

Tips for Setting Direction in Ministry

To set direction ministries will want to keep in mind The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. Here Jesus gives us the mission, the method, the means, and the promised miracle of his presence. But there's more to setting direction. They include establishing the following:

Core Values: A short list (3-7) of timeless items that identifies who you are as a ministry. They comprise the foundation of your "ministry's DNA." They serve as lenses through which to see and filters through which to receive information/input. They help with the decision-making process. They help create and sustain a culture of healthy accountability. Note the example of core values below:

- Love for God and His Word
- Unity in faith, hope, and mission
- Selfless service
- Christian education for all ages
- Sharing God's changeless Word in a changing world
- Excellence in all we do

Core Focus / Purpose: This captures WHY your ministry exists and about what you are most passionate. This should be short and to the point.

Ministry Strategy: This defines the groups of people whom you are striving to serve. The Ministry Strategy also defines a ministry's "Uniques" - the traits/characteristics that make your ministry stand out (what you are known for, what you excel at, what separates you from other similar ministries in your area, etc.).

Vision/Targets: These are the longer-range items that you envision and toward which you plan/work. Targets can range from specific/measurable to dreams/aspirations. Regardless of the type of targets they are, they will force action in the shorter term to move forward. The Lord will bless and redirect as He chooses.

Two or Three-year Picture: These are steps that "feed up" to your Vision/Targets. It's the idea, "If we would like to be 'here' in six years, where do we want to be in three years?"

One-year Goals: These steps "feed up" to 2 or 3-Year Picture and Vision/Targets. There may be shorter term strategic initiatives that need to be completed within one year; therefore, these items won't "feed up" to longer term items. One-year goals need to be specific, measurable, and attainable.

90-day Rocks: "Rocks" are 90-Day action items that "get you moving" toward your longer-term vision. "Rocks" are specific, measurable, and attainable. Rocks need an owner who may enlist others to help achieve the Rock in 90 days. This provides accountability.

With these seven components a ministry will have clear identity and clear direction! They will also move forward in ministry and be good stewards of their God given gifts!