**A Vision Planning and Organizational Planning Process**

*If people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; but when they attend to what He reveals, they are most blessed. -* Proverbs 29:18 *The Message*

Vision discernment and organizational planning is nowhere to be found on most church’s radar. Most pastors and churches agree that vision and planning is important, but lack an understanding of what it looks like or have the discipline or know how to implement it. It is regretfully rare for churches to work together to see the future with clarity and excitement. To do so requires a blend of visionary and organizational planning skills and tools.

Vision planning requires the ability to zoom in and out of the future. Sometimes we need to focus on what we are going to do for the next 90 days or the next year, and sometimes we need to dream big about what God is calling us to do over the next 3, 5, or even 10 to 20 years.

Organizational planning on the other hand requires collaboration, getting all the different personalities, giftings, and ministries on the same page with a plan and a pathway for moving forward.

Vision planning is about the picture of your church’s future. Organizational planning is about the steps to get there. Vision planning answers the question, Where is God taking us? Organizational planning answers the questions, What are the next steps, How will we measure success, What are the time frames, and How will we hold ourselves accountable?

You can have vision planning without organizational planning and vice versa. It has been said that vision without execution is a daydream, and execution without vision is a nightmare. Effective churches have learned how to fuse vision planning and organizational planning. The biblical narrative suggests that God delights in both providing the way and delivering the strategy. A methodology for discerning both is necessary.

The following three step approach provides a vision and organizational based process for planning. Various books and consulting services can provide tools, templates, resources and methods to facilitate accomplishing each step in a customized, collaborative and contextualized manner.

If followed, these steps will insure that both visionary and organizational planning will be provided in a consistent and effective manner.

**Step 1: Long-Range Vision and Identity Planning** **(Every 5-10 Years)**

Long-Range Vision and Identity Planning involves first defining the church’s unique identity and culture. It includes clarifying mission, values, and core philosophy and strategy. Knowing who God has uniquely made us to be as a church allows us to more easily discern the church’s long term direction and create a vivid picture of where God is taking us, and unleashes its one-of-a-kind calling and potential.

Secondly, Long-Range Vision and Identity Planning involves finding and focusing on God’s preferred long term future for the church, capturing the dream for the church birthed first in the mind and heart of God.

To be clear, vivid and compelling vision cannot be communicated in a singular statement. Biblical vision is always stated in narrative form. To communicate effectively vision must be captured in a brief “bumper sticker” statement followed by a paragraph or two of word imagery describing the vision in aspirational, heart stirring, problem solving and God sized terms.

God inspired vision and identity is shared, so visionary and identity planning involves Senior Pastor engagement, key leader collaboration and broad church involvement, affirmation and ownership of final decisions.

**Step 2: Mid-Range Organizational Planning** **(Every 3-5 Years)**

Mid-Range Organizational Planning determines the top 4 most strategic focuses or emphases over the next 3-5 years in order to fulfil your Long-Term Vision. These “Big Rocks” or “Organizational Objectives” are likewise communicated through a “bumper sticker” statement followed by an amplified paragraph explaining it.

Renowned management guru, Peter Drucker once said, “There are no results without a concentration of resources.” Mid-Range Organizational Objectives provide a context for church wide prioritization, communication, goal setting, alignment and resource allocation. In this step each department and ministry area establish 3-5 year sub-goals for accomplishing each Organizational Objective.

**Step 3: Short-Range Organizational Planning** **(Every Year and Every 90 Days)**

Short-Range Organizational Planning emphasizes strategy execution and allows for the plan to be updated and revised through the input gained from annual planning and budgeting. Short-range planning includes specific and quantifiable one year priorities, initiatives, budgets and goals broken into 90 day action steps that support the Mid-Range Organizational Objectives.

Short-range initiatives are typically executed by cross departmental teams, ministry teams and individuals. All-Staff initiatives are those initiatives, goals or themes every department and ministry are expected to contribute towards.

**Example of a One Page Long, Mid and Short Range Vision and Organizational Plan**

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| **LONG RANGE 10 YEAR VISION** | | | |
| **Missional Minded Multiplication for the Purpose of Geographic Gospel Saturation:** In the next 10 years we will pursue a process for equipping every member to discern and deploy their gifts, passion and calling for the sake of bringing the gospel to people where they live, work, learn and play. Our emphasis will be on initiatives that saturate with the gospel the housing complexes, neighborhoods, businesses, schools, organizations and agencies that are within a 5 mile radius of the church. | | | |
| **MID-RANGE 3-5 YEAR ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES** | | | |
| **Community Ministry Expansion:** In the next 5 years we will triple the number of community ministry partners and hands on local ministry opportunities to reflect the passions of our members. | **Millennial Focus:** In the next 5 years we will become a church where 18-35 year olds, whether students or in the workforce and whether married or single, experience authentic relationships and encounter the love and message of Jesus. | **Leadership Pipeline Development:** In the next 5 years we will assist our members in taking the gospel to our community by launching the PLACE Process and by providing training in the Oikos Evangelism Strategy | **Professional Worker Engagement:** In the next 5 years we will launch missional communities and provide expanded opportunities for hands on ministry engagement with the downtown and mid-town professional worker. |
| **SHORT-RANGE 1 YEAR ORGANIZATONAL INITIATIVES** | | | |
| **Create Partnerships:** In the next year we will explore and establish two partnerships with like-minded non-profits and two partnerships with like- minded churches. | **Restructure and Realign:** In the next year we will establish a staffing model, core strategies in each area of ministry and an appropriate budget for reaching and discipling millennials. | **Launch the Oikos Evangelism Strategy:** In the next year we will teach the Oikos Strategy from the pulpit and in each Sunday School Class and design a communication plan for keeping the Oikos Strategy before the church. | **Establish Missional Communities:** In the next year we will train church members who work in the downtown and mid-town area to launch missional communities to pray for, serve and reach those they work with. |
| **SHORT-RANGE 90 DAY ORGANIZATIONAL ACTION STEPS** | | | |
| In the coming quarter we will:   1. Contact YFC Board President to discuss partnership possibilities 2. Contact First Pres Pastor to discuss partnership possibilities | In the coming quarter we will:   1. Start the hiring process for a Millennial Minister 2. Launch an off campus small group for recent college graduates | In the coming quarter we will:   1. Enlist Dr. Tom Wolf to lead a staff wide training in the Oikos Strategy 2. Hold a Saturday morning and a week night Oikos Strategy training session for all Sunday School Teachers | In the coming quarter we will:   1. Identify and compile contact information on every healthcare professional in the church 2. Identify and compile contact information on every attorney, law and government professional in the church |