

## **Tool #48: Qualities of Transformational Leadership for Holistic Ministry**

How do you lead a church through a season of missional transformation? Most congregations will not move forward in holistic ministry unless their leaders—called and empowered by God’s Spirit—model the way. The following ten characteristics are hallmarks of effective transformational leaders. As with every aspect of mission, these qualities develop through a blend of human effort and divine grace.

As someone who leads the church in mission (pastor, ministry staff, or lay leader), assess yourself in light of these ten qualities. What are your strengths and weaknesses? In what areas do you need to seek God's empowering grace? Seek out spiritual mentors and partners who can help support you and hold you accountable in your growth as a leader.

### **1. Committed discipleship**

- Love God with one's whole heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30-31)
- Have a growing faith, sound doctrine, and an earnest prayer life
- Able to discern the Holy Spirit's leading
- Active in evangelism, sharing the Gospel in word and deed

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth: \_\_\_\_\_*

### **2. Servant leadership**

- Display Christ's sacrificial love for the church
- Share God's costly, contagious love for the world beyond the church
- Navigate the difficult balance between congregational nurture and outreach
- Personally model the life of the good Samaritan
- Build a leadership team with complementary gifts, unity of purpose, and mutual support

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth: \_\_\_\_\_*

### **3. Faith**

- Sustain faith in God's presence, power and promises despite doubt and discouragement
- Follow Jesus' example of trusting, faithful obedience despite obstacles and setbacks
- Have patience with God's timetable despite limited immediate results
- Embrace a bold vision, with the willingness to take risky or unpopular steps

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth: \_\_\_\_\_*

### **4. Humility**

- Not motivated by the desire for power, approval and lots of followers
- Allow oneself and others the freedom and grace to make mistakes
- Not threatened by critical feedback, but accept the necessity of divine pruning
- Eager to learn from those served, rather than being condescending and paternalistic

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth: \_\_\_\_\_*

Adapted from Ronald J. Sider, Philip N. Olson and Heidi Rolland Unruh, *Churches That Make a Difference: Reaching Your Community with Good News and Good Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 187-198.

## **(Tool #48, continued) Qualities of Transformational Leadership**

### **5. Flexibility**

- Understand that the path to holistic ministry is often messy, mysterious, and open-ended
- Expect the unexpected, tolerate seasons of ambiguity, and weather storms of change
- Think “outside the box” in creative problem solving
- Welcome diversity of cultures, ages, classes and abilities
- Willing to evaluate and revise ministry plans on an ongoing basis

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth:* \_\_\_\_\_

### **6. Visionary**

- Move from "holy discontent" to a new vision of the future, guided by the Holy Spirit
- Cultivate ownership of a shared vision in the congregation
- Motivate others by instilling a missional paradigm and teaching theology of holistic ministry
- Look beyond demands, delays and disappointments of the moment to desired goals

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth:* \_\_\_\_\_

### **7. People-builder**

- Help the congregation understand, get excited about, and connect with the vision
- Empower members to discern and act on their spiritual gifts and ministry callings
- Connect active participation in mission with spiritual growth and discipleship
- Develop people through ministry, rather than using people to get ministry done

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth:* \_\_\_\_\_

### **8. Catalyst**

- Turn ideas into action — bridge the gap between dreams and reality with a strategic plan
- Understand leadership to mean not just doing ministry but equipping others to do ministry
- Are delegators who inspire, empower, train, and coordinate the efforts of others
- Sustain the energy needed for change, managing obstacles and conflicts in healthy ways

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth:* \_\_\_\_\_

### **9. Connector**

- Are energetic networkers — connecting resources, partners, and ministry opportunities
- Personally, prayerfully, and persistently recruit persons for ministry
- Multiply the church’s impact by building bridges to outside assets and allies
- Unite with other churches in ministry, particularly across boundaries of race and class

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth:* \_\_\_\_\_

### **10. Perspective**

- Keep the big picture of a holistic vision in perspective while managing multiple tasks
- Assess the church’s balance of evangelism and social ministry within the holistic paradigm
- Weigh short-term against long-term goals, opportunities against costs
- Are not distracted by non-essentials, discouraged by setbacks, or bogged down by details
- Set appropriate boundaries — know when to say no

*In this area, I am (circle) ... strong \* improving \* so-so \* weak*

*A specific area for growth:* \_\_\_\_\_