

Efficient Strategic Planning for Ministry Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT. The lack of an efficient strategic plan hinders ministries in reaching the greatest level of ministry effectiveness. By following through with the specified strategic plan the programs of an organization will reach greater levels of ministry effectiveness. This can be accomplished through the steps of the strategic plan beginning with an external and internal analysis, a clearly defined mission statement, goals and objectives, formulation of specific strategies, concluding with the implementation of the strategy and managed control process. This concludes that an efficient strategic plan leads to a greater level of ministry effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is on the problem of the lack of an efficient strategic plan as it hinders ministries in reaching the greatest level of ministry effectiveness. After several discussions with three professors at Mount Vernon Nazarene College, who had worked with administration in ministry, agreed that ministries could have more effective programs if proper strategic plans were created and implemented. Dr. John Hall, Professor of Missions at Mount Vernon Nazarene College and seminar speaker of "Strategic Planning for Ministry," stated that one of the greatest weaknesses of ministries is the lack of interaction with planning. After discussion with several executive directors of separate Compassionate Ministry Centers in the Ohio area the idea of an implemented strategic plan was not a high priority for these ministries. According to W. Edward Deming, author and founder of the W. Edward Deming Institute for Total Quality Management "85% of problems in organizations have to do with materials and processes rather than employee performance." Robert and Linda Orwig in the article "*Addicted to Quality*," explains that to achieve greater ministry effectiveness, organizations must revolve around quality management, with an emphasis on complete efficient planning. First, an organization must define specific goals. Then it must set up qualitative steps with specific strategies and deadlines for completion (Orwig, 1994).

The implementing of an efficient strategic plan leads to a greater level of ministry effectiveness. This can be measured through a conceptualization process of the strategic plan outline entailing ordinal measurements of the S.W.O.T (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) environmental analysis, clearly defined mission statement, goals and objectives, specific strategy formulation outline, implementation of the strategies, and control of the strategic plan. This conceptualization control process is the action that will link the independent variable of efficient strategic plans, through the ordinal measurements of the steps of those plans, to the dependent variable of a greater level of ministry effectiveness. This study concludes with an appeal for efficient strategic plan as it leads to a greater level of ministry effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Need for Strategic Planning

Strategy can be defined in many different ways. Dr. Hall, in a recent seminar for

strategic planning in ministries defined strategy as the “practical working out of the will of God within a cultural context.” Strategic planning is an overall approach that looks at the big picture while designing a way through plans, methods, and details to reach a holistic ministry. Strategy is also known as long-term planning, formal planning, or completely integrated planning, and is an approach to philosophy and lifestyle of a holistic ministry program. God is just as capable of guiding a ministry in the early planning as He is with intervening at the last moment. Strategic planning is a means of thinking and responding to social, cultural, temporal, and economic factors, creating a holistic philosophy (Hall 2001).

Dr. John Zietlow, professor of strategic management at Mount Vernon Nazarene College and author of the book Financial Planning for the Nonprofit Organizations, stated that the planning processes are what drive the focus and implementation of the ministry. Strategic planning is needed at the point when priorities begin to compete with one another. It is necessary to have specific goals for any activity to measure ministry effectiveness in addition to thinking strategically for long-term success. With broad plans on the upper levels of the ministry and specific plans at program levels quality control will improve the focus and process. “The strategy is the glue that holds it all together, strategy gives clarity in direction and is helpful for organizations to operate effectively” (Zietlow 2001).

As recorded by Cynthia Burns and Carle M. Hunt in the article “*Planning and Ministry Effectiveness*,” the definition of planning in ministry organizations is defined by Van Auken as, “the process of turning vision into reality-of making things happen the way you and your ministry team desire. Planning is very much a partnership between you and God in which supernatural power can be channeled through the human efforts of a committed ministry team.” There are many different dimensions to planning classified according to: (1) the time involvement of the plan, (2) the organizational level performing the plan, (3) the activities involved in the plans, and (4) the general characteristics or purpose of the plans. Although there are different dimensions concerning planning the main emphasis is on a clearly defined plan with specific goals and objectives (Burns, 1995).

Joseph Nielson’s study “*Impacting Chicago for Christ through the Church of the Nazarene*” (1986) addresses the Chicago Thrust program in regards to careful planning and stated, “[i]n order to adequately impact Chicago for Christ, careful preparation and laying of plans is of utmost importance. Our success will probably be in direct proportion to our planning and preparation for the task.” Oliver R. Phillips, coordinator of Nazarene Compassionate Ministries USA/Canada, in The Twelve-Steps of Starting-Up a Compassionate Ministry Center states that, “[n]onprofit organizations must be intentionally defined in order to serve the church and community to the fullest” (Phillips). How can the church and its ministries do this more effectively? With efficient strategic planning of a ministry will lead to a greater level of ministry effectiveness

Ministry Effectiveness

Effectiveness can only be defined according to the criteria in terms of which any program must be measured. Kennon Callahan, (1983) established a set of criteria for measuring the effectiveness of a church or ministry in the Twelve Keys to an Effective Church: Strategic Planning for Ministry.

Callahan's twelve criteria of ministry effectiveness include:

1. The presence of two or three specific, concrete, and missional objectives that focus on meeting specific needs in the community rather than on a generalized approach to ministry.
2. A pastoral and lay visitation program that provides visitation to the unchurched, newcomers, constituents, and members on a weekly basis.
3. Corporate and dynamic worship services that are holistic in music and message, corporately planned, and led by a compassionate and competent team comprised of both the laity and the pastor.
4. Significant relational groups to foster a sense of community for congregational members, providing opportunities of the group for sharing, caring, and belonging.
5. Strong leadership resources that are characterized by the presence of a key group of strong leaders, that compliment the pastor and church staff, and who have a set of strategic objectives outlining what they are to accomplish.
6. A streamlined structure and solid, participatory decision-making, characterized by ownership and openness to diverse beliefs and opinions.
7. The presence of several competent programs and activities that are done well and focus on a wide range of individuals rather than on all church members.
8. Open accessibility in terms of physical location and church leader availability in terms of physical location and church leader availability to the community.
9. A high degree of visibility with both the church and unchurched people of the community that is developed by physical visibility of the church, leader participation in community activities, and media advertisement.
10. Adequate parking, land, and landscape that will provide sufficient room for growth and expansion, as well as project a warm and friendly atmosphere.
11. Space and facilities that will provide flexibility as well as room for growth and expansion.
12. Solid financial resources that rises as attendance increases, but that is also characterized by the presence of a written budget, and indebtedness that does not exceed current income.

Callahan does understand that not all churches or ministries will be effective or successful in all twelve areas, but he says that a church or ministry can be considered effective if it meets any nine out of the twelve criteria. Dale Jones, Director of Information, Technology, and Research for the Nazarene Church, in July 2001 defined effective churches as understanding the difference between goals and methods. An effective ministry requires a "Constant analysis of which approaches are actually working in the local setting... not which should work because the theories said so." The methods of the organization must be chosen according to the needs of the people. These can be clarified through the cultural realities of the community demographics. Therefore, a ministry to be effective it must possess goals with methods of achievement consistent with the cultural demographics and needs of the community.

Strategic Planning for Ministry Effectiveness

According to Henry Migliore, author of "*Church and Ministry Strategic Planning from*

Concept to Success (1994), church ministries must have good administration and management skills, tools, and prayer in order to reach its greatest level of ministry effectiveness. Migliore states that “[p]lanning as part of the management process is crucial to the success of any organization, this is especially true for the Church.” A strategic plan is broad in scope and identifies how an organization will commit its resources over a pre-selected period. It is a long-term plan analyzing and creating objectives to reach a specific set of goals. When the strategic plan is incorporated into the ministry it involves dividing and assigning the responsibilities of each task with specified resources and completion target dates. The advantages of planning help ministries adapt to changing environments and specifies to whom the responsibilities belong. It gives a sense of direction for assessing the market position, and establishing objectives, priorities, and strategies to accomplish the goals with motivation (Migliore, 1994). The function of a statement of purpose is to define the role of the organization. It creates a common direction, and provides the foundation for job and program descriptions, with standards for measurement (Phillips, 1999).

Strategic planning is a basic six-step process including; the external environmental analysis, internal analysis, a clearly defined mission statement with goals and objectives, formulation, implementation, and control. While there are different methods and step-arrangement processes for attaining the goals of an organization, any formulation process still goes through the basic six-step strategic plan outlined by Peter Wright, Mark Kroll, and John Parnell, in Strategic Management Concepts and Cases, 4th Edition.

The first stage of developing a strategic plan is an analysis of the external environmental opportunities and threats of an organization, which is the first half of the S.W.O.T. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. This external overview includes analysis of the macro environmental forces, industry environment, and environmental trends.

Through evaluation of the opportunities and threats of the organization the four macro environmental forces including; the political-legal, economic, technological and social forces. The political-legal force examines the rules and regulations enforced by the government or similar authority. The economic forces are the main forces of the economy that are influencing the people of the community. The technological forces are the new opportunities or limitations according to the technology available. The last of the macro environmental forces are the social forces. These are the social views of the community and their opinions toward certain values and activities.

The industry environment is also included in the external overview. This includes an analysis of new ministries in the same location as a similar pre-existing ministry field, the intensity of rivalry among existing ministries, and the amount of the availability of similar products or services (Wright, 1998). The external analysis will conclude with an environmental scanning, which is the gathering and analysis of information about relevant environmental trends. This type of analysis includes sources of revenue, stakeholders, and demographics of the area by analyzing the environment and realistically making assumptions about unpredictable future events (Migliore, 1994). Michael Allison and Judy Kaye in Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations define the target market through an analysis of the demographics. These can be acquired through an area census that includes information on the total population, age and gender characteristics, as well as education, employment status, and similar characteristics. The analysis also contains the social aspects of race, language, structures, institutions and cultures of the area. By knowing more about the people it is easier to understand the needs of the population (Allison, 1997).

The second stage is the analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses including a firm's resources, mission statement and goals. It also entails the sustained competitive advantage, which is the structure of human, organizational, and physical resources (Wright, 1998). The internal forces of a ministry organization are the gifts, talents, and abilities among the ministry personnel, as well as the experience, perspectives, and visions through a richness of diversity in unity (Allison, 1997).

The third stage of the strategic plan is the establishment of a clearly defined mission statement, goals, and objectives. Often times ministry organizations will apply this defining step as the first for clarification before the S.W.O.T. analysis rather than following as the third stage. The mission statement, goals and objectives are to be broad at the upper level and specific at the program level. The mission statement is the reason for the existence of the organization. It is broadly defined and is an enduring statement of purpose that identifies the scope of the operations in the organization as well as the offerings to the various stakeholders (Wright, 1998). Hall states that the mission statement defines specifically what it is that God wants the ministry to do in a specific context. The Biblical definition of mission is the theological understanding of the task to be performed (Hall 2001).

The goals represent the desired ends that the efforts are directed (Wright, 1998). These goals must be clearly defined because these represent the values, passions, and urges of the organization and keep it on task (Allison, 1997). Objectives are prescribed written, specific, and measurable in principal and in line with the purpose of the ministry and mission statement. While planning, an organization is to first divide and assign activities according to personal strengths and weaknesses. Then those overseeing each assignment must accomplish the goals and assignments within a designated time period. A commitment must be established to the organization and to the other members of the team in order to accomplish the goals and objectives efficiently (Migliore, 1994).

Formulation is the fourth stage of the strategic plan. This stage creates a "how-to" outline for the organization to follow and specifies the means to reach the attainment of its pre-established goals. This phase examines and evaluates the different and potentially useful methods creating the formulation of the strategic plan. The objectives must be clearly defined so the goals can be met precisely and efficiently with the available resources within the allotted time period. An overall approach must be stated first; then it may include the various sub-plans, time tables and methods, including various members of the mission team as they fit into the overall strategic plan (Allison, 1997).

The implementation stage is the fifth stage. It is the physical activation of the strategies that have been formulated in the previous stage. The strategies have been formulated and the development of operational plans are set in action to meet the goals and objectives through the specified strategies (Migliore, 1994). This is when the organizational structure of hierarchy reports in through leadership, power, and organizational culture (Wright, 1998).

The last stage is the control stage. The activities are monitored to ensure that the goals of the organization are obtained. The control stage must be an actual written product to ensure its productivity as well as a process of implementation. This will ensure that the realized strategy is the same as the intended strategy and that the strategic control of process and performance is completed (Wright, 1998). Performance is evaluated to determine whether the strategy is obtaining the objectives and is still consistent with the purpose, changing strategies and operational plans according to the evaluation (Migliore, 1994). Continual improvement of the strategic plan is a constant review of the S.W.O.T. analysis, goals and objectives, as well as

effective cultural management and managerial training (Zietlow, 2001).

RESEARCH

The research provided in this study has been taken from previous studies of similar material. The first study prepared by Craig Irwin and Robert Roller in 2000 was entitled “Pastoral Preparation for Church Management.” This study reviewed the need for strategic planning skills in ministry. The second study, “Planning and Ministry Effectiveness in the Church” performed by Cynthia Burns and Carle Hunt in 1995 studied ministry effectiveness and how it was related to formal planning. Then a combination of research from Henry Migliore, James Kegin, and Randell Young Odom which Burns referenced is also used to reemphasize the importance of strategic planning for ministry effectiveness.

The Need for Strategic Planning Skills

Craig Irwin and Robert Roller performed a research study in 2000 on pastoral preparation and church management. The purpose of the study was to gain better understanding of three basic objectives: (1) pastoral preparation for church management; (2) pastoral perception of church management; (3) pastoral perceptions of environmental factors affecting church management. The sample was part of a study of 99 pastors from the Northern district of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church. The author of the research did feel this was an adequate representation of the denomination in terms to the average size of the district and the demographics of the pastors.

The first objective of the study was to determine pastoral satisfaction with ministry preparation as it relates to management issues. This focused on three relational elements of pastors: adequacy of preparation and training for ministry, adequacy of current skill levels, and perceptions of a better way to provide management training for pastors. The questions that follow in Table 1 pertain to the first basic objective and are measured on a Likert-type scale: 1=strongly agree (SA); 2=agree (A); 3=neutral (N); 4=disagree (D); 5=strongly disagree (SD).

Table 1
Pastoral Preparation for Church Management (Responses Recorded as Percentages)

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
I feel I received adequate spiritual training prior to entering pastoral ministry.	34	47.2	7.5	9.4	1.9	1.98
I feel I received adequate management training for managing my church prior to entering pastoral ministry.	5.7	13.2	13.2	35.8	32.1	3.75
I feel I currently have adequate management skills for ministry.	18.9	41.5	11.3	26.4	1.6	2.5
I feel I am successful when it comes to managing the church.	9.4	45.3	30.2	15.1	0	2.51
I wish I had better training in management issues prior to becoming a pastor.	41.5	37.7	15.1	3.8	1.9	1.87
My ministry would be more effective if I had better management skills.	35.8	39.6	20.8	0.9	1.9	1.94
My training for ministry prepared me for knowing the direction (objectives and goals) of the church.	20.8	26.4	24.5	15.1	13.2	2.74

The finding above suggest that pastors have at best, ambivalent feelings about their level of preparation for church management. When combining the “strongly agree” and “agree” categories a solid majority of 81.2% seem satisfied with their spiritual training received prior to entering ministry and a more modest majority of 60.4% seem satisfied with their level of management skills for ministry. The vast majority of 84.9% of the sample seems to feel modestly successful when managing their churches if the strong agree, agree, and neutral categories are all combined.

However, over seventy-five percent of those same pastors agreed that they should have had better training in management issues prior to becoming a pastor; and 67.9% are dissatisfied with the management training for managing their churches actually received prior to entering the ministry. Nearly the entire sample at 96.2% minimally agrees that their ministries would be more effective if they had better management skills when the neutral category is included. Less than half of the sample agreed that their training for ministry prepared them for knowing the direction (objectives and goals) of the church.

While the pastors of the study group are satisfied with some aspects of their preparation for church management aspects of their preparation about which they feel negatively exceed those for which they registered positive sentiments.

The second objective of the study was to gain an understanding of pastoral perceptions of church management issues. These focused on three elements of the pastoral working knowledge of a ministry organizational model, availability of adequate resources and management skills, and pastoral belief in the need for business managers within the church. The questions that follow in Table 2 pertain to the second basic objective and are measured on a Likert-type scale: 1=strongly agree (SA); 2=agree (A); 3=neutral (N); 4=disagree (D); 5=strongly disagree (SD).

Table 2
Pastoral Perceptions of Church Management (Responses Recorded as Percentages)

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
The needs of church management have changed significantly over the past 25 years.	62.3	24.5	13.2	0	0	1.51
I feel I have adequate resources and skills in management to effectively minister in today's environment.	13.2	43.4	22.6	20.8	0	2.51
I feel I have a good working knowledge of organizational theory.	11.3	32.1	28.3	18.9	9.4	2.873
I believe that church management should be done by clergy pastors.	11.3	26.4	34	22.6	5.7	2.85
I believe that church management can be done by non-clergy church business managers.	30.2	49.1	7.5	9.4	3.8	2.08
To be a good pastor, one needs to be a good manager.	18.9	49.1	17	11.3	3.8	2.32
I have a good working knowledge of the "systems theory" approach to management.	1.9	9.4	18.9	64	3.58	3.92

Nearly seventy percent of the respondents agreed that to be a good pastor, one needs to be a good manager. Slightly over fifty percent of the pastors felt they had adequate resources and skills in management to effectively minister in today's environment. However, more than sixty-five percent disagreed that they had a good working knowledge of the “systems theory” approach to management. Finally, over eighty-five percent agreed that the needs of the church have changed significantly over the past 25 years.

The third objective of the study was to determine pastoral opinion regarding external and

internal environmental influences on the church. These focused on the three elements of the internal forces that affect the church, the greatest external forces that affect the church, and how pastors adapt to the external changes. This last objective was recorded as the responses of the pastors to the questions although not all responses are shown below. The first question asked, “What external forces affect your church’s ministry the most?”

Social influence (worldliness)	18	Social problems and deterioration	
6			
Society outside of the church	17	Education	2
The economy	9	Community image of the church	1

The second question asked, “What internal forces affect your church’s ministry the most?”

Lack of vision	17	Traditional church structures	3
Parishioner expectations	15	Power struggles	2
Lack of spirituality	9	Finances	2
Lack of organization for ministry	4	Lack of leader’s passion for Jesus	2
Apathy in the church	3		

The third question asked, “What are the largest challenges that you face in ministry?”

People management and motivation	7	Balancing church expectations	3
Time management	7	Resistant tradition	3
Finding/training leaders	5	Leader’s authority challenged	1
Lack of organization skills	4	Spiritual warfare	1
Having a central focus	4	Need for physical plant expansion	
1			
Apathy	3	Satan, sin, the world, my flesh	1
Defining goals	3		

The results determined how pastors and ministry leaders felt their ministries were planning efficiently. The three basic objectives were: (1) pastoral preparation for church management. (2) pastoral perception of church management. (3) pastoral perceptions of environmental factors affecting church management. The results indicated that better management skills would be helpful to the effectiveness of the ministry. Typically management knowledge levels were relatively low and pastors felt that their ministries would be more effective if they had better management skills.

Concerning pastoral preparation, most pastors felt they had received inadequate training in management, and wished that they had received better management training before they entered the ministry. They felt ill equipped to deal with church management issues even though the majority felt their spiritual training was adequate for the ministry. The results indicate that better management skills would be helpful to ministry effectiveness.

The perception that pastors felt toward church management was seventy percent agreed in order to be a good pastor, one needed to be a good manager. However, close to seventy percent agreed that they did not feel like they had adequate knowledge of a systems theory approach to management. Also less than half agreed that their training for ministry had prepared

them for knowing the direction of the church or how to help it achieve its goals. This does show that the general level of management knowledge among pastors is relatively low.

The last objective asked pastors to list the largest challenges of the ministry. Out of these the top five responses, all had to deal with the management of the ministry providing evidence as to why three out of four pastors felt their ministries would be more effective if they had better management skills.

Ministry Effectiveness

Cynthia Burns and Carle Hunt performed a research in 1995 studying the relationship between formal planning and ministry effectiveness. Forty-five pastors from one denomination mostly located in the Eastern region of the United States were used for this study. They were each asked questions concerning the types of planning and the effectiveness it had on each church. The objective for this study was to prove that the relationship between planning and church effectiveness is highly related and the purpose of church planning is to increase church and ministry effectiveness.

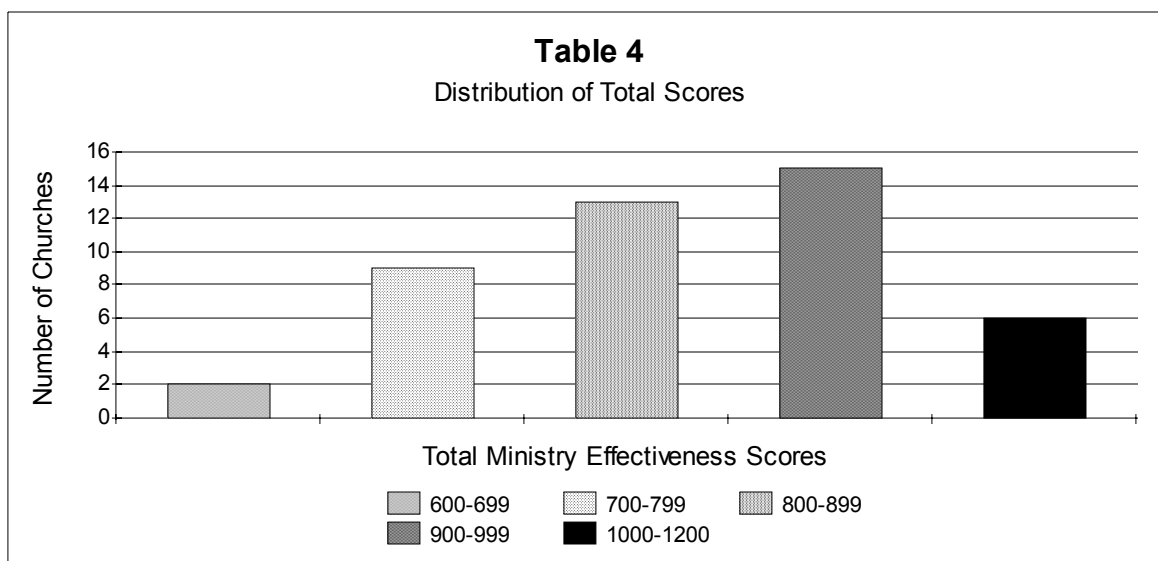
Burns used the study from Kennon Callahan's list of church effectiveness to set up the questionnaire. Each of the forty-five churches was ranked according to the twelve stipulations on a scale from 1-100 in each category with a total score of 1200 possible as seen in Table 4. A total of sixty-six questions covering the twelve characteristics of ministry effectiveness were posed to determine the rank. The results are documented on Table 3.

Table 3
Distribution of Ministry Effectiveness Scores

Effectiveness Characteristic	0-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100	Median Score	Mean Score
Mission	2	1	6	15	21	73	78
Visitation	10	1	20	10	4	60	59
Worship	0	0	1	16	28	82	84
Small Groups	1	0	4	7	33	100	87
Lay Leadership	0	0	7	24	14	78	75
Decision Making	0	0	4	31	10	72	73
Programs	0	0	18	16	11	68	70
Accessibility	0	0	19	21	5	62	66
Visibility	3	0	12	9	21	73	73
Parking	3	1	12	5	24	87	76
Facilities	2	0	10	19	14	75	74
Finances	4	0	11	12	18	76	72

Total number of churches = 45

Additionally, Callahan's study considered a church effective if it can meet nine out of the twelve stipulations resulting in a score above 900. The research performed by Burns found that forty-seven percent of the churches ranked above 900. The results below in Table 4 are the recorded standings of the forty-five churches and their ministry effectiveness.



Burns also recorded the use of formal/written planning for the above churches and ministry organizations. Out of the total research population only forty-four percent of the ministry organizations used a formal/written plan. However, over half of the churches that had an established formal/written plan grew in average weekly attendance above fifty percent during the most recent three-year period. According to Callahan and Odom growth is one of the highest forms to measure ministry effectiveness.

Burns also used the Chi-Square Test to measure the variables of the relationship between formal planning and ministry effectiveness, where a significant relationship did appear to exist. The study proved that specific demographics were not necessary for planning but that regardless of a church size, age, or education of the pastor, all churches were capable of planning. Twenty-two questions were included to discover the types of planning performed by the pastors and ministry leaders of the church. Respondents were then classified according to yearly-short-range planning, long-range (strategic) planning, and churches with no formal/written plan and are recorded below in Table 5. Only forty-four percent of the churches used any type of formal/written plan while more than fifty percent had no form of formal written plan. Out of the forty-four percent churches that did use a formal/written plan only forty percent of those had a long-term plan in process. That is less than twenty percent of the total amount of churches using a long-range formal plan.

Table 5



Ministry effectiveness was below 50% according to the research performed by Burns in accordance to Callahan's criteria for ministry effectiveness. The results of the research performed did emphasize the high relation of planning to the outcome effectiveness of the ministry. Burns concludes that even though ministry leaders do have some minimal planning, ministries with formal/written plans continue to be more effective in total ministry than no planning ministries. Only twenty percent of the churches surveyed used a long-range (strategic) plan. Long-range planning was proven to lead to the effectiveness of many ministry characteristics, and if used efficiently these planning skills should improve any level of ministry effectiveness.

Strategic Planning for Ministry Effectiveness

Henry Migliore, in 1994, reviewed an empirical study that was performed regarding the relationship between the use of the planning processes of a church or ministry and the ministry effectiveness in a certain denomination in the early 1990's. The study found that larger churches (congregations of 250 or more) were more inclined to engage in written long-range (strategic) planning. Most churches that had been using long-range planning for less than three years had achieved attendance increases of 100 percent, twice the growth rate experienced by churches not using long-range plans. Ministry effectiveness was increased by the presence of written yearly and long-range plans. The lack of written plans (yearly and/or long-range) hindered the ability of the church/pastor to be effective in ministering to the community. The most important conclusion is that pastors and leaders must learn and develop administration and management skills, especially planning, in the church (Migliore, 1994).

Another study that was performed by James Kegin in 1991, as quoted by Burns, studied the interaction between ministry success and the presence of leadership/management skills (including planning) in pastors. It found that a relationship between the two variables did exist and that churches or ministries were more effective with a pastor who had been trained and applied management/leadership skills (Burns, 1995).

Randell Young Odom in 1984 performed a study of "*Environment, Strategy, and Planning for Churches and Ministries*." This study related the church size and growth, which are indicators of effectiveness, with the perceptions of the internal and external environments, which were the types of planning used. Odom concluded that churches that used formal long-range planning (strategic planning) were more effective than the churches that used informal planning or did not have any type of planning (Burns, 1995).

The research studies of Kegin, Migliore, and Odom involving efficient strategic planning and ministry effectiveness have all been performed and concluded that the use of efficient strategic (long-range) planning leads to a greater level of ministry effectiveness (Burns, 1995).

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While the research above is valid according to the population samples, each of the studies must be taken in accordance to the specific study and used cautiously while making generalized conclusions. Further research using a cross section of similar research studies through different denominations and locations would satisfy a more complete study. Since similar results have been

compared from several studies, these have a greater degree of generalization than if just one research study had been taken into account for the conclusions.

A suggestion of further research specifically targeted for the Nazarene Compassion Ministries Centers (CMC) and the utilization of efficient strategic planning. Although the above studies may have been comparable to the Nazarene CMC, a more specific research would verify more accurate results. Regardless, results do strongly suggest that pastors and ministry leaders need to be taught the importance and efficiency of using strategic (long-range) planning, and must be able to apply the plans to the ministries. Pastors and church leaders should understand church management as part of the formal ministry training, and continual education. The most important conclusion, according to Burns is that pastors and church leaders must be taught the efficiency of utilizing administration and management skills, especially planning, in the Church. They must also be given the tools necessary to incorporate planning into the ministries of the churches they serve. It is through prayer and the use of the planning process that the church, as an organization, can effectively fulfill the Great Commission that it has been given (Burns 1992).

SOLUTION

With specific concern to the Church of the Nazarene, a recommendation to pastors and ministry leaders for seeking further direction on proper strategic management is encouraged. Also it is advised that the Nazarene Colleges prepare courses in strategic planning for nonprofit ministry organizations. A review of some of the strategic plans and ministry effectiveness of Compassionate Ministry Centers was performed. After interviewing several executive directors of CMC and directors of similar programs in Ohio many of them were not familiar with a strategic plan nor did they have a long-range formal/written plan. This can be a very valuable asset and resource with a very minimal cost, and still with the implementation of this plan the quality of an organization may rise progressively. By measuring the effectiveness of the CMC an overall view can be taken of both how effective the CMC currently is ranked and how by implementing a strategic plan it could be. The eight elements of effectively managed ministry organizations according to Allison are: mission, planning, structure, systems, people, results and quality, leadership, and relationships. These can be measured by a survey found in Appendix A after determining the current effectiveness according to Callahan's twelve criteria in Appendix B.

Jeanne Maes reviewed one way of setting up a strategic plan for a ministry organization to reach its maximum level of ministry effectiveness. This has been an excellent model, and is a good representation of how an efficient strategic plan is implemented. To start, the organization was divided into different subject areas and a Central Task Force was created to design a strategic plan questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to the community at large to review and analyze the organization and its area ministry. The first item on the list was to review the mission statement. Then a S.W.O.T. analysis was conducted to determine the external opportunities and threats and the internal strengths and weaknesses of both the present and future of the organization. A list of needs and area of concerns were then determined. Lastly, a list of responsibilities, goals, and strategies were created.

A list of goals was created at an open convocation. Groups were created to review and prioritize the goals. Then, each group created action plans to achieve the goals and solve problems by reviewing the mission statement, prioritizing the S.W.O.T. analysis, creating a list of top goals, analyzing and creating a recommendation list through the creation of an action plan

with a complete list of objectives. At the action planning process stage, each group was to identify the problem and define the causes and impacts of the problem. Finally, after extensive discussion for solutions and recommendations with strategies, deadlines, location, task responsibilities the impact on the organization was determined (Maes, 1998).

In specific concern with the Nazarene CMC a suggestion of measuring the efficiency of the current ministry in regards to strategic planning with a survey similar to the example found in Appendix A. Also a measurement of ministry effectiveness is suggested for each CMC. Another example of measuring ministry effectiveness is presented in Appendix B. After measurements have been taken, recorded and evaluated if a more efficient strategic plan is needed it should take place according to the outline above. As discussed previously the plan should follow the six-step strategic plan outline presented by Allison and Wright. With the example presented by Maes, hope is given that a more efficient strategic plan will lead to a greater level of ministry effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

From the understanding of the research results in this study, the concern is that some Nazarene Compassionate Ministry Centers in the Ohio region may not have implemented efficient strategic plans and therefore are hindering the ministry effectiveness. It has been demonstrated that a minimal amount of ministries are using strategic (long-range) planning, even though nearly seventy percent of ministry leaders agree that an effective pastor must have good management skills of which an important aspect is understanding strategic planning.

The lack of an efficient strategic plan hinders ministries in reaching the greatest level of ministry effectiveness. By following through with the specified strategic plan, the programs of an organization will reach greater levels of ministry effectiveness. It can be accomplished through the steps of the strategic plan beginning with an external and internal analysis, a clearly defined mission statement, goals and objectives, formulation of specific strategies, concluding with the implementation of the strategy and managed control process. This study concludes therefore that an efficient strategic plan leads to a greater level of ministry effectiveness.

APPENDIX A

Elements of an Effectively Managed Organization (EEMO) A Self-Assessment Tool Copied from Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations By Michael Allison and Jude Kaye

MISSION

1. The organization has a clearly articulated and agreed upon purpose (a statement that describes the ultimate result the organization is working to achieve).

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

2. There is a consensus on the primary business(es) primary services the organization should provide.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

3. There are shared values and beliefs that guide the organization and its members.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

4. There is a clear and agreed upon vision of what the organization is trying to accomplish and what it will take to make the vision happen.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Mission: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

PLANNING

5. There is agreement on clients the organization should be serving.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

6. A three to five year strategic plan is in place. The plan is reviewed yearly and modified as needed to reflect trends in the environment, current and future client needs, and the organization's capacity to meet those needs.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

7. There is an annual process to set program goals and budget.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

8. There is a written annual operational plan that includes timelines an identification of who is responsible for which outcomes or activities.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

9. There is agreement on overall major strategies that the organization will use for the allocation of resources. (Strategies are priority responses that an organization will use to best accomplish its purpose.)

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Planning: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

STRUCTURE

10. There is well-defined organizational structure (work gets delegated and thus accomplished in an efficient and effective way, and there are clear lines of authority and responsibility including reporting relationships). An up-to-date organizational chart accurately reflects the reporting relationships.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

11. There is a decision-making process and structure that supports decisions being implemented (including clarity as to who has input and who has responsibility for making various decisions).

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

12. Lines of communication encourage and support the flow of information and feedback between and among managers, staff, and the Board. There are communication structures in place to support this information flow.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

13. Meetings are well organized and well run.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

14. Personnel policies and procedures are in place and followed.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Structure: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

PEOPLE

15. The organization is sufficiently and appropriately staffed with paid and volunteer personnel who are able to meet the needs of the clients. The organization is able to attract and retain qualified, competent, and committed employees.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

16. Roles and responsibilities for paid and volunteer staff are clear and understood; there are accurate and up-to-date written job descriptions for all staff.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

17. There is a staff evaluation process that includes established performance expectations, periodic work review sessions, and an annual evaluation.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

18. There is effective governance that supports effective management: governance responsibilities for the Board of Directors are understood; there are written job descriptions for the Board and all committees; specific expectations of members are clearly articulated; the Board annually evaluates its performance.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

19. There is ongoing professional development of all personnel (training opportunities to enhance current skills, learn new skills, and career planning).

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

20. There are appropriate rewards and recognition for all personnel. Staff and Board feel valued and appreciated.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

People: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

SYSTEMS

21. A realistic short-term and long-term fund development program is in place.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

22. The fund development activities secure adequate financial resources for the organization.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

23. Accurate and timely financial records are maintained.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

24. A budgeting process is in place that ensures the effective allocation of resources.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

25. Financial management activity adequately attends to such items as cash flow, internal controls, cost analysis, and tax compliance.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

26. There is effective use of appropriate technology, computers, and other management information systems.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Systems: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

RESULTS AND QUALITY

27. In-depth program evaluation is conducted as part of the planning process. This includes assessment based on identified benchmarks for quality and specific outcome and process objectives. The analysis of outcomes and processes are integrated into the monitoring and adjustment of the organization's long-range and operational plans.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

28. The organization has feedback mechanisms in place to assess client satisfaction and client needs.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

29. Clients are satisfied with the services offered by the organization.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

30. Programs are effective and efficient. The organization provides quality programs that support the organization's mission.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Results and Quality: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

LEADERSHIP

31. The organization's management is a model for effective leadership (including inspiring shared values and a shared vision, holding people accountable for achieving results, and leading by example).

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

32. The ED (and management team if applicable) takes responsibility for creating an environment in which all personnel feel supported and motivated to produce quality results.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

33. Leadership is not just personified in one person, but is a shared function among many people.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

34. The Board President models effective leadership by taking responsibility for ensuring that the Board is performing its governance and support roles, that Board committees are operating effectively, and that individual Board members are fulfilling their commitments.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

35. The organization takes a leadership role in the community, both in advocating on behalf of its constituencies and playing a key role in fostering cooperation among agencies offering similar services in the community.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Leadership: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

RELATIONSHIPS

36. There is a constructive climate in which people are able to feel free to express unusual or unpopular views without fear of personal attack or reprisal.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

37. Individuals and groups have developed effective ways to be creative, innovative, and solve problems together.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

38. There is a strong commitment among all employees to working effectively as a team. Team spirit within and among departments is encouraged and supported, and there are effective coordinated services among departments.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

39. People are willing to work through conflicts. Difficult issues are discussed within an atmosphere of supportiveness and constructive criticism.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

40. Effective formal and informal communication systems are in place that encourages support, trust, and cooperation among groups and individuals.

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Relationships: Overall Assessment

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Elements of an effectively Managed Organization

Overall, how well is the organization doing in achieving its purpose?

Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weakness
	4	3	2	1	

Specific recommendations/comments:

Elements of greatest strength? How can we take advantage of this strength?

Which element is holding the organization back from achieving its purpose the most? What should we do to respond to this weakness?

Confidence that your assessment is widely shared?

Other comments:

APPENDIX B

Twelve Criteria for Measuring Ministry Effectiveness By Kennon Callahan (1983)

1. The presence of two or three specific, concrete, and missional objectives that focus on meeting specific needs in the community rather than on a generalized approach to ministry.
2. A pastoral and lay visitation program that provides visitation to the unchurched, newcomers, constituents, and member on a weekly basis.
3. Corporate and dynamic worship services that are holistic in music and message, corporately planned, and led by a compassionate and competent team comprised of both the laity and the pastor.
4. Significant relational groups to foster a sense of community for congregational members, providing opportunities of the group for sharing, caring, and belonging.
5. Strong leadership resources that are characterized by the presence of a key group of strong leaders, that compliment the pastor and church staff, and who have a set of strategic objectives outlining what they are to accomplish.
6. A streamlined structure and solid, participatory decision-making, characterized by ownership and openness to diverse beliefs and opinions.
7. The presence of several competent programs and activities that are done well and focus on a wide range of individuals rather than on all church members.
8. Open accessibility in terms of physical location and church leader availability in terms of physical location and church leader availability to the community.
9. A high degree of visibility with both the church and unchurched people of the community that is developed by physical visibility of the church, leader participation in community activities, and media advertisement.
10. Adequate parking, land, and landscape that will provide sufficient room for growth and expansion, as well as project a warm and friendly atmosphere.
11. Space and facilities that will provide flexibility as well as room for growth and expansion.
12. Solid financial resources that rises as attendance increases, but that it also characterized by the presence of a written budget, and indebtedness that does not exceed current income.

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