# outcomes

The Magazine of Christian Leadership Alliance

## Christian Influence

*Dr. Gregory Alan Thornbury*  
on evangelicals, culture  
and leadership

## Succession Planning

Your organization's long-term  
health depends on it.

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## Mentoring for Life

A path of blessings,  
growth and success





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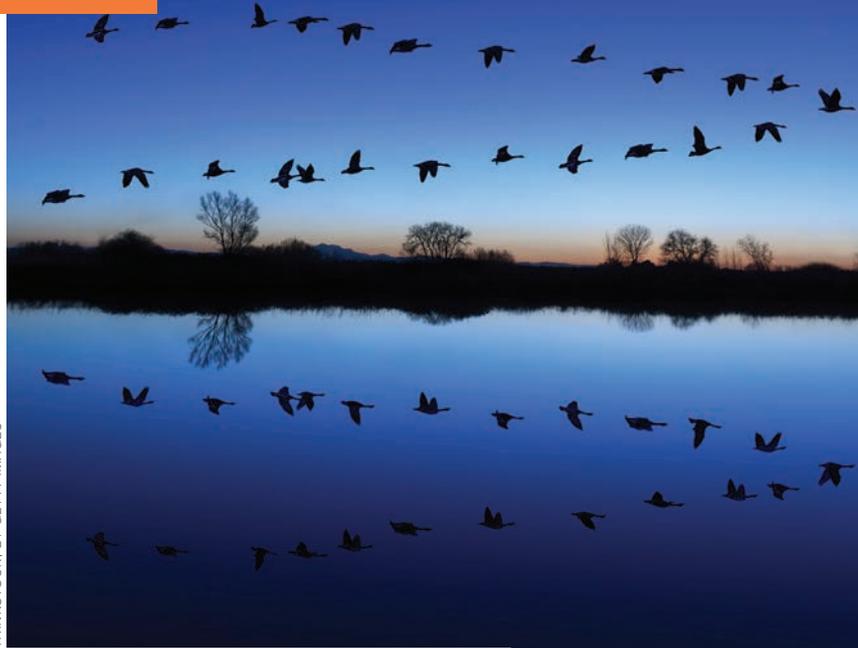
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# What's Your Succession Plan?

**SUCCESSION PLANNING IS VITAL FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES.** For the past decade or so, organizations such as The Bridgespan Group have warned of a significant leadership gap soon to impact the nonprofit sector. Christian nonprofits are no exception to that trend. As the baby boom generation moves toward retirement, and as many new nonprofits are launched, a wave of new ministry leaders is needed.

Succeeding the faithful visionaries who have guided Christian organizations for so many years won't be easy, but wisely orchestrated succession is a normal and vital part of a healthy organization's life cycle. The looming leadership gap, and the need to equip future leaders to fill these roles, is why this edition of *Outcomes* magazine has "succession" as its theme. Inside, we offer insight from leaders who have navigated leadership succession well, and who today see thriving organizations as a result. We provide tips on equipping the next generation through mentoring and coaching. We also explore a range of succession related topics such as the board's leadership role in replacing a CEO, pursuing gender balance in ministry leadership, and how former executives can best support their successors.

Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) is passionate about helping to fill leadership gaps in Christian ministry with a new generation of well-equipped, Christ-honoring leaders. Our mission is to equip and unite leaders to transform the world for Christ. We do that by offering a range of resources for Christian leaders that include: *Outcomes* magazine, the annual Outcomes Conference, the Outcomes Mentoring Network, CLA's Leader2Leader peer network, CLA's Credentialed Christian Nonprofit Leader (CCNL) credential program, CLA's Online Academy, monthly leadership Webcasts, a 24/7 eStation (CLATV.org), and much more (ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org).



*W. Scott Brown*

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The purpose of *Outcomes* is to fulfill Christian Leadership Alliance's mission to equip and unite leaders to transform the world for Christ. *Outcomes* offers those whom Christ calls to leadership higher thinking and lifelong learning resources to equip them for excellence in kingdom service and stewardship.

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# Christian Influence

## Dr. Gregory Alan Thornbury on evangelicals, culture and leadership

**I**CLA PRESIDENT AND CEO TAMI HEIM recently interviewed Gregory Alan Thornbury, Ph.D., president of The King's College in New York City. He has been called "Jonathan Edwards Meets *Rolling Stone*" by Russell D. Moore and "America's First Hipster College President" by *The American Spectator*. Thornbury previously served as professor of philosophy, dean of the school of theology and vice president for spiritual life at Union University. He is the author of *Recovering Classic Evangelicalism: Applying the Wisdom and Vision of Carl F.H. Henry* (Crossway, 2013). He is a senior fellow of *The Kairos Journal*, theological editor for Biblemesh.com where he has worked with leaders such as Eric Metaxas, Tim Keller and others, and is a visiting professor of philosophy at Ansgar Teologiske Høgskole in Norway. He recently spoke in the CEO Forum at CLA's Outcomes Conference in Dallas.

The King's College prepares leaders for strategic institutions in society through courses of study in politics, philosophy, economics, business, finance, media, culture and the arts. Heim spoke with Thornbury about Christianity and culture, succession and equipping the next generation of Christians to lead.

### The theme of this issue is "Succession." As you look back, what best prepared you for stepping into the role as president of The King's College?

I would absolutely have to say that my best preparation came from the mentoring I received from the leaders with whom I worked and under whom I studied before I assumed presidential leadership at The King's College. Those guiding lights are Dr. Albert Mohler from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Dr. David Dockery of Union University (now president of Trinity international University in Deerfield, Ill.). I watched as both of these men in different ways completely turned around a large and historic organization by reigniting theological passion and conviction with strategic planning and business acumen. Both of their stories have been chronicled in recent books that both men have produced. They are: *The Conviction to Lead* (Bethany House, 2014) by Mohler, and *Christian Leadership Essentials* (B&H Publishing, 2011) by Dockery.

What struck me the most from a combined 20 years of observation of these two outstanding theological and organizational minds was this: Excellence never had to come at the expense of Christian kindness and compassion. At Southern, I saw Dr. Mohler enter a situation in which the seminary had been theologically adrift prior to his presidency. His willingness to stand for the vision of the seminary's founders is the stuff of legend. At Union, where I served for 15 years, I saw David Dockery carefully, calmly and boldly build an institution that more than doubled in enrollment numerically and advanced leaps and bounds in terms of national reputation. Although I have never studied leadership formally as a part of my education, I feel as though I have a Ph.D. in strategic vision from these two men.

### As a thought leader on Christianity and culture, what advice would you have for Christian leaders about influencing today's culture for Christ?

I always respond to Christians who say, "I want to engage culture," by saying: "Too late! Culture has already engaged you." We think of "culture" as something being outside of the Christian community, something from which we are separated. The truth is that we are deeply enmeshed in society and often unaware of which pre-suppositions we possess are deeply Christian and which ones are not.

So if we want to influence the culture for Christ, we must attend to the disciplines that helped previous generations of believers do the same. That means we must become informed about philosophy, church history and society. As much as most people don't want to hear that imperative, it's true. No challenge that we face today is unique to us. The church has faced these issues before, and we have much to learn from their example. We are legatees of a great intellectual and spiritual inheritance.

Closely related to this practice of deep learning is the twin experience of practicing the spiritual disciplines. If we are not regularly praying, fasting, devoting ourselves to Scripture and being quiet before God, we might totally miss what God is doing in our time. We might be saved (because salvation is all of grace), and we might even live a life of real personal piety, but we might completely miss out on major developments in the kingdom of God — simply because we're seeing through worldly lenses.

Finally, we need to be accomplished. That's why I'm writing a biography on rock 'n' roll icon Larry Norman. Larry was a Capitol Records artist, and was produced by George Martin and his team that worked with The Beatles. But Larry sang about Jesus unashamedly. He got away with it because the records were good. Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan and Frank Black all at some point counted themselves fans. We need to get back to that: work that people who are at the top of their game respect.



Dr. Thornbury helps equip next generation leaders.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE KING'S COLLEGE

## Could you share insight for today's evangelical leaders from your research and writing about the late Dr. Carl F.H. Henry, considered by many as America's premier evangelical theologian?

Well, there is an institutional aspect to this. Dr. Henry played a central role in helping launch and provide the theological shape to many of evangelicalism's key institutions and identifiers, namely: The National Association of Evangelicals, Fuller Seminary, *Christianity Today*, the Lausanne Congress, Prison Fellowship (he wrote the statement of faith), the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, and the Evangelical Affirmations Conference.

Part of what I write about refers to a period in time at the turn of the 1960s into the 1970s. At one point in the book, I describe classic evangelicalism via the spirit in the individuals who characterized the movement: Billy Graham was reaching the multitudes with his crusades; Francis Schaeffer was beginning to draw university students, hippies, artists and other seekers into the embrace of L'Abri; Larry Norman was recording Jesus rock on Capitol & MGM Records and rubbing shoulders with people like Janis Joplin, The Doors and Paul McCartney; and Carl Henry was reaching intellectuals through *Christianity Today*. Classic evangelicalism was characterized more by what it was *for* than what it was *against*. It was upbeat, confident, evangelistic and engaged.

Classic evangelicalism was also an attitude which held that because "God speaks in intelligible sentences and paragraphs" (to use Henry's expression) through the verities of divine revelation, therefore we can speak clearly, with conviction, about the foundations of the faith as well to the world in which we live. Classic evangelicals had a buoyant confidence in the ability of the Good News to speak to the all of the social and cultural ills, not only with a general message of hope for eternal life, but concrete proposals about what human flourishing looks like in our time.

Finally, and most importantly, classic evangelicalism entailed a certain understanding of "the Evangel," to wit: "The Good News is the scripturally anticipated-and-fulfilled promise that God's sinless Messiah died in the place of otherwise doomed sinners, and moreover, that the crucified Redeemer arose bodily from the dead to resurrection life as the helmsman of the eternal moral and spiritual world." Throughout the book, I argue that such a definition of the "ism" that arises from the "evangel" is predicated upon a particular view of divine revelation. As Henry says: "It is unjustifiable therefore to broaden the definition of evangelical identity in a way that excludes a specific view of Scripture. The reduction of evangelical authenticity to the affirmation of a 'minimal gospel' (salvation solely on the ground of Christ's substitutionary work appropriated by faith) therefore obscures the inviolable truth of Scripture, which the Apostle Paul affirms. Evangelicals as a body of believers have stood traditionally not for a truncated definition of the good news, but provide

an overwhelming precedent for the view that a consistent and complete statement of the Gospel embraces also the truthfulness of Scripture."

Because of his theological convictions, Carl Henry was able to build great institutions. So there you have it in a nutshell: That's what I mean by "classic evangelicalism." That's the swagger evangelical leaders need to recover today.

## At The King's College you're equipping a new generation of future Christian leaders of "strategic institutions." What are keys to doing that well?

I think that there are three absolute essentials to preparing the next generation of leaders of strategic public and private institutions. They ultimately boil down to where you live and how you live. That's why The King's College is the only traditional undergraduate residential Christian liberal arts and business college located in the center of one of the world's top alpha cities. And we just happen to be on Wall Street in New York City, the "capital of the world," as Pope John Paul II once said.

So, what are those three essentials? First, if you study both Scripture and church history, Christians have always gone to the seats of empire — the financial and cultural capitals of the world. Where did Paul spend the majority of his time in ministry? In Corinth and in Ephesus, the financial and cultural centers of Achaia and Asia Minor, respectively. Conversely, although Paul wrote an epistle to a city like Colossae, he didn't spend time there or even visit. Why? Because it wasn't a particularly strategic place to be. Now, we realize that *every* place where God's people are is important. It's just that evangelicals have not focused on some of the most obvious locations for influence in the recent past.

Second, there's the skill mastery piece. Every biblically literate Christian knows the story of Daniel and his companions. They did not eat from the rich portions of the king's table. They did not bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's false idol. They stayed faithful and were brought through on the other side of the fiery furnace, thanks to the fourth man in the fire. But if you look at a passage like Daniel 1:4, you see something that isn't talked about as much in our circles. The text says that these young men became competent to stand in the king's palace because they acquired all of the wisdom and knowledge of the Babylonians. That knowledge came from the seat of empire, and that was Babylon. Here at The King's College, we believe that New York City is our Babylon — an image that shouldn't have a negative connotation. We forget that Scripture tells us that the exiles from Israel flourished and succeeded in this seemingly hostile environment. Daniel and his companions became the ministers of finance, culture and the government not only for their generation but for generations to come.

Third, there is the discipleship piece. Long-term Christian influence cannot be done in a "drive by" manner. You have to cultivate intellectual, theological and ethical virtues over a period of years, face-to-face, day-after-day. This was what college and university life was originally designed to do hundreds of years ago. Today, institutions of higher education have largely forgotten that imperative, opting instead to focus on technique rather than character. Integrity is everything, but it is best learned in an environment like New York City where your convictions and values will be daily put to the test. ●

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Learn more about The King's College at ([tkc.edu](http://tkc.edu))

# Mentoring For Life

A path of blessings, growth and success

*“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”*

Prov. 11:25

**W**HEN SUSAN WAS HIRED as the executive director of her pregnancy center in 2006, she knew the calling was strong, and it was confirmed by the confidence that the board seemed to have in her abilities to lead an organization. But she had no experience in pregnancy center work, and as the job responsibilities and pressures began to unfold, she wondered to herself, *“What have I gotten myself into?!”*

Many *Outcomes* readers can probably relate to Susan’s trepidation in one way or another. The pregnancy center movement, like many other Christian ministries, is filled with devout people who know in their deepest heart that they have been called “for such a time as this,” but yet, on a daily basis feel unprepared and “in over their heads” with the complexities of the work before them.

Unfortunately, during my nine years as a leader at Care Net, I have watched more than one pregnancy center leader succumb to the pressures of leadership and step down citing emotional, physical and even spiritual burnout. While maintaining a close and vibrant relationship with the Lord is the most important defense against the many tensions that are common in any leadership role, additional strategies can strengthen a leader’s long-term effectiveness. In fact, today Susan attributes her longevity to a pivotal relationship she formed early on. Within months of starting her new position at the pregnancy center, she found someone who was willing to invest in her growth and success. Susan found a mentor.

## WHAT IS A MENTOR?

The word “mentor” originates from Greek mythology and the story of Odysseus and his son, Telemachus. When Odysseus went off to war, he entrusted the care and guidance of Telemachus to his faithful adviser, Mentor. According to this myth, under Mentor’s tutelage, Telemachus became a talented and effective ruler. The word mentor has since come to mean a wise and trusted guide — an individual who has already walked the same road and is now dedicated to helping another develop the qualities needed to succeed.



A mentor can be a person who acts as an adviser to a new leader, but mentorship can also be a tremendous blessing to a seasoned leader. And I am the perfect example.

Over the years, many friends have contributed to my leadership growth (a shout-out to Joane, Jacque, Mary Margaret and others), but none have done so in an official capacity. And while I have studied mentoring and encouraged many to consider mentoring, I have never formally had a mentor myself. That is, until earlier this year when I learned about the Outcomes Mentoring Network and jumped in with gusto. Now, not only do I have a mentor of my own, I am a mentor to another Christian leader. The blessings I have received from both of these relationships solidify my commitment to mentoring.

My mentor, Brady Pyle, is a great listener and asks probing questions to help me grow. A session with Brady never ends without me being challenged to consider new perspectives. This is one of my favorite parts of being mentored.

Mentors have a responsibility to guide and advise, but in order for the relationship to thrive, the person being mentored (known as the “mentee”) is also responsible. I see the qualities of a good mentee as being able to remain transparent and vulnerable so the mentor can encourage, exhort and even gently rebuke if needed. It makes no sense to me to invest in a mentoring relationship if I am not able to remain humble and willing to take constructive advice from my mentor. Thankfully, my Outcomes Mentoring Network mentee also has that perspective and, while I would not want to speak for her, the feedback she gives me indicates she receives input well and is learning and growing in her leadership journey.

As I serve in my leadership role at Care Net, I will continue to encourage pregnancy center directors who are feeling overwhelmed (like Susan) to consider mentoring. But now with first-person experience, my recommendations will include a personal testimony of the treasures available to any leader willing to allow another person a front row seat to their leadership journey, or is willing to invest in the life of another. Both scenarios will produce blessings, growth and success. ●

**CINDY HOPKINS** serves as vice president at Care Net ([care-net.org](http://care-net.org)), an organization that provides resources to a network of life-affirming pregnancy centers. Cindy holds a B.S. in Business Administration from Weber State University and an M.A. in Organizational Leadership from Regent University.

To learn more about the Outcomes Mentoring Network developed by Christian Leadership Alliance visit ([OutcomesMentoring.org](http://OutcomesMentoring.org))

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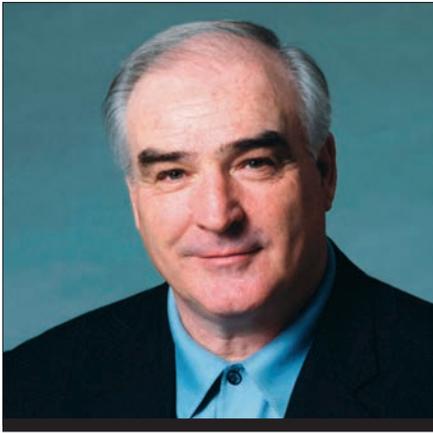


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## A Winning Transition Plan Passing the leadership baton for your ministry

**AFTER MORE THAN 20 YEARS** as pastor of Christ Fellowship Church in South Florida, the church he founded and grew to a multisite church of more than 40,000 people meeting on seven campuses around South Florida and online around the world, Tom Mullins passed the baton of leadership to his son Todd. As Tom was transitioning out of this role, he was also stepping into a new one, as president of EQUIP Leadership, a non-profit organization specializing in training and mobilizing effective Christian leaders. *Outcomes* spoke with Mullins about his new book, *Passing the Leadership Baton* (Thomas Nelson, 2015).

INTERVIEW  
WITH  
TOM MULLINS

### What led you to write *Passing the Leadership Baton*?

I was getting so many requests from people asking about our process, because we had such a smooth transition at Christ Fellowship. When we passed the leadership baton here, the church grew exponentially. It has been phenomenal. According to Leadership Network, close to 60,000 ministry transitions will happen over the next few years. You only get one chance to pass the baton well, and you don't want to drop that.

### What do you hope that readers take away from your book?

The first thing I hope they take away is the critical importance of preparation: having a transition plan, actually sitting down and

working through this with your boards and with your leadership teams. This is what creates health for your church or for your ministry or for your organization.

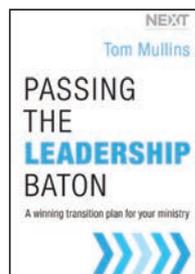
There are a lot of practical steps for how to prepare yourself, how to prepare your successor, how to prepare your organization, and then we have a whole chapter on crisis-driven transitions. There are some minefields you've got to navigate in times of crisis to re-establish trust in the organization with new leadership.

### How can leaders personally prepare to transition out of leadership?

Always keep the bigger view in mind: the purpose of the ministry or organization you're leading. I really do believe that we need to treat every role that we're in as an interim role. We're just one runner in a relay race. We've got to pass that baton successfully to complete the race. This kind of mindset means we often have to deal with ownership and identity issues — "this is my baby, I built this thing" — and we often find that so much of our identity is wrapped up in our current roles and titles that

it's hard for us to make transitions. But I've got to do not what's best for me but what's best for the organization or ministry I'm leading. Once you can get there, then you begin to start realizing: I've got to raise up successors, I've got to prepare them, I've got to let them run alongside me, and I've got to understand the right timing for transition.

Most leaders stay way too long in their roles. They don't pass the baton early enough, when things are fresh. If they wait until the momentum is gone, and they're on the downhill side of ministry, then it makes it almost impossible for the successor to succeed. The leader should go out right at his zenith, because then as he steps, he's not stepping away from something, he's now in a position to step into something. There really is life beyond transition. In the end we're going to realize that the way we transition will be the greatest test of our leadership. Then it will also be our legacy, if we do it well.



# Milestones

**APPOINTED**  
**JOEL DILLON**, as President/CEO of Jill's House, Vienna, Va. Dillon comes to Jill's house from Trinity International University, where he served as associate vice president for advancement. He succeeds former Jill's House President/CEO Cameron Doolittle, who has been appointed as a senior program director of the Global Generosity Initiative for the Maclellan Foundation.

**APPOINTED**  
**DR. BOB ROLLER**, as dean of the School of Business and Management for Azusa Pacific University (APU). He comes to APU from Mount Vernon Nazarene University where he served as both dean of the Jetter School of Business and as a professor of management.

**DIED**  
**STEVE HAYNER**, former president of InterVarsity Fellowship and Columbia Seminary, of cancer. He was 66 years old.

# HEADLINES:

## Get your CLA Digital Pass

Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) is offering a digital pass for just \$49.95 to Outcomes Conference keynote addresses, backstage interviews and educational content. This CLA Digital Pass, created in partnership with LifeWay MinistryGrid, unlocks outstanding video content from the Outcomes Conference: CLA Dallas 2015 (April 14–16). Videos include keynote presentations and backstage interviews with Christine Caine, Israel Gaither, Joni Eareckson Tada, Judge Ken Starr, David Kinnaman and Jonathan Evans. Also included are backstage interviews with Dr. Gregory Alan Thornbury, Dr. Paul Nyquist and Bianca Juarez Olthoff. In addition, the Digital Pass provides access to 32 teaching sessions with CLA conference faculty such as Dr. Tim Elmore, Phyllis Hendry and other thought leaders. Learn more and order your copy at ([ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org/DigitalPass](http://ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org/DigitalPass))

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SCORECARD

**THE POWER OF A GOOD LEADER**

According to a recent study conducted by Barna Group, in partnership with LeaderCast, among Americans in the workplace, two in five people work for someone they consider a “bad” leader. Only 19 percent ascribe positive attributes to their leader and consider them “good” bosses. And leadership makes a crucial difference in not just employee happiness, but also productivity and commitment. Of those who work for a bad boss, 61 percent plan to be on the job hunt this next year, while only 27 percent of those who work for a good boss say the same.

**THE DIFFERENCE MAKER**

How employees with good leaders/bad leaders rated the accuracy of these statements:

LEADERSHIP	GOOD	BAD
They enjoy going to work each day	91	62
Their work makes a positive difference in the world	82	63
They feel empowered to be a leader at work	74	61
Some days at work don't get their maximum effort	47	73
They are often distracted at work	33	58
People often misrepresent truth at their workplace	19	65
They feel a lot of negative energy in their workplace	15	66

For more information on this study, go to <http://bitly.com/barna-study>.



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**THE FORTUNES OF EVERY ORGANIZATION, WHETHER GREAT OR SMALL, RISE AND FALL BASED ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS LEADERSHIP.**

**DR. GAYLE D. BEEBE**

The latest news for today's Christian leaders

**CLA Online Academy: Summer Session**

Have you joined the growing list of ministry leaders nationwide who have taken a CLA Online Module? If not, check out the CLA Online Academy/Summer 2015 schedule, and register for one of these state-of-the-art leadership modules powered on a platform designed by Azusa Pacific University College. The CLA Online Academy is sponsored by ECFA, and each module is led by an experienced practitioner who understands ministry leadership. Summer 2015 Online Academy registration deadline is June 29. Modules begin on July 6. Learn more or register at [ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org/Academy](http://ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org/Academy)

**Templeton Prize Award to Ministry Founder**

The Templeton Foundation awarded a \$1.7 million prize to Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche community for people with and without intellectual disabilities. The Templeton Prize is given annually to a living person who “has made exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery or practical works.” Past

recipients include Billy Graham, Mother Teresa and Chuck Colson.

“My dream for this magnificent prize you have given me, and through me to L'Arche and Faith & Light, is for us to create spaces and opportunities for meetings, which transform hearts,” said Vanier at a press conference announcing the award. “Places where they can share together, eat together, laugh and celebrate together, weep and pray together; where the hearts of those who carry power in our society can be melted and rest.”

Henri Nouwen spent the last 10 years of his life as pastor of Daybreak, the Toronto branch of the L'Arche community, where he wrote the book *Adam: God's Beloved* (Orbis Books, 1997). This book chronicles his relationship with Vanier, which he called “one of the most significant” of his life.

**InterVarsity Wins in Case with Religious Liberty Implications**

In a decision with implications for parachurch ministries, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in February that InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) could continue setting and enforcing

hiring practices based on its Christian faith. Former IVCF spiritual director Alyce Conlon had filed a lawsuit against the ministry, challenging her 2011 firing for “failing to reconcile her marriage.”

In its ruling the court determined, “Because IVCF is a religious organization and Conlon was a ministerial employee, IVCF's decision to terminate her employment cannot be challenged under federal or state employment discrimination laws. It matters not whether the plaintiff is claiming a specific violation under Title VII or any other employment discrimination statute.”

The ruling is a victory for religious liberty, based on the precedent set in the Supreme Court's 2012 *Hosanna-Tabor* decision, which determined that, as a “minister,” a Lutheran school teacher could not sue the church that fired her because she fit under the “ministerial exception” that allows religious organizations to hire and fire according to their religious principles. The IVCF decision expands that “ministerial exception” to include not just churches but also faith-based organizations.

# Succession in Christian Leadership





# The gift of greater things

By David L. McKenna

**SUCCESSION IN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP** is a drama with a cast of three characters — the governing board, the departing leader and the incoming successor. Although each of these characters has a unique role to play in the drama, they share the common responsibility for continuing the mission, developing the leadership and advancing the ministry of the organization they represent. Succession in Christian leadership is the thread that runs through everything they do.

As surely as apostolic succession defines the Roman Catholic Church, leadership succession must define its Protestant alternative. What then is the specific role and responsibility of the governing board, the departing leader and the incoming successor in the unfolding story of succession?

## SUCCESSION AND THE GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board of a Christian organization has the lead role in the drama of succession. On center stage at the beginning of transition, the board has primary responsibility for the continuity of mission through the formal authority entrusted to it. Tacit in this statement is the reality that executive leaders come and go. Even though membership on the board may change, it is the board that is the most stable unit of governance in the Christian organization. Therefore, it is up to the governing board to have a clear sense of purpose backed up by consistent policies and practices in order to assure continuity of mission, development of leaders and advancement of ministry in the succession drama.

As the first line of action in support of its primary responsibility, a governing board must maintain the authority entrusted to it in policy and in practice. Sole authority for the destiny of the Christian organization rests with the governing board. The policies adopted by the board and put into practice either enhance or erode the authority that is its trust. Studies of the defection of Christian colleges from the faith begin with policies that compromise the mission or default on the authority for which the board is ultimately responsible.

Close behind the governing board's responsibility for assuring organizational stability during the succession process is the obligation to steward the leadership resources entrusted to it. Governing boards tend to have high scores on the selection of leaders, average scores on the development of leaders, and low scores on the succession of leaders. High expectations are written into the profiles for selection of CEOs in Christian organization. After one board member reviewed the idealistic expectations for the new president, he remarked, "I have only one question to ask. 'Can the candidate walk on water?'" Once the selection is made, however, boards tend to relax as if to say, "Now, you are on your own."

Many boards also assume that the leader they chose will serve forever. In such cases, the thought of succession can turn into the charge of betrayal. Governing boards must swallow their institutional ego and accept the fact that leaders who serve and grow may also come and go. The need is for governing boards to see themselves as stewards of a full-orbed process involving the selection, development and succession of leaders, both within and between Christian organizations.

Furthermore, to assure continuity of the mission and advancement of the ministry in a Christian organization, the governing board must take seriously its duty to be the primary agent for accountability in the succession process. In my book *Stewards of a Sacred Trust* (ECFA Press, 2010), I outline the responsibilities of the governing board for accountability in the succession process, beginning with the board itself. I explain that concurrent with the announcement of a change in leadership, the governing board must:

1. **Take charge** by letting go of the past and firming up the organization for the future
2. **Hold steady** though the anxiety and ambiguity that is inevitable in transition
3. **Make ready** the organization for its incoming leader

These are functions of succession that only the governing board can enact and for which it is ultimately accountable. They cannot be defaulted, deferred or delegated. Succession begins and ends with the governing board.

## SUCCESSION AND THE DEPARTING LEADER

The departing leader is not a bit player in the drama of succession for a Christian organization. Quite to the contrary, unless he or she is a leader who assures the integrity of the office by being true to the trust and finishing the task, the process of succession breaks down at the most fundamental point. While the governing board holds things steady during the time of transition, it is also the time when the legacy of the departing leader comes under scrutiny.

The test of integrity begins with the evidence that the departing leader has exercised the power of executive office with honesty, wisdom and compassion. In my newest book, *The Succession Principle: How Leaders Make Leaders* (Cascade Books, 2015), I explore the issue of authority as witnessed through the character of Jesus Christ and entrusted to us for our leadership. That study results in five criteria for the authority given to us by the example of Jesus Christ and for which we are responsible in the succession of leadership:

1. **An obedient authority** in relationship to a higher authority working together toward a common purpose
2. **A humble authority** exercised with discretion for an assigned task and never for personal or political advantage
3. **A tested authority** with integrity in moral crisis
4. **A delegated authority** to followers based on clear lines and specific functions
5. **A monitored authority** assuring its use for the glory of God

Although these expectations apply generally to executive leadership, we must confess that we cannot meet them without the grace of God, the power of his Son, and the guidance of his Spirit. Christian organizations are not exempt from the abuses of authority, and we can cite case after case where the first task of a successor is to clean up a contaminated package of executive power. Every departing Christian leader must stop and ask, "Am I leaving my successor the authority of trust conferred by God and the authority of character confirmed by his Spirit?"

The gift of authority is a means toward the end: to steward the truth as revealed in Jesus Christ and written in the Word of God for the development of followers as maturing leaders in and for the kingdom of God.

At the time of my retirement I was asked, "By what words do you want to be remembered?" I answered, "He left a legacy of Biblical conviction, relational teaching and potential leaders." With this wish, I again come up against the reality that we lead by example and the fact that our character speaks louder than anything we say or do.

While writing *The Succession Principle*, I was driven back time and time again to the words of Jesus, "For them I sanctify

myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.” (John 17:19). If there is one differentiating factor for Christian leadership, it is to place oneself under the scrutiny of the Word of God and be cleansed for a holy task, not just for ourselves, but especially for those who follow us. Succession in Christian leadership turns on this pivot.

### SUCCESSION AND THE INCOMING SUCCESSOR

A succession plan is not complete without considering the role of the incoming successor. As the governing board brings continuity to the process and the departing leader leaves the personal example of integrity in the transition, the incoming leader must pick up these threads of succession and pull them through to unity around a common vision that will move the Christian organization another step forward in its God-given mission. The assumption, of course, is that the incoming leader is more than a manager riding on momentum, holding things steady or taking on the task of turning around a dysfunctional organization. If the governing board and the departing leader are true to their primary roles, the incoming successor will inherit an organization that is ready to move forward to the next stage of effective ministry.

The first task of the incoming leader is to dig for the historical, theological and cultural roots of the Christian organization. Incoming leadership that is severed from these roots endangers both the continuity and the integrity of the organization. Much is written about the current generation of Christian leaders being cut off from its roots and assuming that all of history can be rewritten in the script of their time in office. Such arrogance is not new. Throughout history, incoming Christian leaders have tried to reinvent the wheel of the organizations that they represent. The succession principle and process counters this arrogance. Incoming leaders, particularly those who are “newcomers” to the ministry, must give first attention to understanding the circumstances, convictions, attitudes and sensitivities that define the character of the organization they will lead.

The book entitled, *The First 90 Days* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2003) by Michael Watkins, is an excellent primer for the incoming leader. Readers will note ten key transitional challenges facing the incoming leader. After adopting a personal mindset that looks to the future, the author recommends a fast learning curve to understand the organization, not just its structure and systems, but also the symbols, norms and assumptions that make up its professional, organization and geopolitical culture. Incoming Christian leaders must go even deeper into this learning curve right at the beginning of their administration because the character of the Christian organization is shaped by its history, its theology and its culture.

At this point in the challenge of transition for the incoming successor, attention needs to be given to the past and well as the future. Before turning to the strategy for the next forward step, the new leader should take the time to honor his or her predecessor and recognize the inherited base upon which strategy will be built. Many sad stories come to mind about the relationship between predecessors and successors. We emphasize the importance of predecessors “standing out of the light” of their successors. Equal emphasis needs to be given to the importance of the successors honoring their predecessors. Even in iffy cases, something good

# The first task of the incoming leader is to dig for the historical, theological and cultural roots of the Christian organization.

can be said because, unless leadership has a total breakdown, the continuity of mission still flows from leader to leader.

Once the historical, theological and historical roots are firm and appropriate recognition has been given to the predecessor, the incoming leader takes up the challenge, which Watkins describes in *The First 90 Days* as “a unifying vision that aligns structure with strategy, builds the team and creates coalitions.” In Christian organizations this unifying step should have top priority because of our common love for God and each other as members of the body of Christ. We cannot assume that this virtue is automatic. Incoming Christian leaders have to work just as hard, probably harder, than their secular counterparts in relieving the anxiety and reducing the ambiguity of transition. The best way to do this is by accelerating relationally the transition of every individual and team, including informal groups. As my long-term mentor, Fred Smith Sr., used to say, “Nothing grows without the fertilizer from the footsteps of the boss.” There is no substitute for the love of Christ enacted in a unifying vision of personal and interpersonal relationships as our witness to the world.

Summing up our thoughts, when the governing board assures continuity of mission, the departing leader leaves the integrity of personal example, and the incoming leader presents a unifying vision, the drama of succession rises to its climax in the promise of Jesus to his followers that they “will do even greater things than these.” (John 14:12). When we are true to his trust, transformed by his truth and unified by his love in the process of succession, the gift of greater things awaits us. ●

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# SUCCESSION DOESN'T GUARANTEE SUCCESS

## Biblical models that offer wisdom

By Mark L. Vincent

*“In history’s judgment, leaders are only as good as the successors they groom.”*

—*The Economist*, March 28, 2015

THESE WORDS EVALUATE RWANDAN PRESIDENT PAUL KAGAME, viewed as one of the most successful presidents in African history. He brought leadership to end genocide in 1994 and guided the rebuilding of his country into health, wealth and education beyond what it knew before. And yet, he has reputedly chased away, fired or exiled most anyone capable of succeeding him. According to *The Economist*, tight political control brought heralded success—and may be his undoing. Kagame isn’t modulating toward his inevitable descent.

Kagame’s is one of many stories of a strong leader’s bitter decline. Whether moving to a new challenge, retiring or stepping aside because of merger/acquisition, strong leaders are tempted to linger. They often end up not ending well.

Many stories of arrogant or underwhelming successors also exist. They fail even with a clear path and many endowments upon which to build. They can’t have even a bitter decline because they plateaued without the refining discipline of the ascent.

Ugliest of all are stories in which organizations pay the price for the lack of humility and sense of the moment in both outgoing and

incoming leaders. For leaders looking for successors and successors looking to be leaders, the focus cannot simply be on preparing for the moment to switch chairs. Mission fulfillment beyond one’s tenure must be the aim. It’s like the difference between planning a wedding and laying a foundation for lifelong marriage. Mistaking the former for the latter is disastrous.

A Christian leader oriented to think as a steward understands that at the time of succession, the condition of both an organization and its rising leaders are critical. Thankfully, God has provided us with a great portfolio of biblical stories from which to acquire wisdom. Some end with success. Most mix joy and sorrow. Here is a sampling:

- Moses finding a successor in Joshua: 40 years of navigating through his siblings, rebellions and the appointments of judges (Exodus)
- Isaac and Rebekah competing for their favorite sons to get the birthright and blessing (Gen. 27, 28)
- The narrative of Eli, Samuel and their corrupt sons, leading to King Saul’s selection (1 Sam. 1–3; 8:1–6)
- Hanun, an Ammonite king who listened to poor advisers (2 Sam. 10), and Rehoboam, King of Israel, refusing to listen to good ones (1 Kings 12). Both failed spectacularly.
- Elisha shadowing and then succeeding Elijah (1 Kings 19; 2 Kings 2)

- The judges and kings of Israel, especially King Saul with Jonathan and David, and then King David with Absalom and Solomon (Judges through 2 Chronicles)
- Gospel accounts of Jesus preparing his disciples, especially interactions with Peter, James and John.
- Paul with Barnabas, Silas, Titus, Timothy, Luke and others (Acts). In fact, when viewed from a succession lens, we more fully appreciate how closely Paul modeled his life after Jesus. We also gain deeper insight into Paul's expectation of human growth toward maturity and contentment (1 Tim. 6:6–8).

Savoring, ruminating and reflecting on these texts offers wisdom. Integrate them into your devotional life. Let them guide your conversation with others at board meetings, staff retreats and even strategic planning sessions.

We can begin such conversation with these insights:

**1. The critical importance of the long-term.** One leadership maxim states: “One should have a 40 year career rather than four years 10 times.” Filling a single role for 10 years is not the point. Only a few do that. Furthermore, long tenures rarely result in exemplary transitions. Instead, it is about lifelong personal development, moving deeply into wisdom and learning the beautiful urgency of investing in others who will come after you. The Bible offers a multi-generational vantage point (Pss. 22, 73 and 90), as well as an eternal one (1 Tim. 4:6–16).

**2. The importance of wise advisers.** In a recent posting in a CLA Online Academy course on executive leadership, *Outcomes* editor Scott Brown reflected on the Hanun story referenced above. He noted how listening to wise advisers helps ensure that a rising leader does not make harmful or alienating decisions out of pride or fear.

Often in succession scenarios, new leaders bring in *their* team, do things *their* way, try to get *their* impact early and surround themselves with those who agree with *their* approach. This is unwise. Old alliances and deeply rooted relationships are ignored. Loyal advisers and supporters are alienated. Corporate memory is lost. Methodology and meritocracy replace mission and movement.

The word “*their*” in the previous sentences demonstrates an ownership orientation. Ironically, new leaders who display this mindset often face an ownership mentality within the organization running in the opposite direction that shouts — “don’t mess with how we do it.” New ownership jams against established ownership, becoming a pitched battle for dominance. Careers end early. Donors flee. Staple programs are scuttled for flashier projects that are then abandoned from lack of support. Long, slow deterioration of the leader gets matched by the organization’s long, slow decline.

Ignoring wise counsel results in failed leadership succession and accelerates the downward slope of an organization’s sigmoid curve. Consider this Proverb, among the many that apply: “*Without guidance, a people will fall, but there is victory with many counselors.*” (Prov. 11:14 CEB)

**3. Succession works best with clear boundaries.** The outgoing leader should draw a line between his or her role in managing ongoing affairs, and any tendency to obstruct changes a new leader may wish to bring. A lack of such clarity can lead to meddling and handicapping one’s successor. It is better to detach from the role too early than to hold the reins too long. Similarly, the successor can work to line up new resources without showing disrespect to the outgoing leader. It is better to be slow in getting started than to be viewed as a usurper. Consider Queen Athaliah, who destroyed potential successors rather than lose access to power, and who was then subsequently murdered by usurpers (2 Kings 11). The succession of Moses to Joshua, by contrast, is one of the best case studies in human history.

**4. Cultivating successors is like kissing frogs.** Abraham, Moses, King David, the apostle Paul and Jesus, led beyond the incompetence, short-sightedness and betrayals of their protégés. Had they not taken the risk, no successors would have ascended to the role and there would have been no expanded mission capacity. They had to embrace failure and endure disappointment if there was to be any hope for successful succession.

**5. It does matter what people say when you are gone.** The reputation a leader forges during the succession process becomes an oft-told tale, perhaps even an epitaph. (Consider the differing legacies of King Saul and King David). If succession is led well and leaves fertile ground for the successor, there will be new, even if yet unknown, opportunities for the former leader. If succession is poorly managed, however, each subsequent interaction the former leader has with former colleagues is tinged with stress and regret.

Leaders should rewrite their résumés from a biblical perspective. Rather than trumpeting what they have accumulated, built or accomplished, they should quietly list effective hand-offs to newer, younger leaders whom they have mentored. This will show that they understand what counts is assisting the launch of subsequent generations. As it says in Ecclesiastes: “*The words of the wise heard in quietness are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools*” (Ecc. 9:17 NASB).

Succession leaves no room for mediocrity. To master leadership succession and then to do it repeatedly in a variety of contexts is the highest of leadership arts. ●

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# Developing God First Leaders

## Serving as trustees of the next generation

By John C. Reynolds and Andrew Barton

The ability to identify, develop and retain the future leaders of any organization is a constant leadership challenge and one that is sadly too often not given the priority or focus it deserves within higher education and nonprofit ministry organizations. In *The Succession Principle* (Cascade Books, 2015) by David L. McKenna, Ph.D., this sentiment is captured well by Gayle D. Beebe, Ph.D., president of Westmont College, who states that “our greatest legacy is to leave the place better than we found it: better resourced, better focused, and better aligned to guarantee momentum that can launch the leadership of those who follow us.” ///

In Christ-centered ministries and universities, there is an added dimension of the call to serve. This is valued when we recruit and employ that passionate and energized member of our team who not only is professional and knowledgeable, but also called by God to be part of the purpose and mission of the ministry. We forget, however, that those who are called into a ministry are often open to God's next call. Discerning leaders understand this in their hearts, as they themselves have been called by God to lead; still, losing key team members to their calling often comes unexpectedly, as few ministries plan and prepare for this outcome.

The organizational models for preparing future leaders have evolved in the last decades. In the 1970s the process of simply identifying a replacement (replacement planning) shifted towards succession planning, where organizations identified the critical skills needed at the executive level and developed these in senior level administrators. With the 1990s and 2000s came the emergence of a broader talent management field of study, and succession management approach that suggests a more robust and longer-term view of developing leaders that goes several layers deep in the organization.

Frequently, ministry leaders see succession management as the domain of well-funded corporate entities with complex HR departments and elaborate leadership development strategies. However, to do so misses a critical element of a ministry's future. The goal of an intentional organizational succession management process — whether sophisticated or simple — is to attract and retain talented employees who will drive growth and performance towards missional goals. So how might this work?

### **BUILD A TALENT POOL**

Proactively developing a talent pool for the future is both strategic and pragmatic. Intentionally building a talent pool of internal and externally recruited candidates ready to take the helm of leadership in your organization is good stewardship of leadership time and effort. This talent pool approach requires a longer-term and more intentional view towards identifying, developing and shaping the next generation of leaders. We should ask what our future leaders should look like. The benefit of a talent pool is that it provides the organization the ability to develop employees for a variety of roles as well as greater flexibility in placing them in open positions.

According to a global study entitled *Succession Matters: Effective succession management planning*, published in 2015 by Korn Ferry, an effective employee talent pool approach to succession management extends beyond executive leaders. It takes a deeper view of the employee pipeline — both internal and external — with the goal of developing the next generation of leaders who will



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expand and enrich your mission deep into the 21st century. In a March 8, 2015, article in *TD Magazine* entitled “Learning, Talent, and Leadership Development: Evolution or Revolution,” author Annie McKee, Ph.D., program director and senior fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, says it clearly: “If you don’t have motivated and engaged people, who have the right skills, when and where you need them, you’re in trouble.”

## HOW TO'S

Here are some simple ways you can consider developing this talent pool of future leaders:

1. Identify and develop two or three possible successors for every role in your organization. If you can't start with every role, then begin with those key roles that if left vacant for 30 days would significantly hamper missional effectiveness.
2. Identify the future needs of your business environment and use them to develop the necessary skills in your people now. If you don't have strong internal candidates to develop, then you may need to hire from outside now to build your future pipeline.
3. Treat and develop this pool of employees as if they are the future leaders of your organization. In other words, invest, train and stretch them with a long-term mindset.
4. Provide leadership development, training and formal education programs as experiences unique to the "pool" to enhance synergy and collaboration.

## DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

The concern with developing internal talent pools is that the organization is singling out a group of people for special treatment. This is often a greater challenge in Christian organizations where equity in treating employees is a value held in high regard. However developing the potential for future leaders requires organizations be particular and selective.

A talent pool shouldn't mean that all other employees are ignored, but rather this smaller group of individuals has tailored development opportunities to help refine their suitability for future leadership. In *The Alliance: Managing Talent in a Networked Age* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2014), authors Reid Hoffman, Ben Casnocha and Chris Yeh suggest giving employees in the pool "stretch assignments," which can serve as highly effective and low-cost development and retention strategies for such employees.

Talent does not always equate to success, and vice versa. In the article "How definitions of talent suppress talent management" *Industrial and Commercial Training, Vol. 45*, (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2013), doctoral researcher Suzanne Ross offers insight into the development of future leadership and suggests talent pools should be seen as a mechanism to help organizations better understand whether someone has the potential to play out that talent in the future.

## FORMAL LEARNING AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Effective organizations intentionally coordinate the learning strategies for employees with the development of their talent. Formal education experiences are often an effective vehicle for developing the skills, behaviors and attitudes necessary in future leaders. Investing in your talent pool through skills, knowledge and competency development (certification, micro-credentials, workshops etc.), or formal degree programs is affirming and shows your commitment to a leader for the organization's future.

Flexibility through online learning, competency-based degrees and market-relevant content is available through many reputable Christian universities and colleges. At Azusa Pacific University College, we offer undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs that enable development of leaders through a formal program to invest in their future as kingdom-builders while in ministry and without residency. Understanding that there are a number of current and future leaders with much experience, we are developing a new Masters in Executive Leadership (Organizational Leadership) that recognizes experience for academic credit, focused on helping the next generation of leaders examine their intrapersonal values style, the interpersonal interaction and leadership contributions from an organizational perspective.

## ONGOING HEART CONNECTION WITH GOD

As Christian leaders, we are continually

striving toward effectiveness and efficiency in the context of a Christian identity and witness to the world. Succession planning is no different, and we are diligent in seeking models of those who have gone before us and have done it well. Scripture does not reveal many successful succession-planning models, but Joshua succeeding Moses is an exception. The starting point for the Christian leader is that ultimately God is sovereign and, although we strive for a successful model, it must always be in the context that God has a perfect plan, which may be different than what you and I are thinking. This is not an excuse for not developing future talent, but is a faithful recognition that God has a purpose and future beyond our vision and human minds for the ministry we are called for.

Our next step is to identify and develop our future leaders. Moses publicly announced Joshua as his successor (Deut. 31), but many years earlier he had identified and developed Joshua as a leader and a man of special talent. Moses chose Joshua to lead the battle against the Amalekites (Ex. 17:9-16); to accompany him to receive the Ten Commandments (Ex. 24:13-19); to guard the tent while God conversed with him (Ex. 33:11) and the list goes on. For this critical and smooth transition, Moses had identified and developed Joshua for almost 40 years. It would be inconceivable to believe that over 40 years there was not a continual mentoring relationship between Moses and Joshua.

Talent requires not only formal development, but also the nurturing of leaders in their spiritual, professional and personal growth. Busy leaders are not able to do this for all, so identifying and committing energy and time is a strategic and discerning investment. The new Outcomes Mentoring Network available as a CLA resource is an excellent resource that might supplement your capacity to mentor your key talent.

In *The Succession Principle*, Dr. David L. McKenna discusses the sacred trust inherent to succession planning: "Our legacy will be written not in the good things that we have done as Christian leaders, but in the great things that our successor will do." Invest in your leadership legacy by identifying, nurturing and developing those who will lead after you. ●

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## THE CALL TO SERVE

In Christ-centered ministries and universities, there is an added but critical dimension of the call to serve. This is valued most when we recruit and employ that passionate and energized member of our team who not only is professional and knowledgeable, but also called by God to be part of the purpose and mission of the ministry. We often forget, however, that those who are called into a ministry today are constantly open to God's next call.

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# GENEROSITY HERO



## Profile

**NAME** Tanya Roloff

**OCCUPATION** Producer, writer,  
photographer

**PASSION** Telling the stories of  
people in need

*“Generosity is my responsibility as a believer. It helps me keep my perspective.*

*“I’m inspired by people who experience deep need — but are themselves very generous.*

*“You never know how your generosity will change someone’s life.”*

A Generosity Hero is someone who is inspired by the mercy and compassion of Jesus and turns that inspiration into action — generously serving others in need no matter what the cost. For them, the cape and mask are optional.

That’s why, at Masterworks, the heartbeat of our work is inspiring generosity.

We want to help you bring purpose and meaning to the lives of people like Tanya . . . reach the hero inside each one . . . and INSPIRE them to unleash their GENEROSITY.

**Together, we can make an extraordinary difference for your cause.**

To find out more, contact Rory Starks at 360.394.7694 or [rstarks@masterworks.com](mailto:rstarks@masterworks.com).

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# Succession Planning

**Your organization's long-term health depends on it.**

**By Vincent Schera**

ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES of leadership transition was the transition of power from Moses to Joshua. Moses recognized Joshua's inherent leadership qualities early on. He gave him opportunities to develop his skills, personally mentored him, entrusted him with increasingly sensitive tasks and exposed Joshua to his interactions with God on Mt. Sinai. Over a period of 40 years, Joshua earned the trust of the Israelites and moved smoothly into his role as their leader.

Few organizations today have the luxury of a 40-year succession plan, but many of the same principles apply when thinking through a succession strategy.

## **WHAT IS A SUCCESSION PLAN AND WHY DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION NEED ONE?**

Simply put, succession planning is the process of developing those high-potential employees who have the ability to play leadership roles within the organization. It involves careful evaluation of staff capabilities and development of a process that includes training, mentoring and skills development.

Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great* (HarperBusiness, 2001) and co-author of *Built to Last* (HarperBusiness, 1994), has written extensively on leadership development and business success. Collins maintains that companies that have successfully stood the test of time and weathered changes in management have crafted a carefully thought out succession plan designed to identify and invest in talent from within to assure continuity in leadership.

Succession planning begins years before an executive is departing. Current data on leadership transition reveals that the most effective leaders are those who have an intimate knowledge of how the organization works and are familiar with upper management. A 2010 study entitled "Managing Succession: Global Insights on Current Practices" by Right Management, a leader in global workforce solutions, asserts

that when internal promotions are well executed, they can have a considerable and beneficial impact on an organization's future success. Collins' own research supports these findings, and he indicates that the most visionary companies "homegrow their management" and rarely select CEOs or executive leadership from outside the company.

The importance of active involvement by the board of directors cannot be overstated. The board has a responsibility to ensure continuity by collaborating closely with senior leaders to design a succession plan and by providing valuable oversight as the plan unfolds. It is essential for board members to become familiar with potential successors and have knowledge of their strengths and growing edges. They can offer insights to the CEO and upper management about the skills that need to be cultivated to increase a candidate's readiness. Board members also must remember that the CEO or executive director is not the only position that requires a successor and need to plan accordingly with other "C-Suite" positions in mind.

## **CRAFTING A SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLAN:**

### **1. Consider your context**

In order to design a plan that meets your organization's needs and specific context, you have to carefully evaluate your ministry. What are the core values that drive your sense of purpose? What is the overriding vision that connects those values? What is distinctive about your ministerial focus? How do you see God leading your institution into the future? What do you offer that is different from other, similar agencies? Who is your organization serving and how does that impact your approach to ministry? What challenges is it facing? What skills do your leaders need to meet these challenges?

Evaluating the dynamic nature of your organization will give you a strong sense of what values, vision and skills you want your prospective leaders to have. The needs of a small community organization will be vastly different from a large national nonprofit. Yet,

as senior managers identify the key skills needed in their context, they also need to craft a plan that can remain fluid and respond to shifts in their organizational model or goals.

## 2. Assess the high-potential talent

Once you know what positions and skills will be needed in the future, begin by doing a talent assessment that evaluates potential and performance. Who do executive managers consider to be their successors? What degree of readiness do you observe in them? What skills do they need? Individuals who have high potential and are high performers typically exhibit exceptional standards of excellence in their roles and demonstrate exemplary leadership qualities. To step up in responsibility and leadership, however, most people still need to be coached and mentored.

As a Christian organization, it is imperative that leadership candidates prioritize service to others as an important impetus for their work. A commitment to building the kingdom of heaven on earth and making a difference in people's lives should be evident. They should welcome the opportunity to be contributing to Christian mission and service on a personal as well as an institutional level.

In a healthy organization, leaders are always on the lookout for standout performers and are able to grow people from within who have internalized the core values, are committed to preserving them and can also recognize the areas in which change is needed. Board members want to know there is a sufficient talent pool not only at the management level but even one or two levels below, assuring them of the foundation for stability and the potential for consistent growth into the future.



## 3. Nurture the talent

A critical aspect of developing talent is implementing a sound retention strategy. But keeping gifted employees requires more than salary increases and a good benefits package. While these are important incentives, it can be challenging for smaller organizations to provide them and people are motivated by a much broader range of considerations.

Among the top factors cited by The Conference Board (2014 Survey of Job Satisfaction) that affect employee satisfaction is recognition. Staff members want their skills and talents to be acknowledged. Those in faith-based organizations also want to see the results of their efforts and understand how what they do contributes to the organization's ministry. Staff also value work/life balance, flexible

work hours, workplace diversity, employee engagement and inclusion, and employee training and development.

Opportunities for learning and development are especially important. High-potential employees want to learn new skills and expand the scope of their knowledge. They thrive best when they are given challenging assignments. Training should involve more than increasing aptitude in their current role; it should also expand their experience into other roles and tasks. A mentorship program that pairs high performers with senior management who will invest time and offer valuable feedback and wisdom contributes greatly to increasing retention. At the same time, high-potential employees need to be given responsibility for high-visibility projects they can spearhead.

## 4. Evaluate the succession plan

One common method of assessing individual talent is the 9-box chart. The chart is a very effective tool in succession planning because it helps managers identify talented individuals within the organization and determine the extent to which they can contribute to the company's growth. The vertical axis arranges people according to three levels of leadership performance and the horizontal axis places employees according to three levels of growth potential. When these characteristics are combined, individuals are placed in one of the nine boxes.

To get the most out of the 9-box system, begin by rating a person's performance — what they do and how well they do it. Then decide whether you would categorize them as a weak, solid or strong performer. Next think about the professional level that individual is capable of reaching with continued training and mentorship, given their current performance.

Bear in mind their innate ability, enthusiasm and initiative, and their level of engagement with the team or organization. Should they remain in their current role, or are they in the wrong position? Should you consider a future lateral move or a promotion up one level, or are they ready to be promoted higher than one level? Finally, look closely at whether there are skills that need to be developed before they can be promoted. Can they acquire those skills within the next year or will they need more than a year to hone the necessary skills?

The 9-box chart can be a powerful tool that clearly reveals future leaders. It helps senior management to discuss key characteristics of leadership and gain critical insights about an organization's talent pool. But it should not be misused as way of branding employees, particularly those who are underperforming. Handled skillfully, it serves as an excellent way to determine an individual's training needs, to assign projects that stretch one's ability and manage employee development at all levels within an organization.

Carrying on the good work Christian organizations do requires planning for smooth transitions of leadership. While you will not have the 40 years Moses used to prepare Joshua to take his place, you can begin today to consider who on your staff has the capacity to play a larger role in your organization and to begin preparing them for this expanded responsibility. ●

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# Replacing the CEO

## The board's leadership in succession planning

By Tom Okarma

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MINISTRY BOARD is replacing its retiring CEO. While this event presents huge ministry opportunities, it can also be disruptive and filled with emotion, politicking and hurt feelings.

Sooner or later every ministry faces this challenge and how it is managed will have repercussions for years to come.

The specific steps to replace a retiring leader are fairly clear but there are several important overriding considerations to remember when faced with replacing a ministry CEO. Here are five:

### 1. The board alone owns this duty and must take charge of it

- Once the board learns the CEO plans to leave, it should work to establish a mutually acceptable separation date. Once set, that date should be considered firm and the board should stick to it.

The timetable for everything that must be done to replace the CEO should be established from that date backwards.

- Start the process of replacing a CEO early, in fact, as soon as possible. It may take many months to identify and hire a suitable replacement, and there are many steps and unknowns along the way. To avoid rushing into a poor decision, it is best to build ample time into the schedule.
- The entire board should be involved in this important task, with a search committee to lead the effort and being responsible to the board for carrying out the day-to-day steps of the process. The search committee should report its progress frequently to the board, usually during executive session.
- Since people's reputations and careers are involved, not to mention the ministry's own reputation in the community, it is important to maintain confidentiality throughout the process. One person might serve as the spokesman for the board's efforts whenever people invariably ask how the search is going.

- It's usually best to hire from within, so the board should review its internal leadership pipeline for viable candidates first. If there are none, then building internal leadership bench strength is something that should be addressed in the near future.
- Ideally, the ministry already has one succession plan in place — the emergency succession plan — to be used in the event of a tragic event occurring. That plan may also offer solid ideas on the retirement replacement process.

## 2. Understand and recruit towards the future direction of the ministry

- A board should look forward, not backward when hiring a new leader. It should first review (or update) its strategic plan and then build a leadership profile listing a combination of the most desirable skill sets, experiences and relationships that complement the ministry's strategic plan and future direction.
- It's human nature to try to replace the retiring leader with someone comfortable, or similar in style and skills, or with the internal person next in line. While they may appear to be ideal candidates, it is also possible they are not a good fit for the kind of leadership the ministry needs going forward. If not already done, the board should pray over the proposed new leader's profile to engage the Holy Spirit's wisdom. Prayerful consideration at this point may well lead to some fine-tuning.

## 3. Support and engage the outgoing leader

- The retiring leader has led well; it is now time to leave well. Leaving well is just as important as having led well. Having this discussion early on can help things go smoothly later.
- The board may want to debrief the retiring leader, not unlike an exit interview, to get a ground level and frank assessment of the ministry that the board can use when crafting the new leader's profile.
- It is usually best to keep the retiring leader entirely out of the replacement process. This may be met with some resistance but is actually a huge gift. The leader may well be swamped with requests from friends and nonprofit colleagues either to put in a good word to the search committee for them, or in seeking inside information on the interview process, etc. Keeping him or her out of the process gets the leader "off the hook" and keeps them from being put in the middle of the search effort. It also allows him or her to focus on duties surrounding their "leaving well."
- It is a good idea to periodically check in with the leader to see how he or she is doing during this period, which may be a very personal and emotional time. The leader is still the face of the organization and needs to stay focused.
- The board should plan an appropriate celebration to recognize the leader and all the ministry's accomplishments.
- It will be helpful to the board and the new leader to ask the leader to clean up or update any confusing procedures or complicated manuals before leaving. This gives the next leader time to step in and learn the ropes. The same goes with any longstanding projects. Can they be wrapped up before he or she leaves?

## 4. Prepare the ministry for its next chapter

- Change is coming and not everyone may be ready for it. The ministry culture must be protected and key staff, leaders and volunteers may need some special handling. It is important to identify what

Start the process of replacing a CEO early, in fact, as soon as possible.

and who must be protected and, in the case of key individuals, "re-recruited" so they stay on board. Periodically walking around the offices may reveal how well this is going.

- Feedback is always important but especially during transition. Ensure that organizational services are still satisfactorily being delivered and that the ministry continues to operate as normal as possible.

## 5. Develop a plan to help the new leader transition in

- Since the new leader will face many new challenges and probably have a lot of questions, the board chair should offer to be available to the new leader, as needed, to help navigate those first few months. Giving the new leader a safe place to ask questions and receive feedback will help speed up the orientation process.
- The ministry's key staff members should understand that they are expected to play an important role in helping make this leadership transition successful. This should be made clear early on, even before the new leader is hired.
- It might even be a good idea to include some key staff in the candidate interview process. It should be made clear, however, that they would not have ultimate veto or hiring power, but that their feedback would factor into the decision.
- To help the new leader start off on the right foot, a board should provide a "deep dive" session or two to immerse the new leader in the details of the ministry's mission, vision, values, ongoing internal and external issues, informal protocols, key upcoming events, etc.
- Someone should be responsible to introduce the new leader to all external key stakeholders of the ministry. Many important relationships need to be cultivated and transitioned, so the sooner, the better.
- It is reasonable for a board to set certain expectations for the new leader and ask for periodic updates over the first 30/60/90 days.
- Consider asking the new leader to assess the ministry and its people, and to make any observations and recommendations within the first 45 to 60 days.

Some forethought and common sense will make this important transition a success, but it will take time. These five steps should assist in that process. The payoff is a ministry that continues to serve its clients without missing a step. ●

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# Millennials and Motivating Needs

Why understanding the next  
generation is vital



## By Lee Scott and Cliff Cartwright

WHEN I (LEE) WAS ORDAINED IN 2014, a couple of my close friends gave me the gift of a wristwatch. Since receiving that gift, it has taken on a deep sense of meaning for me. More than just a timepiece, it has become a way of helping me better understand the world around me. A good wristwatch tells more than just the time; it describes a bit of the world around you.

When you look at a wristwatch, you will, upon first glance, see a mechanical device capable of (hopefully) keeping accurate track of time and sometimes dates. It does so in a compact object, reliant entirely upon its parts to complete its task. The gears, springs, hands and mechanics drive the function of the watch, while the case and the band provide its aesthetic features. In the hands of a skilled craftsman, these parts are assembled into a functional and beautiful whole that accomplishes a simple, yet vital, task. Though it may be small, its simplicity belies its complexity, just like the organizations in which we serve.

Whether a business or nonprofit, organizations are full of complexity, especially regarding the most essential aspect of the organization — its people. In the last several years the landscape of the workplace has changed drastically, due in large part to the emergence of a new generation of workers, the millennials. Roughly defined as those born between 1984 and 2002, millennials are emerging into the marketplace, and as the economy improves, they are ascending to leadership roles in our organizations. These changes are forcing organizations to adapt their work in myriad ways from communications and information systems to management and supervision. For Christian nonprofits, the inauguration of this generation into the workplace presents opportunities as well as challenges.

Defining groups by generations is a risky venture. Although assumptions are often made about generational theories, we often end up with a smattering of hasty generalizations and unhelpful stereotypes. Some of the common ones regarding millennials that we have encountered in our work in campus ministry tend to deal with issues of entitlement, concerns about work ethic and an assumption of technological savvy that is not always present. Millennials, as with all previous generations, are finding the need to overcome stereotypes in ways that identify their real gifts. But the generalizations do not tell the true story of this new group of workers.

To begin to understand this group, we need to move beyond the stereotypes and into something more substantial — motivating needs. So what is a motivating need? Simply put, it is what drives you to get out of bed in the morning and accomplish something. Our motivating needs are the fundamental parts of our personality that inspire and drive us.

In the course of our work in managing the recruiting and staff services for the Coalition for Christian Outreach, (CCO), we have spent considerable time adapting and meeting the motivating needs of this new generation of workers. Roughly 40 percent of our staff fits within the age demographic of the millennial generation. Moreover, because our mission is to “Transform College Students to Transform the World,” millennials and the

following generation, “generation Z,” are our primary mission focus at this time.

For our purposes, we see five distinct areas of motivating needs for our millennial staff members:

1. **Coaching for Success**
2. **Mission for Motivation**
3. **Collaboration for Creativity**
4. **Structure for Freedom**
5. **Incentive for Investment**

Each one of these points finds congruency in the workplace. Frankly speaking, these are not solely a “millennial thing.” We have found that those of every generation appreciate the way our organizational culture meets the felt needs of our staff. That serves well in advancing both the recruiting and retention strategies for the whole organization. Understanding these needs changes the game for recruiting in some very real ways.

### COACHING FOR SUCCESS

If we reorient our view of recruiting to be a discernment process, and the recruiter takes the posture of guide, we find ourselves with a situation similar to how the millennial generation has interacted with coaches throughout their youth. This shared discernment model prioritizes fit from both sides of the interview table and positions the recruiter less as a gatekeeper to the organization and more as an adviser and coach. In some cases, the candidate is not a fit for our organization. If that is the case, and we can help them find their calling within God’s kingdom, then that’s still a win in our book.

### MISSION FOR MOTIVATION

Finding that fit within the kingdom is our greatest joy. We have found that the best way to focus on this is to relentlessly emphasize “Mission for Motivation” as a means of recruiting and retaining. If you do not love college students, the CCO would be a very difficult place for you to work. They are our heart. The mission is the primary motivation we have seen among our millennial staff members. Our goal is to make sure we bring on board staff who are already in love with our mission and already embody our core values. Though this is true across generational boundaries, it is especially true with millennials. This carries over heavily into our efforts to retain staff once they get in the door.

### COLLABORATION FOR CREATIVITY

This leaves us with three primary motivating needs that we have observed among millennials, and this next one is a game-changer in the workplace. If you walk into a public school these days, odds are the structure and design of the classroom environment will be drastically different than what you may recall from when you were in school. Sure, technology is changing the way education is delivered to students, but take a look at how the desks are arranged and how the environment is oriented.

For Christian nonprofits, the inauguration of this generation into the workplace presents opportunities as well as challenges.



Collaborative work is a part of the normal experience for millennials and oftentimes it provides a creative kick to projects that could otherwise be accomplished individually.

In our experience, our younger staff members are energized by opportunities to partner with leaders and veteran staff members on projects, as well as just to spend time in training with those who have similar interests. One of the most important strategies for retaining our staff has been a cultural priority to gather together four times a year for continuing education. These gatherings offer opportunities for our staff to kick-start creativity through collaborative conversations.

### STRUCTURE FOR FREEDOM

The last two points focus on two standard human resources priorities: providing a healthy workplace environment for staff to thrive, and offering compensation and benefits that provide real value for staff members. The millennial generation emerged into the marketplace at the onset of the worst market since the Great Depression. As the economy recovers, millennials who have been in the workforce as well as those just starting out are seeking careers that will allow them to develop and grow. They seek “structure for freedom.” They deeply appreciate being given a framework for success and clear guidance for what success looks like. Give them structure and guidance but let them run with ideas. This is a generation that has experienced standardized testing at seemingly every grade level. Give them clear ideas of what they will be evaluated on and then give them a chance to rise to the occasion.

### INCENTIVE FOR INVESTMENT

Finally, instill in your millennial staff an incentive to invest their early career in your organization. Many of them want an opportunity to use the skills that they have studied long and hard to acquire, often encumbering themselves with tens of thousands in debt. Given these constraints, they have specific

salary needs that may initially seem entitled to some. The reality is, fair compensation is essential to retaining all employees but especially so for those carrying considerable debt. However, there are other ways to provide an incentive to invest their time outside of monetary compensation.

For our organization, offering a paid leave for new parents has been a beloved benefit. So has offering greater access to vacation, and seeking out the most generous health insurance and retirement plans we can find. The greatest incentive to invest can be found in a workplace that provides strong compensation to all staff and fosters a culture of joyful work, a place where anyone can see themselves making a career.

In conclusion, the millennials are coming. Their time to enter the workplace is now and organizations that are excited to receive them stand to gain a new generation of collaborative-minded individuals, focused on the mission of their new organizations and ready to grow. Now is the time for you to welcome them! ●

Roughly 40 percent of our staff fits within the age demographic of the millennial generation.

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# BUILDING

## Five steps for targeted staff development

Recently, I read an article by Mike Myatt — recognized as one of the top leadership thinkers globally — who encouraged leaders to do away with form over substance when he wrote: “I have grown to have a great distaste for 9-box thinking when it comes to leadership development. I question the ‘best practice’ mentality of labeling people, and putting them in a box. If talent management and succession planning were as easy as identifying ‘high potentials’, the business world would have many more success stories than currently exist. In fact, I would go so far as to say the phrases key employee or high potential are outdated, elitist terms that create angst and animosity among the ranks. Good leaders view all employees as key, and great leaders don’t label people as high potentials — they ensure people achieve their potential.”

As leaders, we should see all of our team members as “A-players.” Then we can use the same approach Ken Blanchard describes in his book *Helping People Win at Work* (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009). As a college professor, Blanchard believed every student should earn an “A,” so he distributed the final exam on the first day of class then taught to it throughout the semester. His goal was to ensure everyone could succeed. So, if you want to help people win on your team and in your organization, what steps can you take to develop your staff?

### STEP 1: START WITH YOUR TEAM MEMBER'S SELF-ASSESSMENT

As a leader, go beyond the “Golden Rule”: “*Do to others what you would have them do to you...*” (Matt. 7:12). Instead, get to know your team member’s preferences, and treat them how *they* want to be treated. Seek to know and understand them. What strengths do they bring to the team? What do others around them recognize that they do well?

In coaching and counseling people over the years, I’ve found that many people don’t immediately recognize all the strengths they have. My personal “aha” moment came after reading *Now, Discover Your Strengths* (The Free Press, 2001) by Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton. Their StrengthsFinder quiz pointed out that my primary strengths are Achiever and Learner (along with Responsibility, Analytical, and Focus). While I’ve always loved learning, especially about people and leadership, I never fully appreciated it

By Brady Pyle

**M**ANY YEARS AGO, when I heard the term succession management, I immediately thought of the 9-Box Model. This model plots team members in one of nine boxes based on their performance (high/medium/low) and their potential (high/medium/low). The 9-Box Model makes it easy to identify “A-players.” After all, that is where organizations should focus their investments, at least according to what I learned in graduate school, and what I continue to see in industry.

However, in recent years, I’ve noticed that each of us attracts people who are similar to us. Psychologists call this the “like me bias.” As a result, if we want a diverse team, we have to be intentional in reaching out to those who are different from us. Creating a diverse pipeline for your position, your team or your organization takes effort.

# IG WINNERS

as a “strength.” If you can help your team members identify their strengths, you’re well on the way to helping them succeed!

As a Christian leader, you’ll need to be sure your team members also understand the potential God sees in them. As 2 Corinthians 3:18 puts it, *“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”*

## STEP 2: UNDERSTAND YOUR TEAM MEMBERS’ GOALS

What are their development goals for the next few years? Do they have particular career aspirations?

In my own career, I always wanted to grow up to be the Director of Human Resources. As I drew closer to that goal, I learned a couple of things. First, obtaining that goal was outside my control, so I needed to focus on what I could control. Second, that goal was ultimately too limiting. There are a variety of leadership challenges that now interest me, and I have a plan for growth and development beyond my current HR Director role!

## STEP 3: SEEK OTHER PERSPECTIVES

To provide the best development advice, use other perspectives. In my organization, our leadership team takes a day each year to discuss development of everyone on our staff. Our supervisors start the discussion, relaying the strengths and interests of their team members. Then, we have a healthy discussion about each team member, offering suggestions for future tasks, projects and roles.

The supervisor takes this information back for a one-on-one discussion with each team member. We then encourage the team member to consult with HR to understand their development opportunities. If you’re in a smaller organization without those kinds of resources, there are still many options available. Is there a role model in the organization? If so, encourage staff members to approach the role model about serving as a career mentor. I took this approach early in my career, picking out someone whose character I admired both at work and at church.

When I approached Don Blevins about serving as a mentor, he responded, “I don’t think you have the right guy. I’m not even sure what a mentor does.” I explained to Don that’s exactly why I called him. I appreciated his humility and just wanted to spend time with him and build a relationship. Over the next few years, Don and I met regularly for lunch, and I learned a lot about life, leadership and succeeding in both.

Finding a mentor — someone who has been there and done that — is invaluable. Proverbs 27:17 puts it this way, *“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”* That’s where the CLA Outcomes Mentoring Network ([OutcomesMentoring.org](http://OutcomesMentoring.org)) can help. There are a number of experienced professionals in the network who can

provide your team members with a different perspective. Encourage them to use this resource as a way to understand what opportunities they should pursue and why.

**If you can help your team members identify their strengths, you’re well on the way to helping them succeed!**

## STEP 4: PROVIDE “FEEDFORWARD” AND MAKE A PLAN

Marshall Goldsmith — named the “World’s Most Influential Management Thinker” in 2011 — encourages leaders to use “feedforward” instead of feedback. With feedforward, leaders provide two suggestions for the future that help their team member achieve a positive change. With this focus, leaders do not give feedback about the past. They only give ideas for the future.

“Feedforward” should be used as you help your team members create an Individual Development Plan (IDP). A couple of rules of thumb help with this. First, focus 70 percent on strengths, 25 percent on learning new things and 5 percent on weaknesses. Second, focus 70 percent of development time on context (jobs/projects/tasks), 20 percent on contacts (coaching/mentoring/shadowing) and 10 percent on concepts (reading/training).

## STEP 5: EVALUATE PROGRESS REGULARLY

You need to continue this developmental dialogue over time, keeping in mind that the path of every search must go beyond your team member’s self-awareness — to knowing God better and becoming more like Jesus Christ.

I offer my team members quarterly performance and development discussions. Half the time, we focus on long-term career planning. What I’ve found — for me and my team members — is the IDP is a living document. Over time, my career options change. It’s nice to look back at IDPs from 15, 10 or five years ago to chart my own growth — recognizing what I’ve learned from my supervisor, mentors and role models.

I encourage you to use this five-step process for tailored staff development, as you help your team members shoot for the stars! ●

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Through his website ([OutOfThisWorldLeadership.com](http://OutOfThisWorldLeadership.com)), **BRADY PYLE** serves leaders who shoot for the stars with his blog, workshops, speaking and coaching. In his day job, Brady is acting director of Human Resources for NASA’s Johnson Space Center.

# Humility and Servanthood

## The keys to seamless leadership succession

**HOW WOULD YOU FEEL AS THE NEW PRESIDENT** of a Christian organization knowing that all five of the former founders and presidents were still actively involved in the ministry? Does just the mention of this send shivers down your spine as a leader? Well, this is my reality as the new president of the C.S. Lewis Institute, and I couldn't be happier!

You are now wondering, "Is this guy crazy or just plain naïve?" Well, I may be nuts, but I don't think I'm a greenhorn. I've worked in churches, a Christian college and other nonprofits, and served both in the U.S. and on the mission field in Europe. So I've experienced firsthand the real life struggles that leaders face. In addition, my doctoral dissertation focused on the development of a systematic CEO succession planning model for nonprofit organizations.

I'm aware of the potential landmines in leadership succession, including "founderitis," the disease in which charismatic leaders can't let go, stay too long and meddle in the affairs of the next generation leader; the cost of leadership succession, which some estimate at being 150 percent of the CEO's salary; and the short tenures of most next generation leaders (less than two years in about 70 percent of the cases). I also know that the landscape in Christian nonprofit organizations is riddled with stories of scandal, hubris and unbecoming words and actions that look nothing like those of our CEO, Jesus.

So, what's different about leadership succession at the C.S. Lewis Institute (CSLI)? I think I can state it in two words — "humility and servanthood." The former leaders of CSLI are more focused on serving Jesus and the mission of our organization than promoting their own name or agenda.

Founded in Washington, D.C. in 1976, the Institute endeavors — in the legacy of C.S. Lewis — to develop disciples who will articulate, defend and live their faith in Christ in personal and public life. From its inception, the Institute has been inter-denominational, has worked closely with a variety of churches and sees itself as a servant ministry, assisting churches and pastors in making disciples of Jesus Christ. This takes the form of discipleship programs for working professionals,

area-wide conferences, pastor fellowships and resources in print and on the web. The Institute now has offices in 12 cities in the U.S. and the United Kingdom. Under the leadership of its former presidents, the Lord has used the Institute to disciple many for service in God's kingdom.

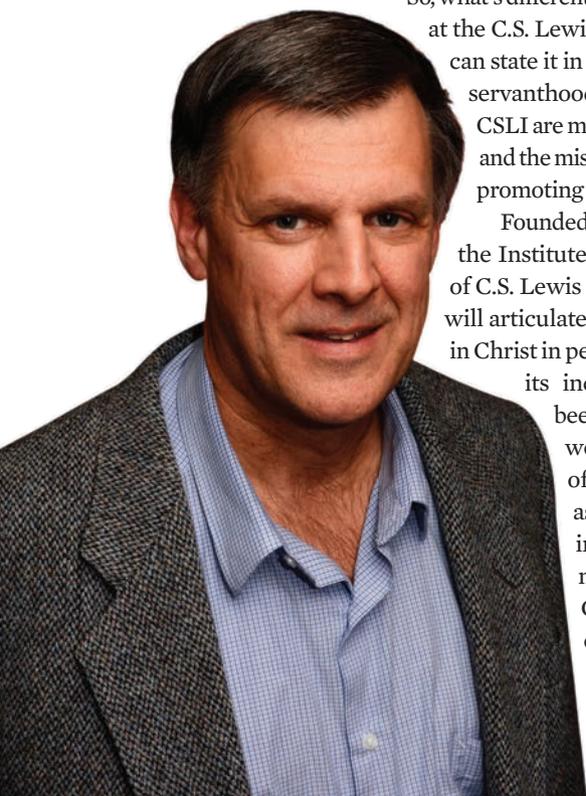
The intellectual, spiritual and professional firepower of these former leaders is impressive, and yet, when I'm around them, I don't feel inferior or judged. Co-founder Jim Hiskey, who started the Bible study on the PGA tour and has disciplined countless people around the globe, kindly reminds me, "Don't worry about the funding. For money follows ministry." Co-founder Dr. Jim Houston,

**You are now wondering,  
"Is this guy crazy or just  
plain naïve?"**

who knew C.S. Lewis personally as a fellow professor at Oxford, recently treated me to a marvelous French meal and did nothing but speak words of life and grace to me. Dr. Art Lindsley, an intellectual giant and eloquent apologist for the Christian faith, greets me warmly with words of encouragement every time he sees me and asks how I'm doing. Dr. Tom Tarrants, who holds a degree in spiritual formation, and who knows just about everyone in the evangelical world, mentors me and models what it means to quietly serve others and remain true to the Lord's calling. And Kerry Knott, someone who has known the heights of political power and served as special counsel to the likes of Bill Gates, laid a solid foundation at the Institute for the past five years and then graciously passed the leadership baton to me with enthusiasm — expressing his confidence in my ability to carry on the mission by embarking on a five-month global cruise with his home-schooling family.

And so, instead of having a group of meddling, personal agenda oriented, grumpy former leaders, I have an amazing team of professional and spiritual advisers who I can turn to without hesitation, knowing that they are there to serve me and the mission of the C.S. Lewis Institute. I don't know of any other organization that has experienced this kind of seamless leadership succession. For me and the C.S. Lewis Institute, the key to seamless leadership succession is former leaders who exude the traits of Jesus: humility and servanthood. ●

**JOEL S. WOODRUFF, ED.D.**, president of the C.S. Lewis Institute ([cslewisinstitute.org](http://cslewisinstitute.org)), has worked in higher education, nonprofit administration, and pastoral ministries in Israel, Hungary, France and the U.S. He is a graduate of Wheaton College, earned his M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and has a doctorate from Nova Southeastern University.



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# Moses and Joshua

## The importance of developing future leaders

**LEADERSHIP IS ALWAYS A TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT** — always. It is a temporary assignment because leaders do not ultimately own the teams, ministries or organizations they lead. They simply steward what the Lord has entrusted to their care for a season. Wise leaders embrace the temporal reality of leading, and they prepare the ministry for the future. Because the assignment is fleeting, developing others for leadership is an essential responsibility of a leader.

Moses understood the temporary nature of leadership and the necessity of succession. He personally selected and invested in leaders. He modeled leadership by replicating leaders.

This pattern of divesting and replicating leadership began not long after the exodus from Egypt. Moses led a group of millions literally by himself. At one point in his ministry, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, arrived for a visit and asked, "What is this thing you're doing for the people? Why are you alone sitting as judge, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?" (Ex. 18:14 HCSB). Moses tried to explain his role as arbiter of millions, but his answers fell short. Jethro, always quick to correct, said: "What you're doing is not good...You will certainly wear out both yourself and these people who are with you, because the task is too heavy for you. You can't do it alone" (Ex. 18:17-18 HCSB).

Jethro encouraged Moses to select honorable, wise and godly men who could be taught basic interpretation of God's laws and instruction. It was a defined leadership system designed not only to alleviate stress immediately from Moses but also to sustain the young nation for the long haul. Ultimately, Moses listened to Jethro, leaders emerged, his stress lessened and his father-in-law went home.

This pattern of multiplication in Moses' life and leadership reached its pinnacle with his selection of Joshua as his successor.

Joshua is first mentioned in the Scripture when Moses chose him to lead the Israelite army in battle against the Amalekites (Ex. 17:8-16). From that moment forward, we observe Moses intentionally developing Joshua.

As you read through the Scripture, you see Moses pouring into Joshua. Moses brought Joshua up the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments from God (Ex. 24:13). Joshua observed Moses' righteous indignation when Moses smashed the two tablets (Ex. 32:17-19), and Joshua was witness to the holy

communion Moses shared with the Lord as he guarded the tent of meeting (Ex. 33:11).

Through all these critical moments in the life of God's people, Joshua was there with Moses. Moses helped ensure the following generation would love and fear God. He served his people by pouring his life into another. And immediately after Moses' death, Joshua was ready to lead Israel.

Moses' behavior is a model for modern-day leadership. We can see the priority he placed on the future by how he empowered younger leaders like Joshua. Simply put, leaders are responsible for future leadership.

## Will you be like Moses or like Joshua?

A leader who is not developing future leaders is not serving the organization well. The leader is either being shortsighted or selfish — shortsighted in that the future is not being considered or selfish in that the leader thinks only about himself or herself.

The leadership legacy of Joshua, sadly, is very different, as we find in the Book of Judges. After Joshua's death, Israel drifted from the Lord and lived in chaos:

*"Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110.... That whole generation was also gathered to their ancestors. After them another generation rose up who did not know the LORD or the works He had done for Israel"* (Judges 2:8, 10 HCSB).

Why the stark contrast?

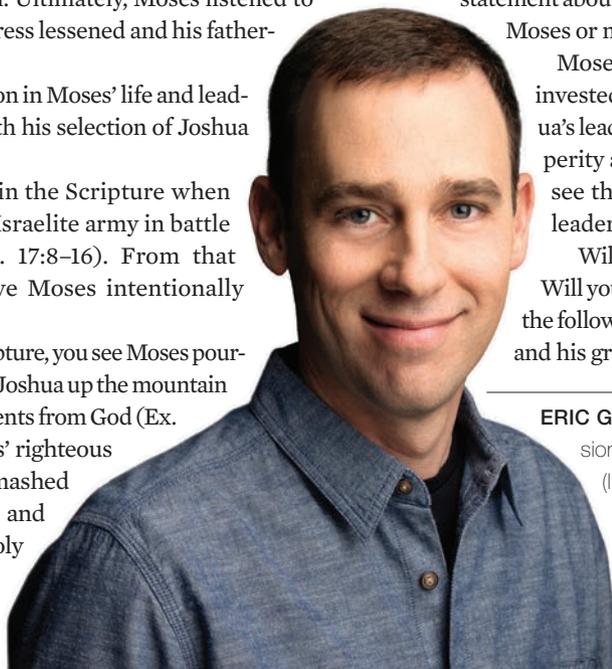
There is no record of Joshua investing in anyone. We don't see him intentionally developing leaders. We don't read of him pouring into others. And the generation after his leadership didn't know the Lord.

A soul-searching question: If you were to hand your temporary leadership assignments over today, would a statement about your leadership sound more like Moses or more like Joshua?

Moses proactively and intentionally invested his life in Joshua. Under Joshua's leadership, Israel enjoyed great prosperity and victory. But Joshua failed to see the value of investing in younger leaders.

Will you be like Moses or like Joshua? Will you invest in others who will ensure the following generations know of the Lord and his gracious works? ●

**ERIC GEIGER** leads the Resources Division at LifeWay Christian Resources (lifeway.com). He is married to Kaye, and they have two daughters, Eden and Evie.



# SOME HEROES DON'T WEAR CAPES



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# Gender-Balanced Leadership

## One organization's journey of change

TWO YEARS AGO, OUR ORGANIZATION TOOK A LOOK at our leadership landscape and decided to address our lack of gender balance head on. Having operated as an egalitarian organization for some years, we were nowhere near representing that balance on our leadership teams. Knowing that for many Christians, theology is a significant barrier, our first step was to clarify our position in writing and distribute it widely. This gave us the freedom to actively recruit qualified women into Christian Associates and to intentionally develop them from within.

### PARSING THE “NO”

It quickly became apparent that despite our position paper and inclusive stance, gifted women were turning down offers to assume more public leadership opportunities. Reasonable excuses were provided that were easy to accept at face value. We were challenged to press further into underlying issues. As it turned out, the deeper reasons for declining leadership opportunities were more complex than first imagined.

### THE HIDDEN BARRIERS

Some of these barriers seemed obvious: a lack of invitation, perceived gender bias, family and home responsibilities that primarily fell to women and a lack of leadership development or experience. Unearthing the hidden barriers required intentional listening. For example, we found that many women lacked confidence in their skills. Other issues included an organizational culture that inadvertently preferred “male” behaviors, a desire to balance work and family/home responsibilities and a perceived fear that women would not be permitted to lead in a distinctly female style.

### ADVOCATING FROM THE TOP

Starting to address these barriers has required outspoken voices and actions right from the top. Our president, Dudley Callison, actively advocates for women to participate on all leadership teams and scrutinizes agendas like the speaking lineup at our regional conferences. The senior leadership team intentionally watches for women who have leadership potential and sponsors them into opportunities. Job profiles are scrutinized for gender-neutral language, and we ensure that the recruiting pool includes both genders. We are actively working on creating project-based opportunities for women to develop their skills without a full-time commitment.



### RESOURCING

Offering opportunities for women would not be successful if we did not also resource them. The most effective tools turn out to be a trifecta: mentoring, coaching and training. Having women visibly leading in public space is important, as well as asking current leaders to mentor a junior leader through monthly conversations. Coaching is provided in Christian Associates for those who wish to put into action a specific plan, whether that is leadership-based or otherwise. We are also implementing leadership training that will build skills through cohort-based events, and insisting on equal male and female participation for each cohort.

### CHANGING CULTURE

Culture change is a more challenging task. This has involved taking stock of both our formal and informal organizational patterns. We're asking ourselves if there are behaviors or assumptions that hinder gender balance — whether it's all that sports banter or discomfort about working closely with persons of the opposite gender. We have also reviewed our meeting culture and observed how good facilitation can make sure that all voices are heard and valued. For many women, and I generalize here, breaking into a high-energy conversation of dominant males hyped on coffee is not just difficult, it is terrifying! We are calling out and valuing leadership styles that play to women's strengths, emphasizing collaborative and team-based work. Finally, we are looking at our job structures and building in flexibility. Remote work placements, job-sharing, project-based assignments and shared parental leave all help promote healthy work/life balance and accommodate a variety of family patterns, especially during child-rearing years.

Surveying our leadership landscape today, it is encouraging to see the change. Our board of directors, which has been chaired by a woman for 10 years, now has equal gender representation. The senior leadership team is gender-balanced, and our regional teams are working toward this goal. There is a clear eye on women with potential and a desire to develop them to move into these roles in the coming years. Women are much more visible in our conferences, leading and speaking from the platform. Most importantly, our women are less likely to say “no,” to sometimes say “maybe” and to increasingly say “yes” to opportunities to lead. ●

**ANN STEIGERWALD** has served with Christian Associates ([christianassociates.org](http://christianassociates.org)) since 1995. In that time she was invited, cajoled, encouraged, mentored and resourced to develop from a missionary homemaker to her current role as chief people officer. The vision of Christian Associates is to see churches mature into sustainable faith communities, primarily in urban areas, where they become multiplying movements — churches who plant churches who plant churches.

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# Strategic Succession

## Preparing leaders for a strong future

**F**OR MORE THAN A DECADE, leaders have been talking about the strategic role of “talent management.” A friend told me he was taking a new role as a global talent manager for a Fortune 100 company. He said the leaders at his organization believed that talent management was their next competitive advantage.

This focus on talent management takes on even greater significance if you look at the changing generational demographics of organizational leadership. There are currently more millennials in the workforce than baby boomers, and as boomers retire there is a vacuum of qualified leaders to fill the void.

Strategic planning during past decades often focused on capital, materials and labor. Today’s organizations are being pressed to increasingly think strategically about their leadership capacity, talent development and succession planning. How will organizations fill the shoes of the boomers who will retire over the next decade?

Jesus provides us with some insight on this topic. In Luke 8:1, we see Jesus proclaiming the kingdom; however, just one chapter later in Luke 9:1 he is commissioning the Twelve. In chapter 10 of Luke, Jesus not only commissioned the 72, he also prayed for even more workers in the harvest field. Jesus spent much of his time investing in the next generation of leadership. We would be wise to do the same.

Today’s younger leaders are hungry for opportunities to grow personally and professionally. In leading the Emerging Leaders Institute in Minneapolis, we covered many important issues, yet the most prevailing goal for these 25 to 40 year olds was the desire to learn and grow, both personally and professionally.

The centrality of strategy is discovering how to add value to our stakeholders. We often think of key stakeholders as those we serve outside the organization. Let us not forget that we can also add value to our employees by thoughtfully crafting individual and group pathways for growth and development.

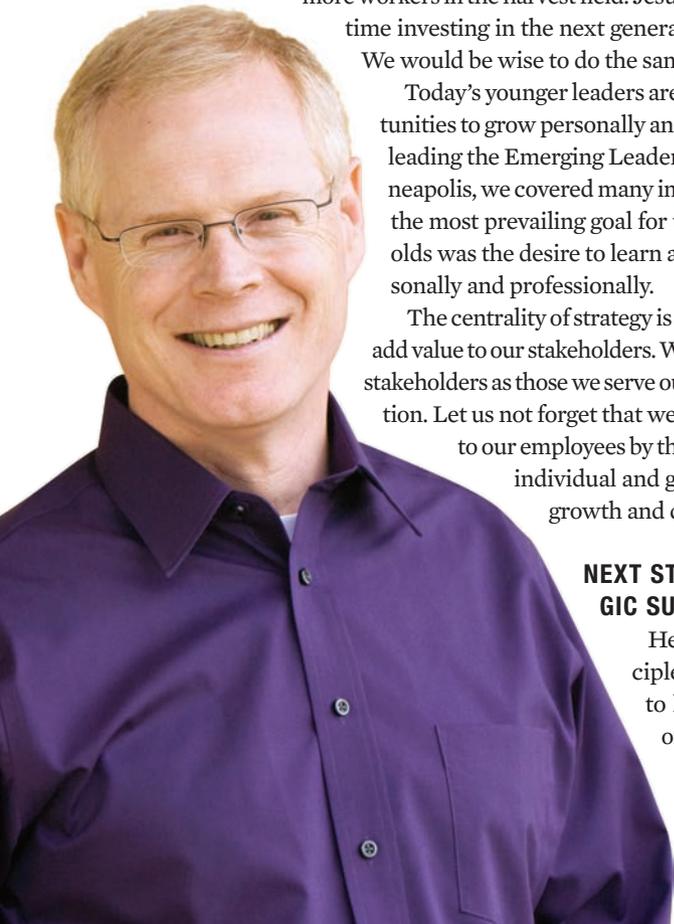
### NEXT STEPS IN STRATEGIC SUCCESSION

Here are some principles and suggestions to help you and your organization prepare leaders for a strong future:

- **No one is irreplaceable:** We need to take time to think and discuss what our strategies are for replacing each and every employee. This prepares the organization for unexpected departures as well as anticipated expansion.
- **Outside/inside:** Best practices in talent management include finding the right mix of strategic hires from outside the organization as well as developmental promotions from within. Talk about where you have strength from within and where you need to go outside to find the specific talent you need.
- **Bring up the topic:** At least annually, talk with employees individually about their hopes, aspirations, areas of growth and how they feel they can best add value to the organization now and in the future. When I talk with emerging leaders, they are often disappointed that this topic does not come up in conversation with their supervisor.
- **Recast leadership responsibilities:** I once asked the senior team of a \$40 million nonprofit organization who was responsible for talent management and development. They could not come up with an answer. The answer is — they are. Leaders at both the senior and middle management levels need to see at least a portion of their role as developing their direct reports.
- **It is not all about us:** It is true that as leaders, we are responsible for reaching the aspirational outcomes of our organizations. Developing our people helps reach those outcomes. However, we also need to see past our immediate context and realize that investing in emerging leaders is a kingdom investment that may bless the next organization rather than our own.
- **Set aside time:** The foundation of a great future is laid through time spent in prayer, reflection and dialogue. I once interviewed a vice president who works for a Christian nonprofit filled with Ivy League leaders. This bright, dedicated, Christ-centered leader said it was rare for the leaders to take time for strategic conversations because they were so busy with the tactical, everyday work around them. Try to take at least an hour a week to pray, think and/or talk about the strategic future of your organization and the development of your current and future leaders. If that’s too much time, try starting with an hour a month.

Our future is as bright as our next generation of leaders. We have the opportunity to shape that future. ●

**DR. RICK MANN** is professor of leadership and strategy at Trevecca Nazarene University. Through his strategy consulting practice (ClarionStrategy.com), he has worked with organizations managing budgets from \$1 million to \$500 million. He can be reached at rick@clarionstrategy.com.



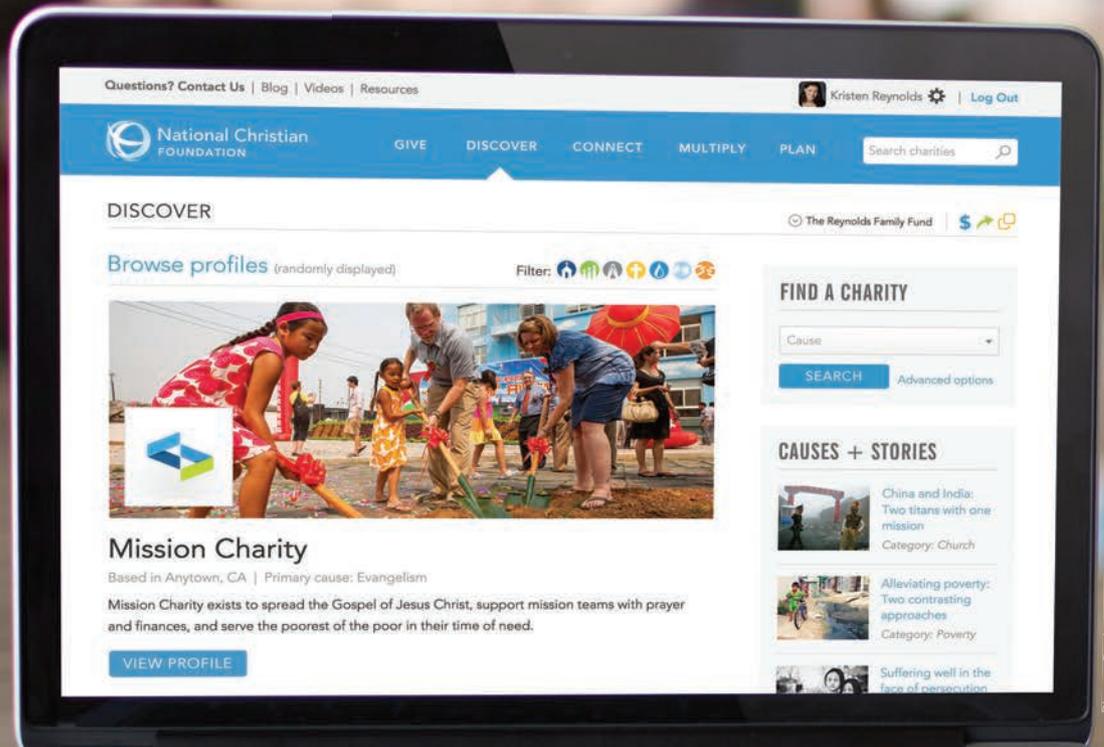


Photo: Rachel Illadis

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# Kingdom Partnership

## How releasing authority strengthens leaders

**WE DON'T NEED TO LOOK HARD** in Scripture to find examples of strong relationships where responsibility and authority bound two individuals together in fulfilling the purposes of God: Moses and Joshua; David and Solomon; Eli and Samuel; Paul and Timothy. Each of these unique connections required unselfish leaders to move forward in tandem and agreement in order for the greater work to be accomplished.

To move forward together with others requires agreement between parties. Amos 3:3 asks *“Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?”* This level of agreement is far deeper than mere compliance, acceptance of direction or acquiescence. Rather, it signifies a whole-hearted sense of mutual dependence. There is a promise of cooperation, a sharing of the task, a pulling together in the same direction. It does not devolve into a “tug of war,” where one faction imposes their will against another. It is a commitment to work together in a manner that moves the task forward — often with exponential results.

One such example is found in the early days of Billy Graham's ministry. At the time, the practice was for the evangelist to personally counsel with individuals after preaching the message, assisting them with their specific questions and needs. Even when a small team came alongside to assist, demands quickly outstripped supply. It was apparent that the ministry needed someone with expertise to join in. During this time, God had raised up a man gifted in discipling others named Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators. Billy approached his friend “Daws” and asked him to give direction to the follow-up process and materials for these new believers.

These two soul winners partnered together in a way that shared the responsibility for the work and provided each the freedom to operate in their God-designed area of individual giftedness. They shared together in such mutual commitment and respect that you could not say that one led and one followed — it was two leaders harnessed together to accomplish more than could have been done alone.

And therein lies a key challenge for us as leaders. We need to see those who labor with us as our partners in this great work, rather than simply as employees whom we direct. We have two choices. We can release responsibility and authority to others and allow their giftedness to expand the impact of the vision, or we can hoard responsibility and authority to ourselves. The ramification of the latter hoarding approach is that it will ultimately limit our influence. It will also cast the organization into disorder when we are gone.

Giving away responsibility does not absolve the leader from accountability for the end result. The leader still must understand and agree with both the direction and the way that decisions are

being implemented. There needs to be regular checkpoints where key decisions are discussed and evaluated. Not to do so reveals a lack on the part of leaders who may see themselves as too busy with other responsibilities or who try to insulate themselves from difficult discussions or issues they don't want to address.

Responsibility and authority go hand-in-hand. It does not work to have one without the other. Separating responsibility and authority will ultimately result in frustration for either the leader or the staff member. Passing along responsibility without requisite authority forces staff members to continually check with the leader at every roadblock. The danger inherent in responsibility without authority is that it does little to provide ownership of the task or decision. Lack of ownership lowers a staff member's commitment to the project, and ultimately limits that individual's impact on the organization.

One of the marks of a leader is the ability to make decisions and take authority over issues and situations. Because this is an ingrained aspect of leadership, it is often difficult for leaders to actually give authority away. This mindset, unfortunately limits a leader's ultimate impact. Hoarding authority hinders creating a lasting legacy in those we lead.

## Responsibility and authority go hand-in-hand.

As leaders, we are responsible for more than results; for as Hebrews 13:17 points out, we *“keep watch”* over those we lead and will give an account of our dealings with them. The true image of leadership is not one standing on the pinnacle seeking to rule kingdoms, but one kneeling before their followers and washing their feet. ●

**DAVID YERRY** has more than 30 years of ministry experience, 20 of which has been in leadership positions with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He is principal of YES Consulting Group — helping people and organizations get unstuck. Learn more at ([davidyerry.com](http://davidyerry.com)).



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CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP  
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## Books to Consider ...

Great insights on leadership succession, hiring, team building and more!

### THE SUCCESSION PRINCIPLE:

**How leaders make leaders**

By David L. McKenna

(Cascade Books, 2014)

Succession is a hot topic in leadership development, and as a college, university and seminary president who experienced three successions in leadership, Dr. David McKenna is eminently qualified to speak on the subject. In this book, McKenna introduces us to the succession principle: What we bring to leadership is important; what we do in leadership is more important, and what we leave from our leadership is most important.

### PASSING THE LEADERSHIP BATON:

**A winning transition plan for your ministry**

By Tom Dale Mullins

(Thomas Nelson, 2015)

Successfully passing the leadership baton to the next leader is essential to give our organization the best opportunity to thrive after our time of service. A smooth handoff requires meticulous planning and forethought. Yet most leaders delay thinking about leadership transition until they are faced with a situation where they have no choice but to make a change. *Passing the Leadership Baton* offers insights for a seamless transition.

### NEXT: Pastoral succession that works

By William Vanderbloemen and Warren Bird

(Baker Books, 2014)

While there is no simple, one-size-fits-all solution to the puzzle of planning for a seamless pastoral succession, *Next* offers church leaders and pastors a guide to asking the right questions in order to plan for the future. Vanderbloemen, founder of a leading pastoral search firm, and Bird, an award-winning writer and researcher, share insider stories of succession failures and successes in dozens of churches, including some of the nation's most influential.

### THE FIRST 90 DAYS: Proven strategies for getting up to speed faster and smarter

By Michael D. Watkins

(Harvard Business Review Press,

Updated Edition, 2013)

In this updated and expanded version of the international best seller *The First 90 Days*, Watkins offers proven strategies for conquering the challenges of transitions — no matter where you are in your career.

### TRUST: The firm foundation for kingdom fruitfulness

By Dan Busby

(ECFAPress, 2015)

Never in history has trust been so attacked on a daily basis. That is why those who lead and serve Christ-centered ministries — the target audience for his book — need to be intentional about building and maintaining trust. When Jesus radically changes us, our “trust factor” goes way up. And radically changed people are serious about fundamental ministry issues like governance, financial management and raising resources.

### THE FIVE ATTRIBUTES: Essentials of hiring for Christian organizations

By Chad Carter

(Best Christian Workplaces Institute, 2015)

Chad Carter offers insight and instruction from his 20-plus years in human resources and consulting. He casts a bright light on five essential attributes every hiring manager must intentionally study in each interviewee with a “no compromise” approach.

### RISING ABOVE A TOXIC WORKPLACE:

**Taking care of yourself in an unhealthy environment**

By Gary Chapman, Dr. Paul

White and Harold Myra

(Northfield Publishing, 2014)

Many employees experience the reality of bullying bosses, poisonous people and soul-crushing cultures on a daily basis. *Rising*

*Above a Toxic Workplace* tells authentic stories from today's workers who share how they cope, change or quit. The authors blend their experiences in ministry and business to deliver hope and practical guidance.

### BREAK THROUGH THE ICK FACTORS OF NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP: Discover your organization's true potential

By Tom Okarma

(Tom Okarma Publishing, 2015)

In *Break Through the Ick Factors*, author Tom Okarma tackles some of the most critical issues facing nonprofits each day. These issues, or “Ick Factors,” can paralyze a nonprofit leader or board if not handled well. This book was written to help nonprofit leaders face challenges head on, eliminate energy-draining problems and focus on mission-critical work.

### TEAMS THAT THRIVE: Five disciplines of collaborative church leadership

By Ryan T. Hartwig and Warren Bird

(InterVarsity Press, 2015)

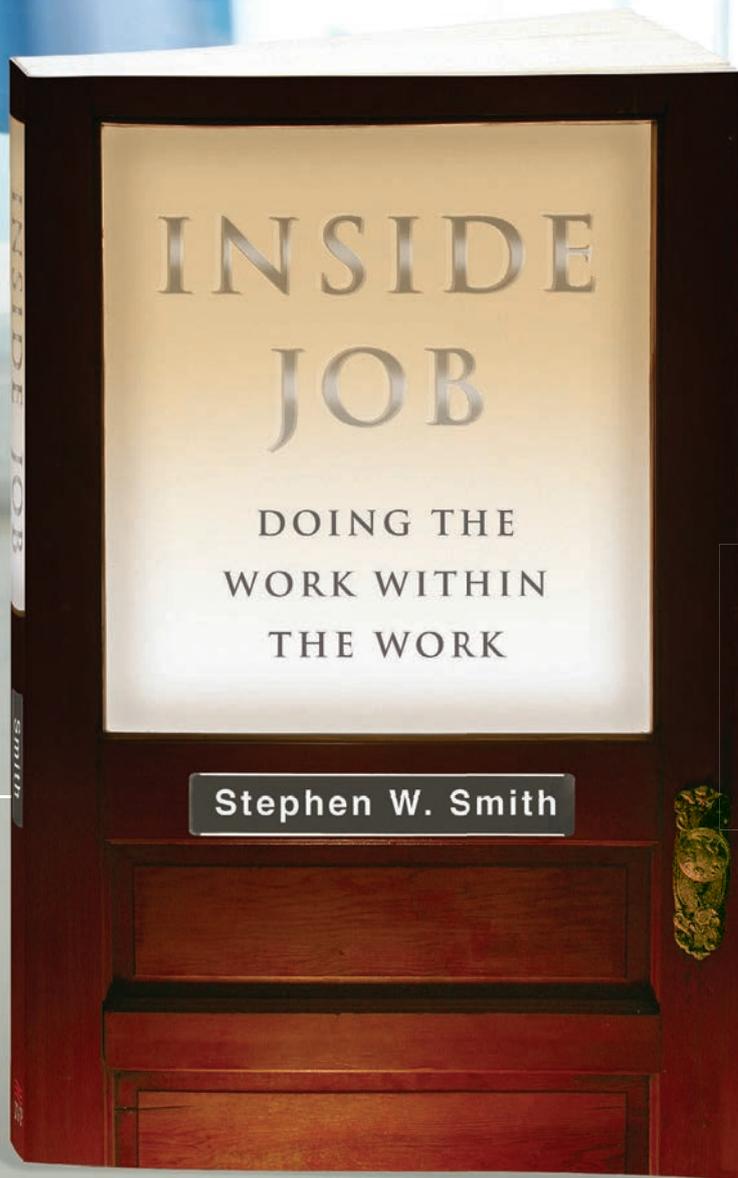
It's increasingly clear that leadership should be shared — for the good of both organizations and leaders. In *Teams That Thrive*, Hartwig (Azusa Pacific University) and Bird (Leadership Network) provide a coaching tool that enables struggling teams to thrive and that empowers teams doing well to do their work even better.

### RELAUNCH: How to stage an organizational comeback

Dr. Mark Rutland

(David C. Cook, 2013)

Drawing from his remarkable experience turning around two universities and a megachurch, Rutland guides leaders through the hard, dangerous work of turning failure into success. He shows how to cast a vision while facing reality; align market, message, and medium; transform corporate culture; lead from quality to excellence; and re-energize and lead a board. ●



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*“Stephen Smith understands that there’s a big difference between living life in balance, and living in rhythm. The former leaves leaders stuck on a treadmill of stress and disillusionment. But the latter helps them truly discover their purpose and live within life’s limits. Inside Job should be essential reading for anyone who is tired of the rat race.”*

**JIM DALY**, president, Focus on the Family

*“As a personal trainer for our soul, Steve first helps us confront with brutal honesty the vulnerability of our souls and the wounds of our hearts. . . . Read this slowly and let it begin an ‘inside job’ in the deep and hidden parts of your life. You will find that you will become who you long to be, to the benefit of your own soul and everyone around you!”*

**SCOTT ARBEITER**, former lead pastor at Elmbrook Church

# CLA Gold/Platinum Member Directory



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**ALLIANCE**

A directory of CLA Gold and Platinum level members

Listings for members are current as of May 5, 2015

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Greg Griffin, Partner  
Stan Reiff, Partner  
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**Boston, Massachusetts**  
Fran Brown, Partner  
Phone: (617) 535-7534

**Brea, California**  
Vonna Laue, Managing Partner  
Phone: (714) 961-9300

**Chicago, Illinois**  
Sheree Bruggmann, Partner  
Doug McVey, Partner  
Jeff Sharda, Partner  
Phone: (630) 682-9797

**Colorado Springs, Colorado**  
Tim Sims, Partner  
Paul Galliant, Partner  
Phone: (719) 528-6225

**Columbia, South Carolina**  
Dan Campbell, Partner  
Phone: (803) 458-2169

**Dallas, Texas**  
Gregg Capin, Partner  
Phone: (817) 328-6510

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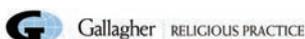
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**In 2016 Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) celebrates 40 years of equipping and uniting leaders to transform the world for Christ!**



to lead in just such a time as this. We look forward with excitement to what lays ahead as together we pursue eternal Christ-honoring impact.

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In Scripture 40 years is significant. It often signifies a generation. During the Outcomes Conference we will celebrate the generation of brave pioneers who have gone before, and we will look forward to a future generation of steward leaders who will impact the world for Christ.

We praise God for the successes. We thank God for challenges overcome. We think of the times we dared to aim higher. By following the leading of the Holy Spirit, we have together seen culture impacted in profound ways in the name of Christ.

Those perspectives are also about what is ahead. We see today’s ministry challenges, and opportunities, and believe you were chosen



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And more are yet to come...

# Passing the Baton

## Planning for succession and follow-through

I CAN'T WAIT FOR NEXT YEAR'S SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES IN BRAZIL. I love track and field events, especially the exciting relay races — often won or lost in the split seconds of passing the baton from one runner to the next. Do it with excellence and the whole team prospers. Fumble or drop the baton, and usually it's impossible to regain a winning momentum. Leadership succession is like that. It is said, "There is no success without succession."

I have experienced succession twice now — 22 years ago as the incoming president of Compassion International, and again just two years ago as the outgoing president as I stepped into retirement. In both cases the transitions were a God-honoring, uplifting process for the organization. So what have I learned?

### INTENTIONAL PLANNING

Most importantly, choose the right successor! That seems obvious, but if you get this wrong, no amount of process excellence can fix it. So how do you know the right person when you see him or her?

I initiated the succession process by announcing my intention to retire three years in advance. It then didn't create anxiety to begin asking people, "What should characterize Compassion's next president?" Being the first question posed after my announcement, and before any candidates had been considered, this enabled clear, open thinking and honest expression. In closed sessions, I presented a survey to the leadership at the board, executive and international partner levels, asking them to rate the importance of specific qualifications and traits. The results from all three leadership groups were nearly identical. So before we even began the search process, we were able to craft a 20-point document that described what we all agreed we were looking for.

If you fast-forward through the year-long internal and external search, the interview and screening of dozens of candidates, to the final board selection, the wisdom of our having arrived at this initial consensus shines through wonderfully. At the final stage, as our global staff fasted and prayed, the board unanimously chose Santiago "Jimmy" Mellado as Compassion's next president. And it was the final matching of that preliminary document to Jimmy, point by point, that gave us the blessed confirmation that he embodied virtually everything we had, several years earlier, described as our ideal new CEO — and he was even "more than we asked or imagined" (Eph.

3:20)! Further affirmation came through discovering how God had worked so incredibly in Jimmy and

his wife Leanne's lives to bring them to Compassion. With absolute assurance that God had led in our succession process, the actual passing of the baton, then, was a joyful, positive experience for the entire worldwide ministry.

### FOLLOW-THROUGH

Having successfully passed the baton, the spent runner then finds just enough strength to shout to his successor, "Go, go, go!" And in a runner's mind, the finish line is not the actual tape, but ten yards beyond it, to ensure he keeps giving his all *through* the finish. Follow-through is crucial.

Our new president's orientation, training and transition took six months. Midway through that period, I pledged to Jimmy:

1. I am completely committed to your success; I want you to thrive at Compassion, and I want Compassion to thrive under your leadership.
2. From this point forward, I will not reverse any decision you make.
3. I've got your back; I will never speak ill of you, and will not allow you to be unfairly criticized.
4. I will be transparent and always tell you the truth about anything.

It has been two years since that conversation. Jimmy says this follow-through phase gave him great courage and confidence. He is doing an outstanding job.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all formula for successful succession, except for, above all else, relying on God to guide. According to several scriptural examples, God cares about leadership transitions and involves himself in them. A well-passed baton honorably caps off the tenure of the departing leader, provides the new leader with a running start in a new chapter of leadership and gives the whole organization the joyful hope and confidence that its best days are yet to come! ●

*"All good athletes train hard ... for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades.*

*You're after one that's gold eternally.*

*I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line.*

*I'm giving it everything I've got."*

(1 Cor. 9:25–26, MSG)

**DR. WESS STAFFORD**, the author of *Too Small to Ignore* (WaterBrook, 2007) and *Just a Minute* (Moody Publishers, 2011), serves as president emeritus of Compassion International, the world's leading authority in holistic child development through sponsorship. To learn more, visit ([compassion.com](http://compassion.com)).



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