

Strategic Planning

Turning ideas into reality—the role of planning in ministry

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Overview

This session will help you think more clearly about the goals of effective youth ministry. We want to help you get past just having some good intentions for your programs. This will help move you past the busyness of your schedule to some clear plans that will keep you motivated in ministry. We will give you time to talk about your dreams, visions and goals for ministry.

Big Ideas We Hope to Get Across

- Vagueness is killing the church
- Effective youth ministry requires a clear vision and intentional planning
- Planning and programming are tools to help you accomplish your goals
- The leaders will discuss and share goals for ministry

Introduction:

5 minutes

Today’s session is about strategic planning. Strategic planning may sound fancy and feel like it is about creating a grand vision statement for youth ministry—when really what we are talking about is improving your focus. We can all get distracted and just start to run youth activities without a clear purpose. Or maybe, we start to feel like a cruise director—we just want everyone to have fun and stay busy.

It has been said that “A youth ministry without a vision becomes a youth group.” What we are hoping to do here today is help you gain some clarity on your purpose as a ministry to young people so that it is more than just filling a calendar with a youth group or an event.

Open in Prayer

Discussion Question:

5-10 minutes

To get us started, find a partner or small group and share a time when you got done with an event, youth group, or an experience with teenagers—and you just couldn’t really remember a clear reason for what you had just done.

(Leader: encourage them to have fun, but be honest. We ALL have done this, so don’t feel alone!!)

Groups/Pairs share for a few minutes.

Have a few share with the larger group as you pull them back together.

We will always stay busy in youth ministry—but, sometimes we need a little work on improving our clarity. This video will help us think through this issue a little.

Video Segment #1: Tiger **minutes**

5-7

Highlights of the video:

Issue of having a focus	Not getting distracted.
Hope is not a strategy.	Good intentions is not enough.
Vagueness is killing the church	Simply ask: "Why am I here?"
Big goal: Nurture Faith. Deal with the Moralistic Therapeutic Deism that Terri discussed.	

Scripture References: Deut 6. Pass these things onto your children...
Joshua 4: Stones on the side of the river, so when your children ask, you can tell the story of God's work in your life.

What are your goals for your leadership—and your ministry?

Strategic planning is just trying to put legs on that. We will have you talk about some of this in your groups. Good luck. (Pause video.)

Small Group Responses

5-10 minutes

Break into groups of 3-4 to reflect on the video.

What were a couple ideas that stuck out to you?

What applications or challenges did you feel as you listened to the video?

Have a few folks share their thoughts with the large group—but keep them in their small groups for the next set of discussions and reflections.

Reflections: When did a goal help you?

10-15 minutes

In your small groups, share a time in your life when you established a goal, identified a target and started working towards it. It might have been saving money to buy something, getting certain grades in school, something in sports, finding a job, etc. Share these goals—and what it felt like to accomplish them.

Leader: After the groups have shared, get some representative examples in the large group.

Reflections: The goals of youth ministry

10-15 minutes

Goals are not idle exercises—they really can help us name the important things we would like to focus on. They represent that big word called "Vision." Remember the definition of vision that Tiger shared: "A picture of the future that produces passion."

Let's discuss some of those goals in our small groups. Goals start with a hope. What are they? What are you hoping for in the lives of young people in your church? What would you like to see happen in the lives of teenagers because of your church's ministry to them?

Share in your small groups some of the things you really would hope for in the lives of the teens in your church. Why are they there? What is the hoped for outcome in their lives? What are their goals for ministry?

LEADER NOTE: This list is not to overwhelm or discourage. Get ready for a variety of opinions—so don't try to resolve everything. Get them to name their goals and hopes—and to realize that this is just a start. When they report these to the group, don't try to resolve all the different emphasis areas.

After the groups have talked, have them report to the large group and record their hopes on a whiteboard or flip chart. Notice the variety of hopes/dreams that these adults have for young people. Discuss if needed.

Worksheet #1:

5 minutes

Pass out Worksheet #1. By yourself, write down three examples of your hopes for next summer—and whatever program you have chosen to do. What are the outcomes you would like to see in your youth and the youth group because of what you choose to do next summer?

Worksheet #2: The goals of youth ministry

10 minutes

Pass our Worksheet #2. This worksheet can help focus our hopes we listed on Worksheet #1. What do we want our students to.....

KNOW

DO

EXPERIENCE

BECOME

These four areas may help us think about what we are working on in youth ministry. Remember Tiger's phrase: "Vagueness is killing the church." Mark down some things you want in each of these four areas in the coming year—or associated with the event they are planning for the summer.

After they have had time to fill out the worksheet, you may want to ask some questions to the group for discussion.

What thoughts do you have after completing this worksheet?

What kind of environment would need to happen for these things to occur?

How would you recognize the things that you wrote down here?

What would need to happen for you to reach some of the things you wrote down here?

Leader Note: If you have time, you may want to have participants discuss these in small groups. Encourage those who came in a team to sit together. Or, encourage those who came in a team to discuss on the way home. Encourage everyone to discuss these goals with their teams/volunteers/leadership in their home congregation.

Video Segment #2: Tiger

2-3 minutes

Highlights of the video:

Two Circles:

- Circle of Concern (Things we care about. Leaders who focus here tend to wander around, don't have strategic planning),
- Circle of Influence (strategic planning can happen here, place where God has put you, you can exert some influence).
 - Plan to be more intentional in your circle of influence. Dream big (circle of concern), focus small (circle of influence). (End video.)

Conclusion: Strategic Planning

5-10 minutes

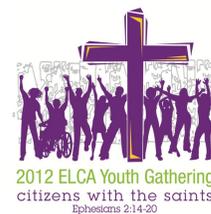
Conclude your time by saying something like: Today we heard a lot of different thoughts about the goals of youth ministry. But, we also heard some key themes didn't we? We are here to nurture the faith life of teenagers—to help them follow Jesus.

We want to remind each other of this—because it can help us stay focused as the adult leaders. Goals can help us look to the future with a little more clarity. They also can be used as a filter to say NO to some things.

Prayer

End your session with a time of prayer for youth ministry—and the upcoming special events. Maybe have your adults pray in their small groups for the things they have talked about—and then you can close the training.

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Worksheet #1: Goals for the Summer

"When I first started out in youth ministry "what I did" and "where I was headed" was determined by two unintentional priorities: established programs and random relationships. These two areas were usually guided by the "urgency" principle. What I did was determined by whatever needed to be accomplished for the next program or assignment, and usually I had no stated purpose for any of the programs that I was preparing for. I enjoyed and valued spending time with the youth, but I had no plan for who I would meet with, when, or why. Very few goals could be met because there was no way to evaluate what was taking place. Without a purpose there was no sense of direction, no evaluation, and no sense for understanding why we were doing what we were doing."

- Scott Peterson, Pastor

TIME OUT

Think about the following questions and write your answers in the boxes provided:

What are you hoping will happen in the lives of your students because of the program/event that you have planned for next summer?

Do you see any potential impact on the youth group because of this trip/event? If so, what might that be?

Worksheet #2: Know • Do • Experience • Become

What would you like your students to **KNOW** this year? (e.g. *the Bible, family information, denominational doctrine, etc.*).

What would you like your students to be about to **DO** this year? (e.g. *skiing, hayrides, progressive dinners, outreaches, serving, etc.*).

What would you like your students to **EXPERIENCE** this year? (e.g. *feeling valued, experiencing worship in a personal way, being cared for by a peer, etc.*).

What would you like your students to **BECOME** this year? (e.g. *able to make healthier decisions, a person more focused on Christ, etc.*).