



LIFE.CHURCH

Axioms

Everything rises and falls on leadership.

Leadership is the single most significant input to success. It's a spiritual endeavor that matters to God. God will always respond when we make quality leadership decisions and choices.

All development begins with awareness.

We typically don't fix things if we think they don't need fixing and we don't use tools we don't know we have. Awareness, both personal and organizational, is critical to our success. Feedback is the best vehicle to bring awareness. Therefore, feedback is critical to our success.

Where performance is measured, performance improves.

From setting world records to competing in sporting events, measuring outcomes matter because they result in improved outcomes. For some reason, the concept of measuring outcomes in the church often causes concern, but there is clear biblical evidence that numbers are an important part of the equation. Some examples include how many were saved on the day of Pentecost or how many men Gideon took into battle with him. Life.Church measures many things because it plays an important part in our decision-making process. We are always sensitive to whatever God calls us to do at the local church, but data should have a seat at the table.

Never put people above the mission through sanctioned incompetence.

If we, as leaders, allow people who can't or won't do the job to remain in a role, we become the problem. Sanctioned incompetence has a devastating effect on productivity and morale. If we sanction incompetence, we effectively put the person above the mission, which sets people up for failure and cheapens the mission.

Innovation comes best through constraint.

Many people think innovation comes from having plenty of time and resources to come up with great ideas; the opposite is actually true. Limited time and resources forces us to come up with new and creative solutions. Multi-site is just one of many examples of how God used constraint to help us innovate and grow.

Success is defined as much by what we don't do as it is by what we do.

Resources—energy, time, finances, fixed assets, etc.—are finite. We can only spend them once, so we make sure to spend them on what's most important.

Trust the process.

Sometimes people try to circumvent what God wants to teach them through the process. So whether it is our own development, working through a challenge on the job, developing or hiring a person, or even collaborating on a project, we embrace the process and allow it to shape the outcome.

Consistent behavior over time yields results.

We are assuming the right behaviors in this case, but it actually works both ways. Sometimes the enormity of a big change or significant task can be overwhelming. Consistently doing the right things over and over builds momentum and will lead to a successful outcome. Life.Church is an example of this. People look at Life.Church from the outside and it looks completely overwhelming, but it's the result of consistency over time yielding a tremendous result.

Principle of the talent.

God is a great investor and puts resources where there is likely to be a significant return. He will also withhold resources, including people, when we need to fix a problem, change direction, or both. We have seen this so many times that it has become one of the first things we consider when trying to resolve a lingering issue.

Grow the church by asking people to leave.

Have high expectations and a clear vision, and invite people to join you. Ask those unwilling to participate to leave in order to make room for more. This isn't heartless or heavy-handed—it's from the perspective of genuine love. We want everyone to be fully engaged with all God wants to do in and through them. If that should happen at a place other than Life.Church, that has to be OK.

Vision leaks; culture drifts.

A clear and compelling vision is the glue that holds organizations, including Life.Church, together. Vision has to be repeated clearly and often. Culture is like a boat—if you are not actively guiding it, it will drift with prevailing winds and currents. If you're asleep at the wheel, you'll end up on the rocks.

Failure is not an option; it's a necessity.

We were in a meeting with a large, successful church when the leader made this statement: "We can't take significant risks anymore because we are so large we can't afford to fail." This meant they would not undertake anything new or make a significant change until they were sure they had accounted for and eliminated the risks. We have to embrace risk if we're going to accomplish all God has for us.

The 80/10/10 rule.

All significant change will result in the following: 10% of the people will be vocally against it, 10% of the people will be quietly for it, and the other 80% will just show up the next week and move on. Don't allow the vocal 10% to keep you from doing the right thing.

All systems produce exactly what they were designed to produce.

When we aren't getting the results we want or need, it's easy to look at people first; but many times the poor outcome is the result of a system that is broken or inefficient. Early on we used a matrix to help us identify where the systems were broken.

We are living in the good old days.

It's always good to look back with nostalgic feelings and remember the good old days. It's also good to realize that we are living in the good old days today! Don't miss an opportunity to make a difference, to savor the moment, to make a little bit of history right now. We are all a part of a move of God that is nothing short of amazing! We truly are living in the good old days!