**12 Agenda Planning Buckets for Church Staff Meetings**

I have always found it helpful to think in terms of “buckets” to unlock and stimulate my thinking. Considering potential buckets before engaging in brainstorming also ensures that I am thinking comprehensively and big picture about a subject, opportunity, decision, challenge or agenda.

Nowhere has “brain freeze” been more prevalent for me over the years than in developing an agenda for church staff meetings. I found thinking in terms of “critical core buckets” helped get me out of the starting blocks.

This approach won’t solve all of your church staff meeting challenges, nor can you possibly attempt an activity in each bucket in any given staff meeting. And, not all buckets are created equal. The point is that there are a diverse number of subjects that can be included in any given church staff meeting, and you must consider all of your options to achieve the right mix for a timely and impactful agenda.

Below are a list of 12 potential agenda planning buckets for your consideration. You may develop additional buckets or find it helpful to use different labels for your buckets. Bulleted beneath each bucket are several practical example activities to further illustrate the possibilities.

**Critical Core Buckets for Planning Church Staff Meetings**

**Bucket #1: Spiritual Activities:**

* Devotional
* Sharing around a question
* Practice a Spiritual Discipline together
* Take Communion
* Sing
* Prayer (individual, facilitated, triads, dyads, prayer walking, prayer stations, laying on of hands)

**Bucket #2: Strategic Planning Activities:**

* Global Strategic Planning (Example: Determine top 4-5 church objectives/emphases for a period of time)
* Tactical Planning (Example: What are the initiatives/strategies we are going to pursue to fulfill the above objectives?)
* Values Planning (Example: How will we build the value of “inviting?”)
* Goals and Metrics Planning (Example: What are our goals and measures for the above objectives?)
* Event or Opportunity Specific Planning (Example: Music Concert, VBS, Mission Project, etc.)
* People Group Planning: (Example: Youth, Singles, Families, Millennials, Professionals, College Students, etc.)
* Seasonal Planning (Example: Fall Kick-Off; Christmas, New Years, Easter, etc.)
* Planning and Aligning Around Themes and Emphases (Example: Sermon Series, Offerings, Stewardship, Budget, Vision, etc.)
* Planning around Core Strategies and Processes:

1. Evangelism and Outreach
2. Assimilation
3. Music and Worship
4. Discipleship
5. Membership (Member Care and Member Engagement)
6. Missions

**Bucket #3: Problem Solving/Decision Making Activities:**

* How are we going to address:

1. Space issues
2. Parking Issues
3. Security Issues
4. Communication issues
5. Increased giving
6. Schedule issues
7. Structure issues
8. Staff issues/peak loading
9. Process and Systems issues
10. Lack of leaders
11. Unwillingness to change
12. Apathy
13. Attendance
14. Engagement

**Bucket #4: How Are We All Going to Respond Activities:**

* To questions about………(the latest local or national event or issue)
* To questions about………(the latest church incident, recommendation or decision)
* To questions about………(an upcoming church event)
* To questions about Sunday School/Small Groups, how to get connected, etc.
* To concerns we are too big/too small of a church
* To first time guests we meet

**Bucket #5: Evaluating Activities:**

* Critiquing an event, program or special day or worship service
* Critiquing core processes (Guest Services, New Member Class, Moving People into Service, etc.)
* Analyzing key metrics/numbers/data
* Evaluating Ministries and Events
* Signage
* Common language; definitions for the terms we use
* Major Messages

**Bucket #6: Development Activities:**

* Staff wide training (Example: Critical Thinking, Prioritization, Delegation, Change Leadership, Time Management, Communication, Planning Skills, etc.)
* Read a book together and share take-a-ways
* Bring in a speaker on a topic
* Have staff share what they learned at a recent conference they attended or site visit they made

**Bucket #7: Team Building Activities:**

* Determine Staff Values
* Take Assessments and Share Staff Strengths, Gifts, Personalities
* Share individual journeys, biggest challenges, joys and hurts
* Share what you are reading and learning

**Bucket #8: Celebrating Activities:**

* Share life-change stories from each ministry
* Department, Ministry and Individual recognitions for jobs well done
* Sharing and Celebrating Mission, Vision, Values and Strategy “wins” and “victories”

**Bucket #9: Reporting Activities:**

* Looking back by ministry (here’s the key results from what happened the last few months)
* Here’s what is happening now (current “key” initiatives and/or priorities)
* Looking forward by ministry (here’s our key initiative and/or priorities for the next few months)

**Bucket #10: Calendar Planning Activities:**

* Calendar Reporting (in writing provided by ministry)
* Calendar Development (month by month listing)
* Calendar Vetting (using vetting criteria)
* Upcoming Sermon Series Preview

**Bucket #11: Policy and Procedure Review Activities:**

* Review/Update Administrative Processes and Procedures (Budget Planning, Calendar Request, Check Request, Communication Request, etc.)
* Review/Update Policies (Cell Phone, Reimbursements, Personnel, Background Checks, etc.)

**Bucket #12: Fun/Food/Service Activities:**

* What will we eat? Where will we eat?
* What will we do to let our hair down and have fun? (Assign by department)
* Community Service Project together