**Leadership Versus Management: What is the Difference?**

“Lead People, Manage Projects”

There are a myriad of books, articles, and blogs on leadership and management, all looking to clarify the differences, often in variety of ways.

Famed leadership and management guru, Peter Drucker, claims that “Leadership is doing the right things; Management is doing things right.” Mr. Drucker adds, “The task is to lead people. And the goal is to make productive the specific strengths and knowledge of every individual.”

Most churches use the nomenclature of leadership and management interchangeably, perhaps because the two functions overlap each other and there is not a clear line of demarcation. While the two are inexorably linked and complimentary to each other, in reality [leadership](http://coach4growth.com/leadership-skills/the-characteristics-of-a-leader-demonstrating-good-leadership-skills) versus management have very different meanings. The roles and definitions are complicated further because various leadership and management attributes are required to lead and manage a church successfully.

Perhaps there was a time when the calling of the manager and that of the leader could be separated. But in today’s churches people look to their managers, not just to assign projects and tasks, but to define for them a purpose and a vision. And managers must organize staff and volunteers, not just to maximize efficiency, but to nurture skills, deploy gifts and inspire Kingdom results.

In short, leadership and management must go hand in hand. To be a great manager you must understand what it takes to also be a great leader, and vice versa. In successful churches both leadership and management skills exist at every level of the organization.

The motive of the following descriptions is to clarify the different ways leadership and management express themselves in the local church and help the reader discover his or her natural inclinations.

**Leadership Versus Management in the Local Church**

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| **Great Leadership:** Focuses on engaging the diversity of people in the church and communicating that which is universal to the group in clear and compelling ways. |
| **Great Management:** Focuses on accomplishing pre-determined objectives through others by finding what is unique and distinctive in each person and bringing it to bear positively on the particular outcome the church needs from that person to fulfill its mission and vision. |

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| **Visionary Leadership:** Focuses on forward looking activities; trend watching; researching, discerning and describing a preferred future; casting vision; strategic planning; critical thinking and decision making; practicing “problem avoidance” and “law of unintended consequences” thinking |
| **Organizational Management:** Focuses on dealing with the present; putting out fires; implementing the vision; addressing problems; putting controls and systems into place; supervising staff and volunteers |

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| **Transformational Leadership:** Focuses on the theology, philosophy and methodology of the ministries of worship, discipleship, service, missions, evangelism, fellowship and stewardship; identifying, recruiting and developing staff and church leaders |
| **Transactional Management:** Focuses on transacting the “business” of the church; contracts, policies and procedures; stewardship campaigns; building programs; capital expenditures |

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| **Spiritual Leadership:** Focuses on prayer, spiritual disciplines, spiritual reading, preaching, teaching, pastoral care, pastoral counseling, coaching and mentoring |
| **Operational Management:** Focuses on the initiatives and needs of the support operations of the church, such as financials, HR, church records, software, hardware, IT, communications, food service, facilities maintenance, housekeeping and grounds |

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| **Gardener Leadership Metaphor:** Through prayer, relationships and discipleship prepares, tills and waters the soil and plants the seeds of faith, creating the environment where in cooperation with the Holy Spirit individual and organizational growth can occur; the spiritual guide of the church |
| **Guardian Management Metaphor:** Through calling, skill, giftedness, and hard work daily administrates the church and puts into place the people, controls, systems, processes and structures that creates health and protects the church |

Where do you fit in all of this?  Is leadership your calling, giftedness and focus, without wanting to take on the responsibilities of a manager; is management in your hardwired skill set; or are you committed to being a “leadager,” both a leader and a manager as your ministry career progresses?