

Hiring

Look First Inside Your Church

HIRING

We recently did an analysis of fifteen years of hiring history at Granger. I categorized every person ever on staff as a “successful” staff hire or an “unsuccessful” staff hire. I considered it a “successful” hire if the person is either still on staff or if they left well without conflict. If they were fired or resigned and left with difficulty, then I considered that an “unsuccessful” staff hire. The results were amazing! Of those we hired from outside the church, 50 percent were successful hires and 50 percent ended with difficulty. But when I looked at those we’ve hired from within the church, 95 percent were successful and only 5 percent ended with difficulty. I’ve heard similar findings over and over from other church leaders.

Here is why hiring from “inside” makes so much sense:

- You know they *know* the mission, vision and values. There won’t be any surprises six months after they join the staff.
- You know they *love* the mission, vision and values. It’s not just head knowledge—their life has been changed as a result of the church’s ministry.
- You know how they are *respected* by the other volunteers or staff. You wouldn’t be interviewing them if you didn’t see the respect they have from others.
- You know if you like them. The importance of “*chemistry*” on your team cannot be overemphasized. It helps if you like the people on your team.
- You know how they *respond* under pressure. You’ve seen them in some tough times and in some awkward situations. You don’t have to wonder how they’ll respond the first time they are backed into a corner.
- You know where they are really *strong*. They have strengths you need, and you’ve seen these strengths in action.
- You know where they have some *weaknesses*. Everyone has weaknesses. When you hire from inside, you already know most of the weaknesses of the person you are hiring.

Look for the Right Things

HIRING

Most churches consider these traits to be very important when hiring:

- Skills — Are they trained in the specific task?
- Experience — Have they been successful doing it somewhere else?
- Leadership — Can they grow in their capacity and responsibility?
- Ability — Can they get the job done?
- Passion — Does it make their heart beat fast?
- Heart — Do they love the church and wholeheartedly believe in the mission, vision and values?
- Integrity — Can I trust them?

That's a pretty good list. Most church leaders put the highest priority on "skills" and "experiences." It is those two traits that fill most résumés. However, I believe those are the least important! If you have someone in your church who isn't trained and doesn't have experience in the role, but has the other five traits, then hire that person! You can train them in a skill, and you can provide the experience they need. But you cannot train leadership capacity or their ability to complete the job—they either have it or they don't. You also cannot quickly change a person's character. And it will take a lot of time before the individual fully understands and loves the church's mission, vision, and values.

Get the Interview Right

HIRING

- You can't spend too much time in the interview process.
- References are huge – secondary references are even better
 - Be sensitive because you don't want to put the individual at risk.
- Typical process for hiring a support or administrative position (assuming we don't already have someone in mind for the role).
 - This example – hiring Tim's assistant
 - Advertise in bulletin and e-newsletter. (110 responses)
 - Small team filters list down to possible candidates (30 possibilities)
 - § Define team – not positional, but giftedness.
 - Team calls each and determines who to interview
 - 10 quick interviews by team (15-minute slots).
 - Narrow down to 3
 - Tim now involved in these interviews – large-group interview
 - § Have men and women in this meeting
 - § Not positional – based more on gifting, discernment, etc.
 - § Looking for insight, good questions
 - Met with finalist 1 additional time one-on-one.
 - Finalist also met with Mark Beeson one-on-one.
 - Offer the position.
- Typical process for hiring a pastor or senior-level director.
 - This example a position we are in process for right now.
 - Assign an SMT individual to lead point.
 - He met with them 3x individually
 - Group interview
 - Meet 1 or 2x additional to talk through specifics of role.
 - If we recommend, have them meet with entire SMT (possibly with spouse).
 - Meet as a couple with Mark & Sheila.
 - § Why as couple?
 - Offer the position.

Staff Ahead of the Growth**HIRING**

Sometimes you need to hire someone to fill a glaring hole, but many times your higher priority may be a person others don't even think you need yet. A good leader identifies opportunities and threats before others see them. They know what's required to take the next mountain before others even recognize there's a new summit to reach. Because of that, it shouldn't be surprising if you proceed with adding a staff person that others in your church don't believe is necessary.

At Granger, this strategy has been used since the beginning of the church.

- Even before the first service was held back in 1986, the church had two people on staff.
- Before we launched our first building project, we hired Tim to oversee the stewardship campaigns and construction. 2 charter member families left the church when they hired me because they didn't think it was a necessary position.
- Hiring Tony was out-of-sequence. Looking for Office Manager...3 years away from hiring an administrator.

Additionally, you don't necessarily have to pay someone to staff ahead of growth. We frequently identify "volunteer staff" to lead ministry areas. It's one of the reasons Granger's staffing ratios are so low compared to other churches. Of course, it's not uncommon for proven volunteer leaders to join our paid staff as the ministry needs continue to grow.

Pay Attention to Who Rises to the Top**HIRING**

- Prioritizing – how do you know who to hire next? We get asked this all the time.
- SSS: Hire an administrator before you hire a youth pastor.
 - o Infrastructure, systems – keep you from imploding.
 - o You don't want your growth to outpace your systems.
 - o Most churches wait way too long.
 - o Church is 300 to 400 in attendance – time for an administrator or E-Pastor.
- Establish your priority list based on your mission – don't try to do everything, just do what you do well. Some things you won't be able to offer for years (i.e. Men's ministry, Organized Bible studies, etc.)
- After you have your list...pay attention to who is around.
- Hiring is 80% who you hire and 20% the job to be done.
- Get the right people and the job will get done.

Count the Cost Before Hiring a Family Member**HIRING**

Examples

- A senior pastor meets with members of the board or personnel committee to convince them that the church needs a children's ministry director. They agree but then don't know how to respond when he suggests that the most qualified person is his wife.
- A lay leader notices a staff person who is not getting the job done and is lazy, unethical, or incompetent. He believes the church leaders would want to know. The problem is that the staff person is the pastor's son.
- The finances are taking a nosedive, and the senior pastor must make a decision about staff layoffs. There are five staff members, and one of them is his wife. Who does he let go?

Reasons to Count the Cost

- Some will question your motives.
- You could lose objectivity.
- You could put a strain on your family relationships

Guidelines we follow

- We don't hire the spouse of any SMT member.
- We don't hire husband/wife to work in the same department. Right now we don't have any married couples who are both on staff.
- No immediate family member of our Ad-Council members are on staff.
- When there is a family connection, we acknowledge out loud and give ourselves permission to question objectivity. We do our best to separate relationships from difficult staff decisions.

Compensation

Pay Your Staff Well

COMPENSATION

Elders who do their work well should be paid well, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not keep an ox from eating as it treads out the grain." And in another place, "Those who work deserve their pay!" —1 Timothy 5:17-18 (NLT)

Now, before you start trying to calculate what our staff makes, here are some questions we consider:

- What do "normal" people in our area make?
- What would it cost to replace this person? How easy would they be to replace?
- What do other churches our size pay?

At Granger, we've avoided equal, across the board wage increases, and have opted to reward employees based on their performance and ministry capacity. So, we're not only making external comparisons with other churches and local organizations, we're also making internal comparisons based on ministry roles. Whatever your formula, you just need to make sure your staff is being paid appropriately. If you can't pay your employees well, you have too many employees.

We've entered every budget year with this decision to make: Do we add a new position that we desperately need, or do we give our current staff the salary increase they deserve? At Granger, nine times out of ten, we choose the wage increase. The only time we've hedged on that is when we've determined, with the input of current staff, that the health of our team will be jeopardized if we don't move forward with new additions.

If you're looking for places to save money, staff salaries and benefits shouldn't be the first place you look. Your staff won't get wealthy in ministry, but they should be "paid well" to allow them to focus on serving Jesus and the church without dealing with personal financial concerns.

Don't Talk About Salaries

COMPENSATION

If you're wondering how much churches pay, don't start calling other pastors. They really shouldn't be sharing that information. Instead, there are a number of organizations that publish salary surveys that you can use to compare wage levels with other churches your same size and in similar locations. Here are some organizations that publish this type of information:

- National Association of Church Business Administration (www.nacba.net)
- Christian Management Association (www.cmaonline.org)
- Leadership Network (www.leadnet.org)
- By the way, we don't allow staff to talk about their salaries with anyone else on staff or anyone in the church. To do so is cause for termination. Talking about salaries leads to nothing about comparisons and discontent.

Give Your Staff Cool Gifts

COMPENSATION

Last year we bought Ben an iPod. We bought Ginny a box of pears and a gift card for a cooking class. We bought Mark Waltz a TV for his house.

We decided a long time ago that we wanted our staff to "feel" the love of the church all year long. When they are tired or frustrated or out of energy, we want them to know they are valued. Their life matters. So we surprise them with unexpected gifts.

It is *not* a bonus. It is *not* because of their job performance. It is because of their life and it is because of our love.

You might say, "They need the money in their paycheck. I'd rather just increase their pay." However, once you establish their paycheck, it becomes an expectation. When you say, "We are going to pay you \$30,000 next year" they expect that paycheck. They budget for their living expenses based on what you said you would pay. Although it is a blessing and a provision of God, it still becomes an expectation. They don't get all excited and feel your love every time they receive a paycheck. It becomes routine. It is expected.

Here's an example. If your budget is \$30,000, you can tell them you'll pay \$29,000 so you can keep back \$1,000 to bless them throughout the year with gifts. Put it in your budget, but keep it as a surprise to them. Then, in April, you can surprise them with a gift certificate. In July with free rounds of golf. And in October with an overnight package with their spouse.

Systems are your friends

COMPENSATION

- Use Staff Handbook to publish summary of benefits that are included.
- Decide in Advance – don't re-decide every time. But leave room for flexibility.
- At Granger...
 - o Ad-Council determines salary for Sr and Exec Pastors
 - o The Sr and Exec pastors set salaries for everyone else (in tandem with supervisors).
- We are on a calendar-year...we give out envelopes in early December with an indication of a salary change for the next calendar year.
- Never across-the-board.

Culture

Affinity Can't Be Overstated

CULTURE

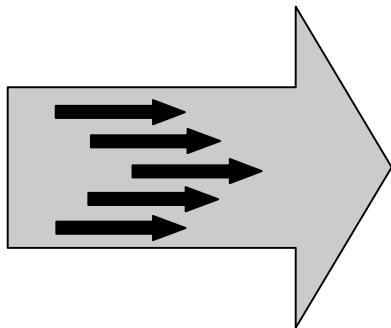
- Talked to a pastor – he told his staff, “I don’t want to be your friend, just do your damn job.” (interesting, he had a high turnover rate)
- Chemistry/Affinity
- Bill Hybels example

Alignment is Non-Negotiable

CULTURE

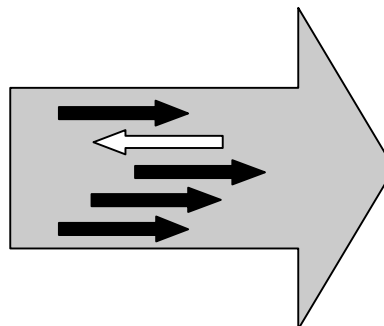
You’ve driven a car whose tires are out of alignment, haven’t you? You feel as if you’re constantly fighting to keep the car on the road. It wears you out and causes tension in your neck and shoulders as your hands keep a constant pressure on the steering wheel. And, all the while, your car is being damaged.

That’s a pretty good analogy for what individuals can do to a church if they are “out of alignment” with the direction of the leadership. Let’s consider different types of misalignment.

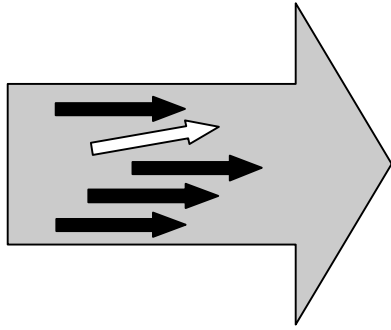


In the first example, everyone is heading in the same direction. There is peace and harmony. The church (big arrow) is clear in its direction, and all the leaders or volunteers (small arrows) are heading in the same direction. Conversations center around how to be more effective and how to reach more people, not about nuances of the church constitution or people’s likes and dislikes of methods.

Sometimes, though, exact opposite direction of leaders or volunteers. It is a major deal, though, far off that no one is being have a tough conversation be hard to convince him same direction as the the team will question your



someone is going in the the church and the other obvious to everyone. It’s not because the individual is so influenced. You may have to with the person, but it won’t that he is not headed in the church. And no one else on decision.



The most dangerous situation is illustrated here. This is the one that will take your church down. This is the one that you should address quickly! The individual is just slightly off. She isn't advocating doctrines that are diametrically opposed to the church's. She doesn't want to take the church in an *entirely* different direction. She just wants the church to move a few degrees.

You've heard her concerns and listened to her thoughts, but she continues to question methods, principles, values, staff motives, and decisions. She isn't even accusing, necessarily. She's just asking questions in a way that tells you what she thinks without leaving herself defenseless if she is cornered. And, of course, every time she has a concern, she makes it clear she is representing unnamed "others" who agree with her.

She never seems happy or satisfied. And you've never done quite enough to please her. This is the person you want to shake and say, "Can't you see all the great stuff that is happening? Don't you notice where God is working?"

This is the person who you need to "ask off your team" as quickly as you can. These people are like poison and will fill a team with doubt, cynicism, fear, and low morale. You may not even notice how far down they have dragged the team until they have left and joy returns.

Of course, this assumes that your church's mission, vision, and values are written and agreed upon. In our membership class, we teach them plainly and ask new members to sign a covenant stating that they will support the church, its beliefs, and our leadership. Then if an alignment conversation is necessary, we can point to their signatures on the covenant, which show that they agreed to support the leaders of the church.

Have Fun Together

CULTURE

- Examples
 - o Chicago – boat ride, museum
 - o Rob Bell's church; meal; bus ride
 - o Christmas Dinner
 - o Manowe
 - o Movie Opener
- Some of this is departmental, some is staff-wide
 - o Staff meeting on the beach
 - o "Wicked" musical

Don't Email When You Are Filled with Emotion**CULTURE**

The good and bad of emails:

- Good: Easy way to express thoughts; Bad – you can't read their eyes
- Good – Quick, saves time; Bad – You can't see their hearts.
- Good – can include web links, attach docs; Bad – you can't tell what is being understood or what needs more explanation.
- Good – Can be copied easily to many people; Bad – can be copied easily to many people!

Never email when...

- You are in any type of relational conflict with an individual.
- You are mad.
- You don't trust someone, or think he or she doesn't trust you.
- You are hurt by something someone just wrote to you.
- Your heart is beating hard, your fingers are typing fast, and you know you'll feel vindicated when you finally hit the "send" button.

Structure

There are Different Levels of Leadership

STRUCTURE

- Senior Staff – huge leadership, birdseye view, ability to put own area aside and look at the good of the whole.
- Associate Staff – also leading scores of people; focused on one particular ministry area.
- Support Staff – probably involved in leading also, but much more focused on a specific task.
- Continuum – the higher you go the less involved in task and more in leadership.

Sometimes You Need a Specialist

STRUCTURE

- Don't fit your payroll structure.
- Need to give them flexibility in hours.
- Perhaps treat them more like a contractor than an employee.
- Be flexible.

Watch out for Span of Care

STRUCTURE

How many leaders have you watched run themselves ragged? It seems like they are the busiest people on the planet, but you don't see that they are accomplishing much. They are always meeting with someone, answering the phone, browsing e-mail, or checking voice mail. They're on the go, but they don't get much done.

Part of the solution involves monitoring the span of care. My opinion is that the ideal number of people to have in your span of care is six or seven. Eight is okay. Ten is too many. Twelve or more is downright unhealthy and dangerous (okay, Jesus had twelve, but he was Jesus).

You are responsible for too many people if you:

- Don't have time to listen to them.
- Don't have time to return their phone calls and e-mails.
- Don't have time to pray for them.
- Don't have time to talk about life, family, and hobbies because you are always talking "business."

This applies to the small group leaders, the staff, and your volunteer leaders. Everyone needs to pay attention to span of care.

Job Descriptions

Job Descriptions are Helpful When Hiring

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- Gives the person a sense of what they will be doing.
- Helps everyone involved know why they are coming on the team.
- After hiring, though, it becomes very organic.
 - We rarely update job descriptions after the fact.
 - If supervisor has an appropriate span of care and adequate working relationship with each direct report—then jobs can be ever tweaked on the fly as needed.
- Ongoing job descriptions more important when you have high turnover.

Administrator vs. Executive Pastor

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

As your church continues to grow, you may also want to consider splitting the responsibilities between an administrator and an executive pastor. We did this at Granger when we reached about 1,200 in weekend attendance.

- Administrative Pastor: responsibilities include all the day-to-day functions that support the front-line ministries of the church. This includes insurance administration, finances, facility maintenance, office management, computer technology, communications, and human resources functions.
- Executive Pastor: Focus more on long-term projects. These include strategic planning, stewardship campaigns, campus development, and staff leadership. In other words, our staff is responsible to the executive pastor rather than the senior pastor. This frees Mark, our senior pastor, to champion the vision, address leadership development, and pour energy into preaching and teaching.

Conduct Ongoing Evaluations, Not Annual

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- Formal evaluations
 - Feel very principal/student
 - Cause supervisors to wait to say stuff
 - Difficult for certain personalities to get through
- Informal evaluations
 - Ongoing, continually addressing stuff as it comes up.
 - No surprises.
 - Relaxed
 - Still need to address problems when they come up.
 - § Suggest written confirmation when you're addressing something that needs corrected.

Training

Spend money on conferences

TRAINING

- Three Huge Values
 - Networking
 - Learning
 - Experiencing
 - Team Time
- § You can't underestimate the value of time together – away.
- Take spouses when you can
 - “Education is alienation” – Beeson

Meet regularly

TRAINING

SMT

- Wednesdays, 8-11am
- Big picture –not micro management
- Tim is filter for agenda items...often I'm saying, “let's do that off-line”
- Always agenda-driven, but sometimes that means we are leaving room for life and sharing.

Decentralized

- Happen in various departments. Some weekly, some less. Some on-site, some off-site.

All Staff

- Weekly, 1 hour, Wednesdays 11:30-12:30
- Open Café...everyone gets one item – included in the budget
- Three S's
 - Stories
 - Spotlight (Ministry or Staff)
 - Stuff

Plan your Orientation

TRAINING

Every new staff member goes through an orientation

- Payroll and tax documents
- Health insurance
- When does staff meet

- Mission, vision values
- Budgeting information
- Work hours and expectations
- Learn Database
- Phone system and computer training
- Event scheduling / Building security system
- Keys, credit cards, mailbox
- Learning – GCC books

Firing & Conflict

When to Fire

CONFLICT

- Competence or Capacity
- Attitude
 - If they are on your payroll, you get to decide what type of attitude they have. You don't have to pay someone to be negative, plenty of people will do that for free.
- Alignment
- Sin

How to Fire

CONFLICT

- Never by email
- Always in person
- Backed up in writing
- Always have someone with you.
- Don't delay
- Don't surprise them.
- Exec Pastor with the supervisor
- Quick good-byes

Leaving Well

CONFLICT

When people leave, especially Christians, they tend to vomit all of their gripes on anyone who will listen.

Leave with integrity...even if you are the one being fired.

After you resign

- Don't talk negatively to anyone. Use the 200-mile rule.
- Don't let people dump on you with their gripes and complaints
- Talk freely about the things you'll miss, the things you love, the way you have grown at the church.

After you leave

- Don't let people dump on you after you are gone either.
- Honor your replacement.
- Don't go back to the church for at least a year. Give the church time to grow and move on without you. It will minimize the tendency to compare.