

An Overlooked Key to Success

In working with congregations over the years, there is one key factor that keeps coming back, loud and clear. If the Pastor and the lay leaders aren't "out in front" of the stewardship efforts, there's very little chance of growth! In spite of the work of the Stewardship Team and it's Chair, the program isn't going to get up and "fly" if the leadership isn't on board.

Now, that's not to say that the responsibility for the success or failure lies at the feet of the leaders, but you can't expect much progress if they are not positive and proactive about what's going on. The congregation follows their leaders and when the leaders are negative, they become negative. When the leaders are lackadaisical, then the members adopt that same attitude. That's why it's absolutely imperative that the pastor and his leadership team are positive about stewardship and they show that positive attitude by becoming the role models for the members.

Some pastors are not comfortable talking about money for one reason or another. They feel that it's a subject better left to the lay members to discuss while they "stay above the fray" and not antagonize anyone. The truth is, that it's when they don't speak up and LEAD in stewardship that the members become critical and wonder what the pastor thinks about giving. There's a lot more chance of criticism when the leaders and the staff "don't sign on" to the program and show that they are active in showing God how much they appreciate all the blessings they have received.

That's why it's an absolute MUST that the stewardship chair coordinate the plans for the year with the pastor and then present that plan to the Council so that everyone knows what to expect and can "buy into" the program. It's the difference between success and a mediocre result in most every congregation. Take the time to lay out a Time Line of your action plan for the year including events and dates, highlighting the main areas of focus. Invite questions and input as how they see the plan being implemented. Let them have a voice, then wrap it up by thanking them for their input and their part as a member of your team.

Now you can move forward confident you have the major players on your side. Now you will know that conversation during the coffee hour, will be about the positive plan instead of griping about the same 'ol, same 'ol again about money.



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Ask the pastor to preach on stewardship at least once the three weeks prior to your appeal. Meet again with the leaders the week or two before the appeal and solicit their support by asking them to spread the positive message about giving. Be intentional about using these meetings with the leadership as a MAJOR part of your preparations. It's one of the KEYS to success that many forget to cover, and it's just good stewardship!



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