

# *start* **STRONG:**

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**Must-Have  
Goals for Your  
Best Year Yet**

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# CHAPTER

## About Tobin Perry

Tobin Perry has served as a writer and editor for Saddleback Church, the North American Mission Board, and the International Mission Board, where he has frequently focused on church leadership issues.

He has also served as the lead pastor of a church in Southern Indiana. He has written for numerous publications, including Christianity Today, HomeLife, ParentLife, Baptist Press, and On Mission magazine, and has ghostwritten for a number of leading Christian ministry leaders. A graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism and Gateway Seminary (formerly Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary), Tobin lives with his wife and three children in Evansville, Indiana. For more information about Tobin, visit [www.tobinperry.com](http://www.tobinperry.com).

All of the first person pronouns in this book are his.



# CHAPTER 2

## The Portland “Jail Blazers” and Your Church

Going into the 2002-2003 NBA playoffs, few commentators expected much out of the Portland Trail Blazers. Immensely talented but incredibly immature, they were best known as the “Jail Blazers” for the players’ frequent run-ins with the law. Heading into the playoffs, all eyes were on the San Antonio Spurs, the New Jersey Nets, and the three-time defending champions, the Los Angeles Lakers. When the Trail Blazers dropped the first three games of their opening round matchup with the Dallas Mavericks, it seemed everyone’s low expectations were justified.

What happened next had only been done two other times in the history of the NBA playoffs. The Trail Blazers came back to tie the series at three and send the series to a decisive seventh game.

Despite a valiant effort in game seven (and the lead with less than five minutes remaining), the Trail Blazers couldn't hang on and ultimately lost the series.

The 2002-2003 Trail Blazers embody an important truth—*it's hard to rebound from a bad start.*

Sure, it can be done. Just ask the 2004 Boston Red Sox. Down 0-3 to their archrival, the New York Yankees, in the American League Championship Series, the Red Sox won four straight games to punch their ticket to the World Series (which they won). Americans love great comeback stories. In fact, we revel in them. Great comebacks—in sports and in life—are plastered over our movie screens and magazine covers.

But the popularity of comebacks hides one inarguable fact—*they're very, very, very rare.* Teams down 0-3 (like the 2002-2003 Trail Blazers) almost always lose. Kids who struggle through tough childhoods usually suffer through tough adulthoods. Businesses hit with misfortune early usually don't last.

And churches that struggle in the first 100 days don't typically have dynamite years.

We don't want that to be true. Yet deep down we know it is.

Your first 100 days of the year matter greatly. If you want December of next year to look better than December of this year, the first 100 days will decide it.

Here's the good news. Comebacks may be exceedingly rare. Good years aren't. Start off well and your odds of reaching your goals for the year skyrocket.

There's nothing particularly spiritual about 100 days. This ebook could've focused on your first 99 days or your first 101 days. But 100 days is a remarkable round number. Presidents have used the figure to set their opening agendas. It's also just enough days to allow you to make some significant headway into the year.

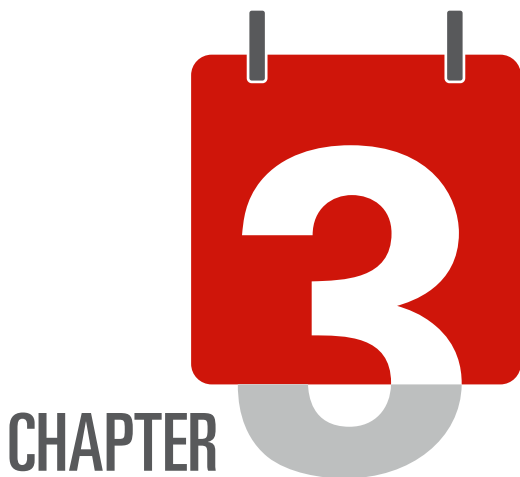
So what do you do in the first 100 days that'll transform your year? Here are your top four priorities for the first part of next year:

- **Get away:** Spend time with your family.
- **Evaluate:** Take a hard look at your last year.
- **Plan:** Decide what's important this year.
- **Do:** Make the most of what's on your calendar for the first 100 days.

You could be standing on the precipice of the most significant year of your ministry.

Start strong.

You've got this.



## Your New Year's Family Resolutions

As a pastor, there is nothing quite like the holiday rush. For two months—from Halloween through New Year's Day—your church likely packs activities into a calendar like sardines. You have fall parties, church-wide Thanksgiving meals, Christmas parties, Christmas cantatas, Christmas worship services, and New Year's Eve watch parties. By the time midnight hits on December 31st, you sing Auld Lang Syne, and blow one of those funky plastic horns, you're simply done.

And frankly, so is your family. Sure, you've done the basics over the holiday season. You've attended the bare minimum of family gatherings, smiled through them all, and even stayed up until 3 a.m. on Christmas morning putting the kid's presents together.

But you likely haven't *really* been there. Be honest.

After two months of an intense holiday schedule, your first 100 days must include some rest and time for your family. Let's be clear. Taking time for yourself and your family in the beginning of the year isn't some cute nod to family values. It's not (just) about modeling good behavior to your congregation.

*It's critical to pastoral success. It's critical to growing a church, too.* Take for example this recent LifeWay Research study that **compared 101 pastors who were deemed "effective"** because their churches ranked in the top five percent of U.S. churches in conversion growth to a group of pastors who led similar-sized churches without significant conversion growth. Effective leaders spent significantly more time in personal evangelism. They spent significantly less time in "custodial" duties.

*They also devoted more time to their families.* Effective leaders spent 22 hours a week in family activities—compared to 18 for the others. That's a four-hours-a-week difference.

How do you start off your family time right in the coming year? Here are a few ideas.

1

**Commit to bi-weekly date nights with your spouse.** Find a babysitter. Get away one night every other week. Make it a habit in January, February, and March and you'll have it down for the year—and beyond.

2

**Rest a day weekly.** The first few months of the year will likely be slower than the season you just exited. Take advantage of the extra time by developing a Sabbath habit—taking at least one day of every week completely off of work.

3

**Spend extra one-on-one time with each of your children.** Try to spend at least an hour one-on-one with each of your kids some time each month.

4

**Make your commitment to your family crystal clear by creating a contract that spells out your plans to honor them this month and beyond.**

You'll find a template for a family contract in the worksheets included with this ebook. The contract specifies only a one-month commitment. After that, you should be hooked.

No matter how many years you serve at your church, they'll move on when you leave. You'll always have your family.

Don't take them for granted.



# CHAPTER

## Take a Look Back

You've likely had someone—a parent, a coach, a teacher—tell you: Never look back.

That person probably had great intentions. He or she likely loved you very much.

But that person was wrong—at least with the never part.

A good, hard (and honest) look back at what's in your rearview mirror is an essential act of leadership. *You'll never know where you're going until you know where you've been.* It sounds cliché—but it's true.

The business world gets it. A 2012 Harvard Business Review article **tells the story** of multiple companies that leaned on their backstories to better understand (and mobilize their teams for) the future.

That's true in the church, too. You must start with last year as you head into your next 100 days. Specifically, you need to evaluate yourself, your team, and your church.

# Evaluate yourself

Jesus makes it clear that proper evaluation starts with yourself. Though speaking specifically of sin in Matthew 7:5, it's an important reminder in other aspects of our life as well.

Jesus said: "You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5 NIV).

You can't properly evaluate your team or your church unless you first look at your own life. Matthew 7:5 reminds us that without a clear evaluation of ourselves we're functionally blind to others.

That means you need some time away. Everyone understands that's hard to do in the busy world of ministry in the 21st century. But it's essential.

Take your Bible, your journal, and your most comfortable clothes and leave the office for a day. Be relentless with yourself. Ask tough questions of God. Ask tough questions of yourself.

Then listen—and listen deeply.

## Here are five questions to get you started.

You'll notice most of them focus on what God did in your life last year. That's intentional. You'll have plenty of time to look at the future later. This day is about evaluating last year.

1

## **What unconfessed sin stood between me and the year God wanted me to have?**

The Bible is crystal clear about this. Sin comes hard after all of us (Romans 3:23). Spiritual leaders are no exception. The Bible says, “Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy” (Proverbs 28:13, ESV).

Write all of your unconfessed sins down on paper (and you’ll make it tangible as you do so). Then confess it to God, and confess it to someone else (James 5:16).

All the great strategies and all the great plans for next year will mean nothing in ministry if you’re carrying around unconfessed sin.

Start the year off fresh.

2

## **What did I do well last year?**

No matter what last year was like for you and your ministry, you did some things well — probably very well. Maybe it’s your preaching. Maybe it’s counseling. Maybe it’s leadership. Be as specific as possible. Why? You want to put yourself in a position to do what you do well as much as possible in the coming year.

3

## **What areas of ministry did I struggle with last year?**

We all have areas of weakness. You’re not perfect. No one (if they are honest) expects you to be either.

Take a look at your weaknesses, and ask yourself if you can strengthen those areas of your ministry by involving volunteers in them. Are you struggling with pastoral care? Maybe you have a volunteer who loves making hospital visits and other aspects of care ministry. Are you drowning in administrative tasks? Maybe you have an administratively gifted person who would love to help out.

4

### **What relationships—in my church, in my family, in my community—seemed to suffer through the most strain last year?**

Ultimately, effective ministry is about relationships. Paul boldly tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:19 that God has given us the “message of reconciliation.” That puts all Christians—but particularly ministry leaders—in the people business. Relational strain not only wears you out, but it attacks the nature of the gospel we’re called to represent.

With whom do you have relational strain?  
Think through these questions:

- Who have you been avoiding?
- Who drains you when you spend a significant time around them?
- Who do you need to apologize to?

Once you’ve determined the strained relationships in your life, do whatever it takes to make them right (Romans 12:18). Make the tough phone call. Make the visit. Make amends.

Make it right.

## What additional training would make me more effective in my ministry context?

We naturally realize that teachers, doctors, lawyers, and engineers need professional development classes to stay up to date with their skills. However, ministry leaders have the same need. Seminary or Bible school is just the beginning of a lifetime of learning for those in ministry.

Once you identify the areas where you'll need new training, you'll have a variety of options—from free classes on YouTube and iTunesU to books and other printed resources to conferences and seminary classes. Think creatively about where you'll need the additional training. Don't limit it to traditional ministry topics like preaching or the Bible either. Consider so-called “secular” topics like leadership, psychology, and technology as well.

Here's the hard—and important—part about evaluating yourself. You can't stop with self-evaluation. You desperately need the feedback of others. Invite friends, acquaintances, church members, community leaders, and—if you are particularly courageous—your spouse to answer the questions above. If you can convince these people to give honest and transparent answers, you'll find this exercise especially valuable.

A worksheet (entitled “Ministry Evaluation”) has been included with this ebook that you can pass on to friends and family to fill out. The questions are slightly different but related.

# Evaluate your team

Once you've evaluated yourself, turn your focus upon your team. Whether you have staff or not, you have a ministry team. These are the men and women you "go to battle" with each week. They may be other pastors, staff members, or key volunteers. As you look toward the first 100 days of the next year, you need to make sure you have the right people, in the right places, at the right time in your church.

If you're in a leadership position over your team, you can find a variety of great evaluation tools on the market. Some are even free. Regular, thorough evaluations that involve multiple people giving feedback on team members (staff and volunteers) play an essential part in an effective ministry organization.

But as you think about your next 100 days—and ultimately your next year, here are a few critical first questions to ask. Take out a list of the people on your team. Look at each name one by one as you consider these questions:

- Has this person clearly "bought into" the church's vision and mission?
- Are this person's gifts, abilities, and experiences being properly utilized in his or her current role?
- Is this person effective in his or her ministry role?
- Is there another role in the church where this person could be a better fit?

- Is anyone missing? As we look to become what God has called our church to be in the next year, is there another role we need to fill first?

These questions should be conversation starters with team members as you head toward next year. Never make decisions on those you lead in a vacuum. Involve them in the process.

# Evaluate your church

Now turn your eyes toward your congregation. You need to figure out where your church is to go next. Always start an evaluation of your church by reviewing the biblical vision and mission of your church. That's the plumb line (For help developing a strategic plan, including a vision statement and mission statement, download the free ebook, [How to Create Your Church's Growth & Legacy Plan](#)).

Look particularly at these aspects of your church as you compare where you are to where you want to go.

1

## What did your church do well last year?

Maybe it was a ministry that flourished. Maybe it was an event that God particularly used. Maybe it was a population you were particularly good at reaching last year. Remind yourself what your church is good at. Consider building upon that in the next 100 days and beyond.

2

## What part(s) of your mission statement did you struggle with the most last year?

No church is perfect. As you look at your church mission statement, identify the places you came up short last year.

3

### Looking ahead to next year, what are some potential growth areas that your church can capitalize upon?

For example, maybe there's a new neighborhood development nearby that your church can reach this year. Maybe there is a growing segment of the population the church is particularly positioned to reach. Or maybe there are some gifts and talents clustered in your church that God can use to do something new and fresh in your community.

4

### Again, looking ahead to next year, what are some potential pitfalls that could be coming?

Often when you examine your ministry closely, you'll spot some trends that are headed in the wrong direction. These three trends should be at the top of your list to review:

- **Age:** Does the average age of your church more closely match your community than last year?
- **Diversity:** Does the ethnic diversity of your church more closely match your community than it did last year?
- **Giving:** Is your church's giving going up or going down?

Numbers (properly interpreted) don't lie. When age and diversity become out of whack with your community and when giving declines, your church declines. Taking an honest look at these trends—and others—can help you spot problems before they come your way.

Now, after you've looked back and evaluated yourself, your team, and your church, it's time to look forward.

You're ready to make the most of the next 100 days.



# CHAPTER

## Plan Ahead

Maybe the most important task you can take on during your first 100 days is to make a plan for the rest of your year. Abraham Lincoln once said, “Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.”

Planning is about sharpening your axe. Without effective preparation, your year is doomed to fail from the beginning. What kinds of plans do you need?

# Establish **goals** for the coming year

Determine what it's going to take to get to where you want to be at the end of next year and develop some goals accordingly. Creating SMART goals (as defined below) can help you make the most of this exercise. SMART goals are:

- **Specific:** Clearly communicate exactly what you expect to achieve.
- **Measurable:** Make the goal something you can count.
- **Assignable:** Give one person the responsibility to complete the goal.
- **Relevant:** Confirm that the goal moves your church toward its stated vision.
- **Time-related:** Specify when you expect the goal to be completed.

Write your goals down. Make sure everyone on your team sees them. Consider creating a bulletin board in the church office that tracks where you are on these goals.

## Determine what **tools** you need to reach your **goals**

Think digital—and more specifically mobile—first. You might not consider yourself a “techie,” but we all live in an increasingly digital world. Even if you aren’t digitally in tune, many of those you lead are.

Most of the significant goals you set for your church can be aided by mobile solutions.

Hard to believe?

*Want to get more of your congregation to study the Bible?* Integrate the Bible into your church's mobile presence and encourage your congregation to use it.

*Do you have a goal to connect more people in small groups?* Build a small group finder into your mobile app that allows users to find small groups near them through their phone's GPS.

*Would you like to see your congregation express generosity more faithfully?* Help them be generous to your church's vision wherever they are through mobile giving.

*Is getting more people to attend your worship service one of your goals?* Empower your congregation to invite friends and family through your mobile app.

Technology isn't the silver bullet that will solve all of your problems and help you reach all of your goals. God never intended technology to do that. You shouldn't either.

*Technology isn't a problem-solver; it's an accelerator.*

Technology will provide the tool that can help your congregation get connected in small groups and make it easier for them to do so. It can't actually make people show up to small group meetings.

Still don't discount the powerful accelerating potential of technology in the church.



# CHAPTER

## Get to Work

You can't sidestep evaluation and planning in the first 100 days. But you can't stop there either.

You have critical work to do in the next 100 days. Time to get started.

# Start something **new**

Unless you're in a location with year-round schools, most of the people in your congregation (and the surrounding community) have two (maybe three) times during their year when their schedules are in flux—and they're open for something new to squeeze into it (the beginning of the school year and the first of the calendar year). Depending upon what you're doing, the beginning of summer may also fit in that category.

Your first 100 days of the year are an ideal time to start new Bible study classes, small groups, and ministries. Don't just start anything though. Make sure it's strategic. Look at the goals you created for the coming year and see what could be aided by a January push.

## Leverage the coming **holidays**

The first 100 days of the year include a number of holidays. To make the most of the coming year, you need to leverage them to build a bridge to your community. Unchurched people are far more likely to attend your church for a holiday event than for a regularly scheduled worship service. For your church's efforts to impact the community, three holidays have particular significance:

### **Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday**

Don't think this holiday is only for historically black churches. Any church trying to minister within a diverse neighborhood should consider tying ministry

efforts around it. Consider hosting a community event honoring African-American leaders in your community. Find a way to celebrate your community's diversity.

## Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day isn't just a chance for greeting card companies to make money. It's also a great way to celebrate marriage, encourage couples to invest in their marriages, and reach out to spiritually curious couples. Consider the following possibilities:

- Provide a date night for couples on February 14 (or the nearest weekend). Provide free childcare. Invite the community to participate. Invite participants to return to your church for worship services or other upcoming ministry activities.
- Host a marriage enrichment event at your church. Again, provide childcare if at all possible. Bring in a compelling speaker (local pastor, Christian author, etc.). Provide a meal. At the end of the evening, encourage people to join couples' small groups.
- Launch a relationship-based sermon series and/or small group study. Scripture is full of great wisdom for relationships. February is a great time to dive into it.

Whatever you do to celebrate marriage during Valentine's Day, make sure you either include singles in a meaningful way or plan something similar for them at a different time.

## Easter

For most churches, this is beyond obvious. Easter is the most significant Christian holiday. More new people could step foot in your church on Easter than any other Sunday of the year. For some churches, more people will show up than the rest of the year combined. Hopefully, you've already begun making plans.

The Internet is full of ideas and wisdom for church leaders as they approach the Easter season (just Google "Easter outreach ideas" and see what comes up). To truly leverage Easter in a way that impacts the community and ultimately grows your church, focus your efforts on these three areas:

- **The sermon:** You have an opportunity to preach the most important message in the history of the world to people interested enough to attend your church. Make it count. Don't dismiss the need to invest more time in sermon preparation for Easter services. To fully leverage Easter, preparing a compelling gospel message on Easter matters supremely. It's also one of the biggest reasons people will return the following week.
- **The visitor's experience:** If guests are turned off by your church before they take a seat on Easter Sunday, it's likely the most winsome gospel message won't reach them. Have your team put themselves in the shoes of a guest at your church and walk through what the experience will be like—from parking to being greeted to finding childcare. If you really want to get the perspective of a guest, invite a person who doesn't attend your church to go through a dry run with you. Pay special attention to things like

confusing signage and complicated processes (like child check-ins) that could become an irritant to a guest.

- **The follow-up:** Getting a guest into your church on Easter and faithfully presenting the gospel is only half the job. You need to get your guests back the following week and connect them to discipleship and ministry opportunities in your church. Spend significant time thinking through how you'll connect with guests—whether someone visits them personally, calls them, or sends them an email. The follow-up communication should include your upcoming sermon series (with a compelling title that speaks to a felt need) and information about how to get further plugged into the church. Consider hosting a ministry fair and/or small group connection event during the month following Easter.

## Take the next step in **technology**

Technology has the potential to be the ideal accelerator for what you hope to see God do through your church over the next 365 days. Whether your goal is getting your members connected in groups, increasing generosity, growing engagement, or something else, technology can help. To get where your church wants to go this year, you'll need to take a step early in the year. Consider one of the following possibilities:

- **Think cloud:** If you're still using any "on-premise" software solutions (in other words, anything on a CD or hard disk), look to replace it with a similar product in the cloud. Most of the software you use—from office software to your church

management software—have better options in the cloud. Cloud products will stay updated better, be cheaper, and have more significant features.

- **Find a mobile partner:** If you don't have a mobile app for your church yet, you'll want one by the end of the year. A good website—even a mobile responsive one—is no longer enough. Ninety percent of mobile phone usage now comes through mobile apps. A good mobile partner—like echurch—will provide you a number of tools to help your congregation give, view worship services, connect with one another, submit prayer requests, and more from anywhere.
- **Gather a technology advisory team:** Look for church members in the business world who are accustomed to using technology on a regular basis in their careers. These people don't need to be computer wizards. You want early adopters from a variety of fields to help with this. Gather the group together on a monthly basis and pick their brains on ways the church can better use technology.



# CHAPTER 7

## Keep the Momentum Going

The 1987 Milwaukee Brewers started off 13-0. Only one other team in the history of Major League Baseball has done that. Led by future Hall of Famers Robin Yount and Paul Molitor and a tough lefty named Teddy Higuera, the Brewers dominated the first month of the baseball season. Yet by the time October came, they were sitting at home instead of enjoying the MLB playoffs. They finished third in the A.L. East behind the Detroit Tigers and the Toronto Blue Jays.

Great starts matter.

Sustaining the momentum matters, too.

No matter how strong your first 100 days are, success comes when you can sustain it over a year, then two years, then five years, and beyond. Communities aren't transformed in 100 days. You need sustained success. How do you get there after a strong start?

*Keep doing what's working.* If leveraging holidays in the first 100 days were fruitful, keep it up. Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day are on the horizon.

*Focus on what matters most.* Keep your eyes on your vision and your mission statement. Success isn't a license to expand your ministry recklessly. Use the momentum you've gained to achieve what God has uniquely called your church to do—not what He has called someone else to do.

*Prepare now for rough patches.* No winning streak lasts forever (ask the Milwaukee Brewers who finally succumbed to the Chicago White Sox on April 21, 1987). Tough times will come. You know that. Be prepared now for how you'll communicate your church's mission—and the redemptive message of Jesus—within those tough times. Pray through the book of Lamentations. Think about the narrative of Joseph in the Book of Genesis. Know now how you'll deal with the road bumps along the way before they come. If you can communicate hope and future ministry fruitfulness no matter what season you're in, you stand a better chance of weathering the storm.

Now it's time to get ready for the best year your church has ever had.

You've got this.



# Workbook

# My **Family** Commitments

Other than my relationship with God, my relationship with my family matters more than anything else. I, \_\_\_\_\_, make the following one-month commitments before God:

- I will go on a date with my spouse every other week. During that time, I'll put away all electronic devices and devote my full attention to our relationship.
- I will read one book designed to help me grow in my relationship with my spouse and/or children.
- I will spend at least one hour alone with each of my children during this month.
- I will spend at least four nights a week at home with my family each week.
- I will organize one fun activity for my family to do together every week.

Ministry Leader:

Spouse:

Children:

# Your **Personal** Evaluation

*"Attack the evil that is within yourself, rather than attacking the evil that is in others." -Confucius*

What unconfessed sin last year stood between me and the year God wanted me to have?

What did I do well last year?

What relationships—in my church, in my family, in my community—seemed to suffer through the most strain last year?

What additional training would make me more effective in my ministry context?

# Ministry Evaluation

*"Let us test and examine our ways..." (Lamentations 3:40)*

Ask three or four people to answer the following questions about your ministry. Preferably try to have a close friend, a lay person in your congregation, a ministry leader (lay or staff) in your congregation, and your spouse participate in the evaluation.

This evaluation is for:

Date:

Over the past year, what strengths of mine have you seen God use in my ministry?

What weaknesses have you seen in my ministry over the past year?

Thinking through my personal interactions with you, how would you rate the following characteristics concerning my attitude? (1 = worst, 5 = best)

Humble

Kind

Thoughtful

Truthful

Gentle

Compassionate

On a scale of 1-5, how well do I deal with conflict?

What additional training would make me a more effective minister in our church context?

# Evaluate Your Team

Strong organizations consistently evaluate their teams to make sure they have the right people, in the right places, at the right time. Remember, this is no substitute for regular, thorough evaluations that include multiple voices. This evaluation is designed to help you as the leader think through your team's strengths and weaknesses. Take a list of your team members and think through the following questions. For the full questions, see the ebook.

[illegible]

# Evaluate Your Church

*What did your church do well last year?* Under each category, list the events/ministries that were particularly fruitful last year.

| Events | Ministries |
|--------|------------|
|        |            |
|        |            |
|        |            |
|        |            |
|        |            |

**What part of your mission statement did you struggle with the most last year?** Write down your church’s mission statement. Circle the part you struggled with the most.

What are some **potential growth** areas that your church can capitalize upon next year?

Which new geographic areas of our community do we need to reach out to?

Which populations in our community can we more effectively reach out to this year?

What cluster of gifts and talents in our church are currently underused? (For example, do you have a large amount of wood workers, medical professionals, etc. who aren't using their skills in ministry?)

What are some potential **pitfalls** that could be coming to your church?

Here are a few trends to keep an eye on first. Visit [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) to find statistics on your community.

## 1. Age of your church or community (%)

| Age   | Our Church | Our Community |
|-------|------------|---------------|
| 0-18  | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| 19-24 | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| 25-34 | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| 35-49 | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| 50-64 | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| 65+   | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |

## 2. Ethnic makeup of your church vs. the community (%)

| Ethnicity        | Our Church | Our Community |
|------------------|------------|---------------|
| African American | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| Hispanic         | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| Caucasian        | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| Asian            | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| Native American  | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |
| Other            | <hr/>      | <hr/>         |

### 3. Giving History

| Time of Gift            | Total Undesignated Gifts |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Last year               |                          |
| Year before last        |                          |
| Two years before last   |                          |
| Three years before last |                          |

# Annual Goals

Use the **SMART** acronym to help you create high-impact goals for the coming year. Once you've written your goals, perform the self-check to make sure they fit within the **SMART** formula.

**S** (Specific)  
Does it state exactly what you expect to accomplish?

**M** (Measurable)  
Is there a way to measure the goal?

**A** (Assignable)  
Is there one person responsible to see the goal met?

**R** (Relevant)  
Does the goal move your church closer to its stated vision?

**T** (Time-related)  
Is there a stated deadline for the goal's completion?

Return to question:



# Goal #1

Which new volunteer or staff position will be necessary to achieve this goal?

Which new tool can help us achieve this goal?

How can mobile technology help us accelerate our efforts in this area?

**Double Check if it's SMART**

## Goal #2

Which new volunteer or staff position will be necessary to achieve this goal?

Which new tool can help us achieve this goal?

How can mobile technology help us accelerate our efforts in this area?

**Double Check if it's SMART**

## Goal #3

Which new volunteer or staff position will be necessary to achieve this goal?

Which new tool can help us achieve this goal?

How can mobile technology help us accelerate our efforts in this area?

**Double Check if it's SMART**

## Goal #4

Which new volunteer or staff position will be necessary to achieve this goal?

Which new tool can help us achieve this goal?

How can mobile technology help us accelerate our efforts in this area?

**Double Check if it's SMART**

## Goal #5

Which new volunteer or staff position will be necessary to achieve this goal?

Which new tool can help us achieve this goal?

How can mobile technology help us accelerate our efforts in this area?

**Double Check if it's SMART**

## Goal #6

Which new volunteer or staff position will be necessary to achieve this goal?

Which new tool can help us achieve this goal?

How can mobile technology help us accelerate our efforts in this area?

**Double Check if it's SMART**

# Checklist for Starting Something New

Other than the start of the school year in the fall, **January** is the best time on the calendar to start something new within a church setting—particularly if it's related to a **New Year's resolution**, such as getting fit, getting out of debt, and making Bible study a habit. As you look to start something new at the beginning of the year, **here's a checklist to help you stay on track:**

- ☐ Discern what new ministry/groups may be needed. These questions can help you get started:
  - ☐ Regularly ask this question to members of your church/community: What unmet need in your life or the lives of your neighbors could the church help to meet?
  - ☐ Is there a ministry or group that could be started that would help attenders apply your church's Christmas message to their lives?
  - ☐ Is there a ministry/group that can help your congregation achieve its New Year's resolution goals?
  - ☐ Look for an underserved group of people (ethnic group, age group, hobby group, etc.).
- ☐ Confirm that the new work fits within the church's vision and helps the church achieve a stated goal.
- ☐ Find a champion to lead the new ministry/group.
- ☐ Ascertain budget money for the new work.
- ☐ Provide the leader(s) appropriate training. If necessary, look for outside training.

- ☐ Collect any tools (curriculum, technology, etc.) necessary to make the new venture successful.
- ☐ Identify a meeting location.
- ☐ Promote the new ministry/group in all available communications venues (bulletin, website, social media, etc.). Consider promoting it in outside venues like newspapers or bulletin boards.

# Your **Technology** Quick Start Guide

*Making the most of the next 100 days*

Don't let another year go by without taking *full* advantage of technology to achieve the goals you've set for your church. Follow this timeline to best ensure you make significant movement toward more effectively using technology this year:

## Month 1

- ☐ Take a look at the church goals developed earlier and discern which technological tools will best accelerate your work toward them.
- ☐ Gather a team of professionals familiar with technology (not necessarily technology professionals) and begin to think through the church's technology needs.
- ☐ With the help of your technology advisory team, perform a technology audit of the church, cataloguing the different ways the church is currently using technology.
- ☐ Review your church's budget related to technology and discern what changes are needed.

## Month 2

- ☐ If more finances are needed for technology this year, make any formal budgetary request necessary to those responsible for your budget.
- ☐ Possibly using your advisory group as a starting point, look for volunteers to spearhead technology efforts in the following four areas: audio/visual, web/graphic design, communications (social and web), and infrastructure.

- ☐ Make a list of technology partners (for example, mobile app/mobile giving providers, website hosts) that can help your church achieve its goals within the areas you outlined last month.
- ☐ Begin contacting potential partners to gather information as to their cost and services. Narrow down your list to one partner for each service.

## Month 3

- ☐ Communicate to the decision-making apparatus at your church what you've learned about your potential partners and make any necessary steps to formalize the partnerships.
- ☐ Begin to educate your congregation on how the church plans to use technology to further its ministry efforts.

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