

Plugging in to Your Church

Many individuals who have been successful in the marketplace are reluctant to consider a second half opportunity within their church. Their image of plugging in at church includes becoming a pastor, serving on a board, or becoming an elder - jobs that don't use the skills, passions and gifts of most marketplace leaders.

The reality is that churches desperately need marketplace skills in order to grow. Some churches actively involve business and professional leaders in their development plans. Others will need you to take more initiative and define a role for yourself.

Here are some steps you can take to begin to plug your skills into your church.

1. Understand what you bring to the table. The Guide to Personal Service (GPS) tool can help you understand yourself better.
 2. Come up with some initial ideas about where you might fit in. In many cases, this might be a new ministry that the church has not yet considered. Lloyd Reeb, a successful commercial real estate developer and Halftimer, helps his church plan and develop their campus. List 5 to 10 needs or growth opportunities that your church may have that you would enjoy leading.
 3. Find another successful business or professional who is actively playing a leadership role and ask him or her to tell you their experience and frustrations when they initially began to look for a role that fit them.
 4. If there is a director of lay leadership or other similar staff person, set up a meeting with them and review your interests and skills. Ask this staff person to come back to you with two or three roles which they feel would address the greatest needs of the church using your skills.
 5. Meet with your Senior Pastor. Share your personality profile and your ideas with your pastor. Solicit the support of your Pastor in brainstorming how this might look in the church and how you and the church might support each other.
 6. Talk to others who share your passion. You probably already know others in your church who have a similar background to your own. Bounce your ideas off of them. Find out who might also be passionate about the direction you feel the Lord is taking you. Find ways to partner with these people (both marketplace partners and church staff) in your endeavor.
 7. Go for it! Oftentimes, getting something new started at a church requires the same entrepreneurial spirit required to start or grow a business. Once you are comfortable that your church is open to what you have proposed, begin to move forward as if you are developing a new business. You may have to start with very few resources and grow as the Lord blesses the project.
- Getting plugged into your church in a meaningful way isn't always easy, so you may have to be persistent. But remember that when you stand before God you won't be given credit for the things you tried but quit after you met with opposition ... so press on to what you feel God has called you to accomplish.