

Empowerment Ministry Team Meeting Notes

Opening

Positive thinking by itself does not work. Your embodied vision, partnered with vibrant and energetic thinking, and balanced with active listening - will clear the path for your Miracles. ---Sumner Davenport

Define Empowerment

Leaders who recognize the creative energy, resourcefulness, and initiative in people will encourage participation in decision-making, self-direction, and self-management in work that is both challenging and fulfilling.

Road to empowerment is a journey. The journey is the destination.

Your goal is to create an environment in which people are empowered, productive, contributing, and happy. Don't hobble them by limiting their tools or information. Trust them to do the right thing. Get out of their way and watch them catch fire.

1. Demonstrate You Value People

People already have power through their knowledge & motivation. Empowerment is letting the power out.

You have to trust in the journey itself.

2. Share Leadership Vision

Define the leadership vision of your group – can be done by the group leader (in early stages) or as a group (in later work) – vision and goals provide guidance when working in the future.

The vision statement helps to focus work in planning. It can also be used to re-focus work that has strayed off-topic.

The Iron Curtain, Berlin Wall, and Apartheid all collapsed due to the flow of information.

3. Share Goals and Vision

Empowered goal setting focuses NRG. Without clear goals, people can waste energy. Vision comes alive when everyone sees where his or her contribution can make a difference. How do you talk about what needs to get done?

Share the most important goals and direction for your group. Where possible, either make progress on goals measurable and observable, or ascertain that you have shared your picture of a positive outcome with the people responsible for accomplishing the results.

4. Trust People

Trust is crucial to empowerment.

Trust the intentions of people to do the right thing, make the right decision, and make choices that, while maybe not exactly what you would decide, still work.

5. Provide Information for Decision Making

People without information cannot act responsibly. People with information are compelled to act responsibly.

Make certain that you have given people, or made sure that they have access to, all of the information they need to make thoughtful decisions.

Courageous visions = passionate energy

6. Delegate Authority and Opportunities – Not just more work

Pieces of the puzzle are important to the whole – each small picture makes up the big picture.

Don't just delegate the drudge work; delegate some of the fun stuff, too. The team member will grow and develop new skills. Your plate will be less full so you can concentrate on contribution. Your team members will gratefully shine - and so will you.

7. Provide Frequent Feedback

Energy needs direction and impact. A river without banks is a big puddle.

Provide frequent feedback so that people know how they are doing. Sometimes, the purpose of feedback is reward and recognition. People deserve your constructive feedback, too, so they can continue to develop their knowledge and skills.

8. Solve Problems – don't pinpoint problem people

Every "mistake" is an opportunity to increase competence.

When a problem occurs, ask what is wrong with the work system that caused the people to fail, not what is wrong with the people. Worst case response to problems? Seek to identify and punish the guilty.

9. Listen to Learn and Ask Questions to provide guidance

Provide a space in which people will communicate by listening to them and asking them questions. Guide by asking questions, not by telling grown up people what to do. People generally know the right answers if they have the opportunity to produce them. When a team member brings you a problem to solve, ask, "what do you think you should do to solve this problem?" Or, ask, "what action steps do you recommend?" Team members can demonstrate what they know and grow in the process.

10. Reward and recognize empowered behavior

When team members feel under-compensated, under-titled for the responsibilities they take on, under-noticed, under-praised, and under-appreciated, don't expect results from team member empowerment. The basic needs of team members must feel met for team members to give you their discretionary energy, that extra effort that people voluntarily invest in work.

Closing

An empowered organization is one in which individuals have the knowledge, skill, desire, and opportunity to personally succeed in a way that leads to collective organizational success.

----- Stephen Covey

Game – Numbers Don't Like

Participants will practice the fine art of Making Mistakes with Glee. This is far more than just a technique; it is a state of mind.

Time Needed: - 15-20 minutes

Materials Needed: None

How to Play:

1. The group stands in a horseshoe formation. Count off down the line so that each player has a number,
2. The first person (Number 1 in the lineup) calls out someone else's number: "Twelve!" That person immediately calls out someone else's number: "Five!". That person quickly calls out another number: "Eight" and so on. The first person to hesitate at all, or call a wrong number (either their own or one that doesn't exist), relinquishes his or her place and goes to the end of the line. That person and all who were previously behind him or her in the lineup now have different numbers. The game resumes
3. As it continues, people will constantly "blow it" and have to move to the end of the line. But here's the hitch" Rather than grimacing or groaning, they must raise one fist in the air and say "Yes!" with triumph, and trot proudly to last place. Everyone else must applaud admiringly.
4. Call time in about 5 minutes.

Debriefing:

1. How did it feel to make light of minor failure? How did it feel to watch someone else do it?
2. Why are we usually inclined to gnash our teeth and groan when we fail – even in a silly little game that has no bearing on real life?
3. KEY POINT – Are there any other minor failures you have made too much of in your life?
4. The "YES" is a device that essentially puts a mistake into perspective. When you say, in effect, "Didn't I do that well?" everyone understands you really mean "Whoops, won't do that again! Now let's move on" Can you think of other ways to convey this humorously besides throwing your arms up and saying "Yes!"? KEY POINT: the best "Yes's" use gentle, positive turn-about humor.
5. What concerns do you have about using "Yes" in real life?