

HOW TO RE-STRUCTURE YOUR CHURCH STAFF FOR GROWTH

THE
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GROUP®



Leading a large church forward instead of drifting backward is incredibly hard—especially if you’re not sure you have the right team around you.

If you want to lead a healthy, thriving church in the future, an inefficient staff structure presents a significant challenge—after all, your team is the most valuable asset you have to move your vision forward. If your team is underperforming and dysfunctional, high-achieving but completely burnt out, or you simply don’t have the right people in the right roles, your vision will **never** become reality.

A high-capacity team, combined with the right roles that are aligned to your strategy, is key to a healthy, growing ministry. **You’re perfectly structured to get the results you’re getting today.** If you don’t like the results you’re getting, it might be time for a change.

But say the word “restructure” and most people get nervous. Leading through an organizational restructuring process is one of the most challenging things a leader has to do.



Here are the **four steps** you need to take to restructure your staff to accomplish your vision:

STEP 1: ASSESS CURRENT TEAM HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE

Good planning always begins with a proper assessment of where you are now. Feeling like something is “off” on your team is a good first step, but you need to be able to clearly identify and name the dysfunction or unhealth before you can begin to fix it.

We recommend starting with two assessments:

An individual strengths assessment. As the leader, it’s your responsibility to identify and steward every strength that your team possesses. You may have required some type of personality or strengths assessment during each staff hiring, but it’s important to revisit this area regularly. We recommend *Leading From Your Strengths*, which showcases everyone’s natural strengths and tendencies. It will also help identify team members who may be acting in a role that is outside their natural giftings.

A team health assessment. We recommend doing this exercise collaboratively with a few key leaders and having a candid conversation around each topic. Using a scale of 1-6 (1 = *strongly disagree* 2 = *mostly disagree* 3 = *mildly disagree* 4 = *mildly agree* 5 = *mostly agree* 6 = *strongly agree*), ask your staff leaders to rate how well they believe you’re doing as a team in response to the following questions:

1. Our team is aligned and dedicated to a common vision.
2. We have great unity as a staff.
3. We have very little staff turnover.
4. We are able to handle conflict in an open and healthy fashion.
5. Our staff are clear about each of their priorities.
6. We have regular conversations where we evaluate people’s performance.



7. Our staff executes at a high level.
8. Our team spends time together in God's word and in meaningful prayer.
9. We have a culture of trust.
10. We are satisfied with the results we are seeing from our staff.

Scoring your assessments:

- First, add up your scores to questions 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9, then take the average. That's your team health score.
- Next, add up your scores to questions 1, 5, 6, 7 and 10, then take the average. That's your team performance score.

How did you do? After each person scores their own assessment, let the results serve as the basis for a team conversation.

To dive deeper in this area, consider the [Unstuck Teams Assessment](#) (available through the Unstuck Learning Hub). This tool helps you clarify your team story by providing a self-assessed aggregate perspective on your staff's personal health, team health, personal performance, team performance, systems and culture.



STEP 2: CLARIFY DECISION RIGHTS

Lack of clarity around decision-making frustrates leaders, slows progress in critical areas, and causes an undercurrent of strain between teammates.

There are seven ways to make a decision, based on how much time you have to make the decision and how much buy-in is necessary:

DECISION LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1) Leader Decides	This is the quickest way to make a decision because no other input is required in the decision making. A leader is simply appointed to make the decision. Buy-in is often very low at this level.
2) Leader Decides with Input	A leader is appointed to make the decision, but is also instructed to get input from others prior to making the decision. Because other voices are in the mix, there is an increased level of buy-in.
3) Sub-Group Decides	A small team, a sub-group, is tasked with making the decision.
4) Sub-Group Decides with Input	The sub-group makes the decision after getting input from others.
5) Majority Vote	Just like it sounds. Once options have been discussed, whichever option gets the most votes wins.

6) Consensus	Consensus is reached once all team members involved in making the decision are no longer opposed or are neutral towards the option that's been laid out.
7) Alignment	Different from consensus, alignment requires that all team members are in total agreement that it's the right decision.

Different types of decisions warrant different types of decision rights. By thinking through what level of buy-in is needed and how much time you have to make a decision, you can identify the proper course of action for each decision. For example: In the event of adding a new service time, you may desire consensus, but also know that you have to make the decision by a certain date to allow proper time to prepare for the change. In this case, the backup plan established at the beginning says, “If we aren’t able to come to a consensus by X date, the Senior Leader decides.”

Bringing clarity in advance to who is making the decision is freeing—everyone knows their role.

STEP 3: EVALUATE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND POTENTIAL

To determine who the leaders are within your team and who should own what, it’s important to determine the unique capacities that each leader holds. In other words, how many people do you think these leaders are equipped to lead?

In [Exodus 18](#), we see the concept of leaders of tens, fifties, hundreds and thousands. These people are all team builders, but the difference lies in the number of people and teams they can build *well*.



All leaders need mentorship to discover their capacity and grow to new levels. People who start out leading 10s may have the capacity to become leaders of 50s—or they may not. People who lead 100s

well may be great leading 1000s, but then again, **they may not**. It takes leaders who have walked this pathway investing in their teams to help them find out.

Once leadership capacity has been evaluated, it's time to ask: Does every person on our team have the leadership capacity needed for their current role? What about for the future?

Leadership capacity is not the only factor at play in a good staffing fit—personal character, team chemistry, and culture are also key factors. We recommend that your Senior Leadership Team complete a **Leadership Assessment Ledger** by assessing each team member in these key areas, scoring them from 1-10 on: Character, Chemistry, Competence, and Culture.

Once all areas are scored, calculate the total score for each person by multiplying Character x Chemistry x Competence x Culture. The final number reflects an overall assessment of team and vision fit and allows you to compare team members in a more objective way.

STEP 4: STRUCTURE FOR YOUR VISION

In most cases, churches develop their structure through a piecemeal approach over time. It's very rare that we see churches who have thoughtfully assessed their strategies to identify the structure needed to accomplish their vision.



Now that you have assessed your team's current health and performance, clarified decision rights, and assessed current and future leadership capacity, you will need to draft a new organizational chart, including suggested implementation phases and outlines on how to organize the work. This includes plans for how your structure will adapt in the future as your church is growing.

Review the first drafts with your Senior Leadership Team, then dig deeper into specific roles, process who will be affected, look for gaps, and identify a potential schedule for rolling out changes in phases.

Your structure could be the biggest barrier to your church's continued health and growth. That's why your structure should be developed **intentionally**, not **accidentally**.

Of all the areas of a ministry that can be difficult to sort out on your own, your staffing and structure is probably the hardest. When it comes to the people you work alongside daily, no one is unbiased. And because most ministries are filled with "people-people," it becomes even more difficult to make calls that are best for the ministry, but may rub some people the wrong way.

We believe that an outside perspective is extremely beneficial in the restructuring process—an unbiased ally can assist you in processing the best possible structure, assessing the leadership capacity of your team today, identifying gaps, and prioritizing which roles need new hires.

We can walk your team through the exercises outlined above and facilitate a collaborative work session with your senior leaders. Our consultants can process your destination structure and present potential organizational chart drafts, including suggested implementation phases and how to organize the work.

Within two weeks after an onsite visit, your consultant will provide a summary report that includes a recommended organizational structure aligned to your strategy, as well as prioritized recommendations for hiring and/or transitioning staff members and 2-3 next steps for leading a healthier, more effective team. To learn more, discover our [Staffing and Structure process](#).

ABOUT TONY MORGAN



This eBook was written by Tony Morgan, founder of The Unstuck Group. Started in 2009, The Unstuck Group has served hundreds and hundreds of churches throughout the United States and several countries around the world.

Previously, Tony served on the senior leadership teams of three rapidly growing churches including NewSpring Church in South Carolina. He published five books including, *The Unstuck Church*, and with Amy Anderson he hosted The Unstuck Church Podcast for seven years, which has thousands of listeners each month.

Tony passed away in 2024, leaving behind a legacy of thought leadership, innovation, and a deep commitment to helping churches thrive.