

LE3A-Post-Course Assignment

Leadership Development Plan

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DML813: Selecting and Developing Leaders

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Introduction

Leadership is essential in any local church. In a rapidly changing world, the need for Christlikeness and influential leaders in the Church is more important than ever. However, developing leaders in the church is not always easy. I thank God that I had the privilege to participate in this cohort. I am also very grateful for Dr. Martin Sanders and the guest speakers who encouraged and inspired me through the process.

This paper will explore the important principles of church leadership development and provide practical plans for my personal leadership development and the developing of other leaders. I will focus on developing lay caregivers, which is a practical plan that will help our church's growth.

Philosophy of Leadership Development

Why is leadership development So Important?

“Without wise leadership, a nation falls; there is safety in having many advisers.”¹ Everything rises and falls on leadership. Leadership is not a title or position; it is the influence to change someone.

God used leaders throughout redemptive history. He used Noah's shipbuilding rescue mission, Abraham's journey of faith that birthed a nation, Joseph's painful rise to the parliament of Egypt, Moses's effort to bring out God's people from slavery, and Joshua's continuation of the incomplete mission to lead them to the promised land.

Leadership development is the key to ministry development and fulfilling the Great Commission. If the church invests in leadership development, the outcome is that the church will have an opportunity for reproduction and multiplication. If the church does not invest in leadership development, the pastors

¹ Proverbs 11:14, NLT.

will be easily frustrated and burn out because not enough lay leaders can support them to lead the church ministry and care for people.

In our Doctor of Ministry class, Rev. Edmund Chan led us to discuss this question, “Why Is Leadership Development So Important?” We had two groups discuss the question and make conclusions. One group reported, “If we don’t do it, we are going to lose the next generation, and we can’t continue the mission.” Another group reported, “Leadership development is related to expanding the kingdom.” When Rev. Edmund Chan responded, he articulated the significant perspective that the “future of the church depends on it” and “The church should develop godly leaders, not natural leaders.”

Leadership is more about people; leaders work with God and work with people to accomplish the vision. People would rather be called “Church Leaders,” “Ministry Leaders,” and “Mission Leaders,” but no one likes to be called “Church Manager” or “Ministry Manager.” Warren Bennis explains the profound difference between management and leadership. He states, “To manage means to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct. Leading is influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, opinion.”² He continues, “Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing.”³ The manager focuses on systems and structure; the Leader focuses on people. The manager relies on control; the Leader inspires trust. The manager maintains; the Leader develops.⁴

Managers focus on efficiency. Leaders focus on effectiveness. Managers solve today’s problems by fixing the difficulties caused by changing events. Leaders create a better future by seizing opportunities stimulated by changing events. Managers make sure that people put in an honest day’s work for their pay. Leaders inspire people to do more than expected. Managers worry about the present. Leaders look forward to the future.⁵

Therefore, the world desperately needs to develop leaders, not managers. The church’s future ministry depends on leadership development and focuses on people.

² Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997),20.

³ Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus,20.

⁴ Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1989),45.

⁵ Phillip V. Lewis, *Transformational Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broacinan and Holman Publishers, 1996), 8.

Why Is Your Ministry So Difficult?

People in our Yale community live complex lives: some easily lose jobs, move out of town, or relocate to other states if they find high-income jobs. Some people who come to New Haven, Connecticut, may have a short stay of a half year or one year, and even if they have the heart to serve, their time is so limited. But leadership development is an ongoing process. Some people have lost family members during the pandemic, and they are grieving and need time to take a break. Some people need to spend more time caring for their family members for various reasons. These changes profoundly affect our community and how we lead our ministry.

In our ministry, the people usually have busy schedules on the weekend, and there are more distractions than ever before that draw people away from the church. They travel more, entertain more, and schedule more.

People are afraid of criticism and conflict. Most of the lay or full-time leaders in our church fear criticism. The point is clear: “No matter what your gifts and style may be, no matter how much you pour your heart into people, and no matter how much time you devote to your ministry, you’ll face criticism.”⁶ Another reason for their fear is conflict: when people gather, there is a chance of conflict, and the church is no exception. Becoming a church leader means one needs to deal with complex disputes.

People lack commitment and trust. At our church, some people attend more than one service regularly. Sometimes they are like "rabbit members": This weekend, they join this church service and another weekend, they join that church’s service. During the pandemic, some people still joined online services, but we rarely saw them participate in person. Or people worship by tuning in to their favorite pastor on television or watching online. Maintaining social distance for a long time without seeing others can cause relationship distance; people lack trust in each other and lack commitment to the ministry.

⁶ Samuel R. Chand, *Leadership Pain* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2015),39.

People avoid leadership pain. Leadership means pain. Pain is a part of progress. People watch most of the church leaders and see that they are cut, bleeding, and sore. As Dr. Chad explained, "If you are not hurting, you are not leading." Passion literally means "pain." Therefore, at our church, I saw some people who did have a passion for loving people accept the invitation to join the ministry as lay leaders, but when they were hurt by someone, they chose to quit. A. W Tozer describes that in one of his most famous books. He wrote, "It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply."⁷ I hope the hurt people can hear these words.

People feel that leadership is a burden. Many of our people believe that if you accept being a lay leader, you should take on extra responsibility and expend extra energy, and time. You will lose your family and personal relaxation time, which is a burden.

What Are the Fundamental Principles of Leadership Development?

Jesus's pattern of leadership development is that he seemed to spend around three-quarters of His ministry time making other ministers rather than doing the ministry Himself. He spent time with the Twelve, living together, working together, ministering together, leading together, and traveling together, and then He sent them out to the mission fields.

Carl F. George points out, "Our field observations indicate that 90 to 95 percent of pastors begin their ministry primarily as solo caregivers."⁸ Some pastors try to be the major care providers for the entire church, instead of inviting other people and training them to be caregivers. And eventually, they become extremely busy and frustrated. They try to do everything to get more attention. In other words, they are saying, "Watch me do ministry." Solo caregivers became solo performers, and individualist pastors tend to see the church as themselves. Carl F. George emphasizes, "The solo caregiver mentality is usually a fundamental obstacle to most church growth and health."⁹

⁷ A.W. Tozer, *The Root of the Righteous* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publication, 1955), 47, quoted in Chand, 124.

⁸ Carl F. Georg, and Warren Bird, *How to Break Growth Barriers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 100.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

Jesus knew the secret; he was explicit about his desire to equip his followers to be caregivers and shepherds. "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" (Jn 14:12). Jesus let his followers know that he was empowering them so they would do greater things than he did. He sent them to care for more people, reach more groups, and make more caregivers. It is not just about our personal growth; it is not just about growing our church—it is about the kingdom. Dave Ferguson explains the secret: "When we invest in helping as many people as possible, identify their unique calling, and release them to pour into others, [we] exponentially increase [our] impact."

There is a Chinese proverb, "Many hands make light work." So, leadership development should empower more gifted people to be caregivers and to be leaders. Edmund Chan states, "The Capacity of leadership is the Team; Leadership is not a one-man show."¹⁰

Transformative leadership. Leadership development is about life-change; this is its primary goal and fundamental principle. Church leaders are eager for more people to come to church, more people to participate in the ministry; and more people be developed to serve. But God's ultimate purpose is a life change for people; that people become more Christlike. Edmund Chan states that Transformation is God's goal: "Our God is a God of multiplication, but he is not just a God of multiplication, He is also a God of transformation. Transformation must precede multiplication."¹¹

Leading through team resonance. Edmund Chan points out that "selection is the key," and he provides five criteria for recruitment: "1. Calling, 2. Character, 3. Competence, 4. Chemistry 5. Capacity."¹² Paul also knew the secret. He instructed Timothy to "entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."¹³ The church should select reliable people and entrust the caregiver role to them.

In "Five Core Competencies of Leadership", Edmund Chan emphasizes that the first competency is "**Visioneering**, the concern of leadership in the future." A leader must have a strategic vision that is

¹⁰ Edmund Chan, *Mentoring Paradigms* (Oklahoma City: Lifestyle Impact Ministries, 2008), 92-93.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹² Chan, *Mentoring Paradigms*, 100-102.

¹³ 2 Timothy 2:2.

oriented towards the future. He explains the leader should be "capturing the vision, what God is saying in the light; casting the vision, which means how to communicate it; concretizing the vision, working out practically; commissioning the vision, and creating ownership of the vision."¹⁴

A study of ninety of America's most effective leaders has revealed that they have four major strategies or ways of leading in common:

- (1) They attract the attention of followers through their vision of what is possible, which gives purpose and inspires action.
- (2) They communicate their vision by using images and actions that give their followers a framework of meaning and thereby trigger enthusiasm and commitment to the vision.
- (3) They win the trust of their followers by positioning, i. e., by constantly modeling a set of actions that demonstrate the vision and show what it looks like.
- (4) They have a positive self-regard and confidence because they know their own strengths and weaknesses, and they concentrate on developing their strengths while making wise compensations for their weaknesses.¹⁵

Therefore, leadership development is vision-driven, and focuses on how to communicate the vision so people will be attracted and follow it.

Current Leadership Development Practices

What Needs to Change about My Current Practice and Why?

More focus on People, not just Tasks. Since I came to this ministry, serving in the New Haven Chinese Alliance Church. I have often thought about the Tasks, how to develop the ministry in our community, how to plant new small groups at our church, how to build a strong prayer team, and how to encourage people to share the gospel with our neighbors. Every year, the church must prepare its annual report. We need to accomplish our goals: to get more people to come to church, more people to be baptized, and more people to come to faith. My dream is that people attend church every week or at least twice a month, and my hope is that more people be equipped to serve the Lord in the workplace and more people be sent out to serve the Lord. But it is easy to neglect the people and their needs. We put the Task

¹⁴ Chan, *Mentoring Paradigms*, 92.

¹⁵ Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 24-25.

before the people. The reality is that when we push people to do this to do that, they don't care about the Task. People care about whether anyone cares about them. Leaders can create a more engaged, productive, and healthy workforce by focusing on people rather than just tasks. This is an important aspect of effective leadership. When prioritizing people, we can build stronger connections, establish trust, and create a warm community. Putting more focus on people, loving them, caring for them, and listening to them also can build a deep personal relationship.

Deny myself. When we discussed the question “Why is leadership development in so neglected?” in our cohort group, we unanimously agreed that leaders must deny themselves. We are all ego, and have sinful natures and great ambitious; in other words, we fear that other people are greater than we are, especially that some people we supervise are more gifted than we are. When Jesus says, “They will do even greater things than these,” that means he is allowing people to do greater things than he did. This is a good example of denying oneself. For my pattern when I do things is that I want to make myself look and feel important. So, I need to change this mindset to come to the cross and deny myself. John Maxwell wrote in *The Five Levels of Leadership*,

Good leadership is about leading with others, not just leading others. It requires collaboration. It requires inclusion. It requires sacrifice of selfish personal ambition for the sake of the team and the vision of the organization. It means being part of something greater than yourself. It means putting others ahead of yourself and being willing to go only as fast as the people you lead.¹⁶

Planning for pain. Pain is usually not included in our plans. I hope to have a better children's ministry and better sermons; I hope everything goes well. But growth always involves pain and facing challenges. People may quit the ministry and stop coming to church, and great expectations become great disappointments. I cannot change that, but I can change my attitude to embrace the pain, because God takes us through pain to purify our hearts and deepen our dependence on him. It keeps us humble and moves us to pray.

Seek His vision, plan for it. Leadership is all about vision, following the vision, and planning strategies for the vision. I do have some dreams and blueprints for my ministry, but I need to seek God and

¹⁶ John C. Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership* (New York: Center Street 2021). 76, Kindle Edition.

reconfirm whether these are just my ambitious or whether they are His vision. I must have a detailed plan for the process to get to the goal.

Build teams; do not be a solo caregiver. I like to visit people in the hospital, pray for the sick, give rides to the needy, and try my best to serve the people around me, but for many years I have still been just the primary caregiver of the church, like being a solo caregiver. I must change that to develop a team, invite more people to be caregivers, provide chances to them to serve, and organize the team to make it more effective.

Personal Leadership development plan for me

According to John Maxwell, “The only way to improve an organization is to grow and improve the leaders. If you want to make an impact, start with yourself.”¹⁷ The following is my personal plan for the next three to five years.

Abiding in Him. “Apart from me you can do nothing,” Jesus said. I must remain in the vine so that I can bear fruit. I need always come to the cross and the true vine and let the Lord cleanse my heart and break my personal idols, like success and accomplishments. I must abide in Him to overcome my pride and my desire to be self-sufficient, rather than relying on His grace and power. Overcome the temptations that try to find security and comfort in position or the approval of others, our identity is a child of God. Every morning, I plan to have a thirty-minute personal devotion, read through the Bible, pray, and reflect.

Conduct a self-assessment. I must take time to reflect on my current strengths and weaknesses as a leader. I must find some good assessment tool to evaluate myself and our church, like “Know

¹⁷ Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership*, 44.

Yourself assessment tool”¹⁸ and “SWOT Analysis. The SWOT analysis information gathered from church leadership can be used to assess and develop ways to better serve my community.¹⁹”

Learning to grow. I must develop a reading list to gain new insights and perspectives on leadership. I will read through the additional recommended books list on DML813 syllabus, like John Maxwell’s leadership books and Warren Bird’s book. Every two months I will read one book; in three years I will finish eighteen books, in five years, thirty books.

Learning from wise men. I will surround myself with other leaders who can support and challenge me in my personal leadership development. I plan to join our Connecticut Chinese churches pastors’ prayer meetings every month to share with them my personal struggles and challenges. I will open my heart to hear the church leaders’ comments and encouragements.

Learning from conferences. I will attend conferences, workshops, or training sessions, as well as seeking mentorship or coaching from experienced leaders. I will plan to join the Exponential Conference in Orlando, Florida, next year and join The Alliance Center for Leadership Development workshops in our Alliance New England district. And to listen to the online Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. I will also continue to connect with my mentor pastor Doug Dry. Keeping this mentoring relationship will benefit my personal leadership development.

Shift from position to potential. I thank God and people for allowing me to continue to serve in this position. I will change my focus and think about my leadership potential. What kind of leader do I have the potential to become? What kind of positive effect can I have on the people? What kind of impact can I make in our community and beyond? After the pandemic, I do have more potential to reach out to the people in New Haven, Connecticut, and build relationships with our international workers. When I change my focus to abiding in Him, I will have good potential to be a transformative leader and impact our community.

¹⁸ <https://churchanswers.com/solutions/tools/knowyourself/>.

¹⁹ The SWOT Analysis will be used to identify the key internal strengths and weakness, as well as the external opportunities and threats, that will shape our strategic planning for the next three to five years.

Relationship and authority. Authority comes from relationships, from a relationship with God and from relationships with people. John Stott said, “The authority by which the Christian Leader leads is not power but love, not force but example, not coercion but reasoned persuasion. Leaders have power, but power is safe only in the hands of those who humble themselves to serve.”²⁰ I plan to invite people to have dinner every month, intentionally focusing on our lay leaders, caring about them, and pray for their needs. I believe it will be different when I intentionally build these strong relationships. In Chinese culture, building trust depends on relationships; more relationships means more influence. I will regularly review my progress towards the goals and adjust my development plan as needed. This will help ensure that I stay on track and continue to grow as a leader over the next three to five years.

Plan for Developing Other Leaders

Developing Goals

For this leadership development plan, I will conduct a Skill-Acquisition Approach. I dream that our church can raise more lay leader caregivers. We can break church growth barriers if we have more lay leader shepherds. This development plan goal is to train and equip the lay people to have servants’ hearts and the willingness to care for our church members and visit new friends in our community. After being trained in this approach, they can provide adequate care for people with empathy, good listening skills, vital praying skills, encouragement, and relational skills. They will be able to visit people in need, to be bridges to connect the church and the community, and to love the people in the church, especially those who have not attended the services.

Discovering Potential Leaders

²⁰ Chand, *Leadership Pain*, 176.

First, a leader should be an active church member and a fully devoted follower. When considering a leader, they will demonstrate faithful attendance, small group participation, weekly ministry service, missional involvement, and financial giving.

Second, Potential Leaders must be members for at least one year before they qualify for any position of leadership. As Paul emphasizes that the Overseer and Deacon "must not be a recent convert," so the church cannot allow people to move into leadership until they have been members long enough; this includes small group leaders, caregivers, and worship leaders. Furthermore, Paul states that a person in a leadership position "must have a good reputation with outsiders."²¹ We should pay attention to the people who participate in worship services, volunteer for ministry opportunities, and interact with others in the congregation, for potential leaders must demonstrate they have serving hearts and willingness.

Third, there should be a leader interview. A typical leader interview lasts sixty to ninety minutes. The goal of the interview is to help the leadership candidates to identify their gifts, passions, experiences, and skills.

The Group Mentoring Model and the Unique Individual Model

In my plan, I will use the Group Mentoring Model, which operates like Jesus' development of the twelve disciples. I will work on primary spiritual development and skill acquisition. In this group, the lay leaders can interact with each other, experience friendships, and develop more Christlikeness.

Meanwhile, I will plan to use the Unique Individual model that follows Jesus's interaction with Peter to help one or two people in their unique needs.

Build the relationship. I will take time to get to know the potential lay leaders, to listen to their stories, ask them about their interests, struggles, and challenges. I will create a spiritual environment to let our potential lay leaders build relationships with each other.

Create a Caregiving Development Program.

²¹ 1 Timothy 3:7.

Attract them with vision. Our vision is to care for one another, reaching out to the community with the love of Christ, so we will love our neighbors as ourselves and practice the great commandment. I will use the Specific invitation approach to invite those people who have the spiritual gifts and natural abilities that are necessary to be effective caregivers.

Training Program and Resources

How to Be a People Helper by Gary R. Collins. There are twelve sessions with growth exercises and group interaction to be used with each chapter. This material emphasizes lay counseling.

A Pastor in Every Pew: Equipping Laity for Pastoral Care by Leroy Howe. This book includes twenty chapters of information on developing specific lay ministries; the last ten chapter is in the form of a training manual for equipping lay shepherds.

The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care by Howard W. Stone. This book is briefer, featuring eight training sessions. The book also includes “A Service for Commissioning Lay Pastoral Cares” in the appendix.

Stephen Ministries provides training and resources to strengthen and expand lay ministry in congregations.

Timelines

5/1/2023-9/1/2023 *How to be People Helper* (Twelve sessions, every Friday evening training, skip holidays)

1/1/2024-6/1/2024 *A Pastor in Every Pew: Equipping Laity for Pastoral Care* (Twenty sessions, every Friday evening training, skip holidays)

7/1/2024-12/1/2024 *Stephen Ministries: Journeying Through Grief* (Every Friday evening training, skip holidays)

Book 1: A Time to Grieve . . . sent 3 weeks after the loss. Book 2: Experiencing Grief . . . sent 3 months after the loss. Book 3: Finding Hope and Healing . . . sent 6 months after the loss. Book 4: Rebuilding and Remembering . . . sent 11 months after the loss.

6/1/2025-9/1/2025 *The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care* (Eight sessions, every week training, skip holidays)

Potential Obstacles and Possible Solutions

One obstacle is Lay Caregiver Burnout. Some lay people may spend a lot of time in this ministry. They may fail in a negative way. Caregivers need support systems to maintain their energy and focus on ministry. The pastor needs to provide encouragement and help lay caregivers. Other obstacles might be confidentiality: people don't like to hear gossip about themselves. So it is good to have the lay Leaders commit to confidentiality. Let them know the restrictions of state and local governments regarding the use of laypeople in counseling.

Outcome and Celebrate Success

Celebrate success: Trained lay leaders get the skills to impact the community and love and care for the people.

Visitation: Laypeople who can visit the members and friends of the church provide regular pastoral care and caring through small groups.

Hospital care: Laypeople have a wonderful opportunity to provide before-surgery and after-surgery pastoral care.

End-of-life comfort: The lay leaders can start a small group specifically designed to help those who are going through grieving. So lay caregivers can also play this important role in supporting the pastor.

Counseling: The lay leaders can lead the counselee to share the important details of their problems and pray for them.

Community Care: The lay leaders can visit new friends, immigrants, and students. They can provide logistic services to help them find a place to live and their children's school.

This plan will have good potential for developing lay caregivers.