

Making It Happen

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WHEN YOU FIRST OPENED the REAL Training Guide, more than likely you were looking for the “how tos” of making the ministry you lead run more efficiently and become more effective. But instead, you found that you were being asked to slow down, step back and engage in the prayerful study and consideration of your call to be a leader in ministry. We hope that as you have studied the material, engaged in conversations with other leaders and possibly pursued more in the areas that you have a particular interest or concern, that you are seeing your role in God’s purposes in your church and the world with a new enthusiasm and energy.

By now, you should begin to see the various parts of the training intersecting in practical ways as you lead in ministry. To complete this portion of the training guide, you will now find tools to be used in areas of ministry that you should find to be essential. Oftentimes in our enthusiasm to bring a ministry to life, we move ahead without taking the time and energy necessary for **writing a mission statement, strategic planning, communicating and marketing**. When these ministry components are used together, our ministries are given shape and direction to what we are called to do.

The resources that will be suggested in this chapter are a very small sample of what might be possible for you to use in bringing your ministry to life.

What's Your Mission?

Too often, ministries move ahead blindly with a vague sense of whom God has called them to be, and therefore, what they should be doing. **Taking the time to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider God's unique call and purposes will serve to provide the foundation from which all ministry flows.** When you are leading a ministry within your church, it is essential that there be a mission statement for women's ministries that reflects God's call and purposes for your church – and not one that is in opposition or tangent to the mission of the church. A mission statement provides guidance at times when we can't see clearly where we are going.

So how do you explain your mission? The mission statement of your ministry should clearly state what God has called you to. The less complicated the statement, the better. Whoever reads the mission statement will know they are reading the values of your ministry in action.

In writing your mission statement, consider these points in your statement:

- Describes the reason for the existence of your ministry - succinctly
- Expresses Biblical principles
- Communicates to whom you want to minister
- Suggests how you intend to do it
- Provides a motto or slogan that is easily remembered (some would recommend that it be able to pass the "t-shirt" test – will it fit easily on the back of a t-shirt?)

Consider the following mission statements from EPC churches. Observe how most, if not all, of the above mentioned points have been applied. As an exercise in creating a mission statement, dissect the statement as to how each could be improved, if necessary.

Embracing and serving women in the name of Jesus Christ

Greenwood Community Church, Greenwood Village, CO

Uniting Women in Christ and His Work

Knox Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor, MI

Ministry by Women exists to meet the diverse needs of today's women through encouragement, prayer, guidance, Bible study and fellowship.

Cherry Hills Community Church, Highlands Ranch, CO

Come...Grow...Serve

Grace EPC, Lawrence, KS

EPC Women In Ministry serves local churches by developing women as servant leaders for the equipping of God's church and the enlarging of His kingdom.

Serve. Lead. Glorify.

EPC Women In Ministry Mission Statement

See worksheet "Stating the Mission" to be used in drafting a ministry mission statement at the end of this chapter.

Being Strategic in Planning

What is strategic planning?

The "planning" is just as important as the final result, perhaps even more so. The "plan" flows out of the work that has been done in listening to God and understanding His purposes – seeing where He is already moving in ministry and how we will be a part of it. The "planning process" is the means by which leadership stays dynamically connected to God as He participates in working through us to bring about the ministry.

Strategic planning is an effective tool that allows you as a leader to include the creativity, experience, varied perspective and intellect from your team in order to bring forward the best ideas that will align with the mission. The key component for any strategic planning session is that it enables the team to visually conceptualize the key issues and allows them to focus on those factors that are critical to accomplishing the mission.

Strategic planning is the design by which the vision becomes a reality. To achieve the strategy, it is necessary to complete the homework.

The homework is the important “behind the scenes” effort that nobody recognizes unless it isn’t completed. If it isn’t done, it will be evident in the effectiveness of the plan.

One of the most important aspects for the leader in the strategic planning process is that she must be able to express the vision and hold to it firmly and without apology. The leader expresses confidence and enthusiasm that the vision can be accomplished. People will never take the first step to achieve a vision they don’t believe is achievable.

Consider these key principles to remember in developing a strategic plan:

- A strategy is only a real strategy when it is written down. Until then it is just a fantasy.
- A strategy begins with a clearly stated goal. The key is that the goal is written so it is measurable and achievable. Goals are vehicles to make the vision come true.
- Define the purpose. Why are you doing this? (Women’s Ministries are famous for continuing to do the same things because “they’ve always been done that way”).
- The strategy must be clearly explained and comprehensive.
- Keep it simple. (The more complicated the strategy, the less likely it will be achieved.)
- There must be a strict and realistic time line.
- Always be willing to ask the question: What price are you willing to pay to achieve the strategy?

See worksheet “From Vision to Reality: Strategic Planning” to guide your strategic planning at the end of this chapter.

Adapted from article by James W. Moss, Sr. and Church Consultants, People Spots Online, November 26, 2001. Volume 4, Issue 13. For additional resources, go to: www.NewLifeMinistries-NLM.org.

Marketing the Ministry/Program

How many times have ministries/programs collapsed simply because it was not marketed to the target audience in an effective manner? One of the continuing challenges for leaders is to recognize that when you have been

immersed in strategic planning and have spent hours in communicating with your team – it does not mean that those who have not been closely connected will understand, appreciate and support what you are putting forward. This is a challenge for every church no matter what the size.

Marketing studies have shown that a person needs to hear or read about a product or event a minimum of **7 times** before they are able to communicate it to someone else. For the purposes here, we will refer to “ministry/programs”. We also know that individuals hear and perceive information in various forms which means that any marketing and communicating needs to be done in various modes. Church newsletters and Sunday programs are the initial marketing tool – it cannot be your only or final one.

Consideration must always be given to the demographics of your target audience or group. Fifteen years ago, computers were just beginning to arrive in many of our homes. Women used to respond quickly to e-mails. The social media tools of facebook and twitter have quickly become the norm of communication.

These may be new areas for you to learn and you may be uncomfortable with the learning curve. But to communicate effectively you will find that you need to be willing to learn to use them. Not that this means that you have to be the one learning each new communication tool – you can recruit a woman in that age group who uses it regularly and bring her on your team and give her the responsibility of creating the communication means that will be most effective in that age group.

Financial resources will determine what you will be able to use in marketing your ministry/programs. In EPC Women In Ministry, we have faced the challenge of communicating effectively with leaders to know what is available to support them in their place of ministry. When “The Well” was created five years ago, the cost of production and postage to mail 650 copies of an eight page newsletter was \$3500.00 for each issue. What was found that while much time and effort was used in producing this marketing and communication tool, many of the issues were not being received by the current leaders. Knowing that the majority of women leaders had access to email and used it regularly, we explored creating an online newsletter. We discovered that we could subscribe to an email marketing company (Constant Contact) for a cost of \$435.00 per

year. The savings were over \$10,000.00 a year. Using this means of marketing, e-newsletters can be sent as needed and email addresses and reports are managed by the company. The email contact list has increased from 540 to more than 3,000. So, we saved money and increased our contacts! (And we know there are hundreds of women leaders who we still need to contact.)

But even that means of communication was short lived as we recognized the need to have an effective website to communicate with leaders. Thanks to “Cloversites”, Women In Ministry was able to quickly develop a new website that served our purposes. As Cloversites continues to develop what they are able to make available, the website becomes an essential tool for Women In Ministry.

The website can be found at <http://www.epcwomeninministry.org>

Recognizing that we needed a quick way to put forward resources, events and news...and recognizing the overwhelming use of Facebook by women leaders, we launched a Facebook page. Listening to women leaders and their use of time, we are committed to anything posted on that page as a resource that we believe will enhance the ministry of women leaders. **You may “like” us on Facebook at “EPC Network.”**

No matter what means you choose to use in your place of ministry, it is essential that you understand both the need and frequency or various forms of marketing and communicating with your target groups.

See worksheet, “Marketing the Ministry/Program” at the end of this chapter.

Who Me...A Speaker?

The final resource to be provided in this chapter is a brief outline on how to prepare a talk to be given in public. As a leader, the opportunities to speak about what God is doing through the ministry – to speak from a passage of Scripture – to encourage those you lead in the work – will be available. The more you speak, the more practice you have, the more effective you will be, and then, the more you will be invited to speak.

I have yet to meet a leader who is not hesitant or who does not feel ill-equipped to have the responsibility of communicating publicly. On a few occasions, when I have heard a leader speak, I would agree that it is

not her strength. But more often, I have found women that when given both the opportunity to speak and guidance on how to organize the material they were communicating – they discovered a new avenue of ministry that both challenged and ignited them.

At the end of this chapter, you will find a very brief outline on what is needed to frame an effective talk. If this is an area that excites you and you are finding your ability to communicate being affirmed by those you serve, I would encourage you to explore avenues to develop your ability. I would recommend that you explore the possibility of attending the “She Speaks” Conference sponsored by Proverbs 31 Ministries that is offered annually. To learn more about this opportunity and resource, go to <http://shespeaksconference.blogspot.com/>

See worksheet, “Who Me...a Speaker?” for suggested simple framework for speaking publicly at the end of this chapter.

Get to Know the Writer

Jacky Gatliff grew up in Richmond, Virginia and is a graduate of the University of Virginia. She is a graduate of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary where she met her husband, Mike. The Gatliffs have served churches in Charlotte, NC, Peterborough, NH, Hamilton, MA, Northville, MI and currently, Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis, TN. Jacky has had a wide range of ministry opportunities and experiences including director of a crisis pregnancy center, Christian education, youth ministries, hospice chaplaincy and grief support education. Jacky has served as Director of EPC Women In Ministry since April 2005. Jacky and Mike are the parents of McCauley, a graduate of Belmont University in Nashville, and Cort, who is attending UT.

Stating the Mission

1. Describe the reason for the existence of your ministry – in 30 words or less.

2. State the Biblical principles that are essential to your ministry – in 30 words or less.

3. Who is your target audience for ministry? (In 30 words or less)

4. The ministry will be accomplished by: (In 30 words or less)

**5. An easily remembered slogan that will communicate this mission is:
(Try to create a statement in 12 words or less. Remember: Does it pass the t-shirt test?)**

From Vision to Reality: Strategic Planning

The following categories and questions may be used to enable you and your team to think through the various aspects of planning necessary to make your ministry/program a reality.

Direction/Vision

Purpose: Why do we exist? What is the purpose of the ministry?

Mission: What will we do for whom? How does it serve the greater mission of our church?

Values: What is important to us as we pursue this work?

Vision: Where are we going? What will it look like when we get there?

If God would answer our prayers for this ministry, what would it look like? How would our ministry look different? How would our church look different?

Resources

What resources are necessary for the first few steps?

What do we have?

What do we need?

Where can we get what is necessary?

Who do we know with knowledge, expertise, passion, experience?

Major Steps

What are the strategies, programs or events that will get us where we want to go?

What is it that must happen for us to move toward the vision?

How will we allocate our resources to best accomplish our mission?

Releasing Resources: Stewardship Efficiency

Who will be responsible?

What is the anticipated outcome?

Was Christ proclaimed?

Were lives transformed?

How will we measure it?

What is necessary? (tools: money, people, material)

When do we expect this outcome?

Learning and Evaluating

To continually improve, we must become students of our own effectiveness. See what works and evaluate it and making changes as need. To truly learn from our choices requires a ministry environment that allows for honest appraisal of performance and open dialogue about choices.

Marketing The Ministry/Program

Ministry/Program (Title):

Purpose: (briefly stated)

Target Group:

Planning:

How is the ministry positioned within the church's vision and purpose?

Available resources:

Staff:

Volunteers:

Financial:

Logistics:

Speaker:

Worship Leader, if needed:

Schedule:

Prayer Team:

Special Concerns:

Communications/Public Relations

Venues for communicating: newsletter, emails, website, Facebook

Promotion & Collateral Material to be used

Brochures, signage, folders

Church Promotion

Website, newsletter, weekly bulletin, e-mail

Status/Timeline

Consideration given for other church events, time necessary to promote ministry/event

Financial Considerations:

Cost of collateral material: signs, brochures, programs, notebooks, etc.

Special Concerns

Who Me...A Speaker?

Preparing A Talk

As a leader, the opportunities to speak publicly about what God is doing through the ministry – to speak from a passage of Scripture – to encourage those you lead in the work – will be available. The more you speak, the more practice you have, the more effective you will be, and then, the more you will be invited to speak.

Rule #1: Always remember that God desires for you to be a means of communicating His truth and character to your listening audience – no matter what the topic. While communicating, you are never on your own!

Rule #2: Do not begin any public speaking/talk by revealing that you are uncomfortable in the role and/or that you do not do this regularly. By doing so, you immediately lose a part of your audience as they will be listening for your “mess ups” rather than your content. Speak confidently and with a sense of assuredness.

I. Connect with the audience through personal story.

Women want to know who you are and find a way to relate to you and your experiences.

II. What is the spiritual issue being addressed today?

State what this means to all of us.

III. What does God have to say about the issue?

What do I want my audience to walk away with?
Clearly know what your aim is.

IV. Where do I draw a personal application?

V. What are we going to do about it?

Remember, whenever you speak publicly, know:

- 1. Know where you are going in your talk and the pieces will fall into place.**
- 2. Know what you want your audience to walk away with.**

The Speaking Format:

Me- Us Connection

Spiritual Issue

What God says

ME (application)

US (application)

Adapted from **Communicating for Change: Seven Keys to Irresistible Communication** by Andy Stanley and Lane Jones, 2006. Excellent resource to use with leaders in learning to be effective communicators.

Further Resources

Please note the more extensive reading list for ministry leaders found in the Appendix. As new books are published or others are recommended, they will be promoted through the online newsletter on the EPC Women In Ministry website: <http://www.epcwomeninministry.org>.

Highly Recommended:

Communicating for Change: Seven Keys to Irresistible Communcation

by Andy Stanley and Lane Jones

Shepherding a Women's Heart: A New Model for Effective Ministry

by Beverly Hislop

Visioneering: God's Blueprint for Developing and Maintaining

Vision by Andy Stanley

Proverbs 31 Ministries Speakers' Conference:

<http://shespeaksconference.blogspot.com/>