

MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ministerial development is the means by which you maintain and broaden your expertise, thereby, enhancing your self-value, your ministry, your church, and society in general.

There are two distinct types of ministerial development. The first consists of the continued development of your ministerial skills and the acquisition of additional subject matter expertise. These a priori elements are basic to maintaining your skills within your ministry.

Your church has called you to a specific ministry because you had a God given desire, spiritual gifts, and some level of subject matter and expertise in the expectation that you would continue to develop adequate ministerial skills. Your church expects those called into ministerial to acquire new expertise to meet the changing needs of the universal Church.

Therefore, it is your responsibility to continually develop this first type of ministerial development. Attendance at workshops, conferences, or short courses specifically related to the improvement of specific skills or to recent developments in the your area of ministry fall into this first type of ministerial development.

The second type of ministerial development is through involvement in associations that assist in continued development within one's specific ministry focus. In many professions, this continued development is presented and monitored by professional associations (American Medical Association, American Academy of Trial Lawyers, Society of Logistics Engineers, Near East Archaeological Society, Christian Management Institute, Academy of Management, National Contract Management Association, National Estimating Society, The Society of Cost Estimating and Analysis, Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, and so forth). However for some ministries the person must accept responsibility

for providing time and resources for such activities. There are many ways for you to participate in these activities. The individual in ministry should seek out activities such as sabbaticals, participation in ministerial conferences, perform research, and so forth. The bottom line is that ministerial development is not something that needs definition; it is something that is done. This is one of the few aspects of ministerial life common to all regardless of specific ministry focus.

Ministerial development, then, is any activity that enhances the individual's ability to understand, disseminate, and contribute to his or her ministerial focus. Such activity enhances both the status of the individual member and the credibility and reputation of the church that fosters such accomplishment in its personnel. Individual development is totally correlated with church advancement.

Each ministerial member is expected to maintain his or her credibility as a scholar first and to integrate such scholastic work into the work place second. One's establishment of oneself in a ministry is achieved through the scholarly achievements undertaken after establishing one's credibility as a scholar and minister. For the true minister your accomplishments should show such outstanding scholarship that colleagues readily accept them. For some few, one's ministerial experience can even provide the necessary credentials for membership in a faculty and/or university at the doctorate level.

As an individual, however, we come from a variety of cultural and educational backgrounds. It is to our credit when we work closely together to further the mission of our church that we

are working within. These differences, however, add to your burden as a minister since each person may have a different opinion. Therefore, it is important that ministers understand a common definition of what is "adequate" or "appropriate" with regard to criteria for ministerial development. The "Strategic Plan" which follows proposes criteria that should be adapted to the local community of ministers.

A Strategic Plan For Ministerial Development

A minister is expected to demonstrate success in two broad areas: scholarly and ministerial accomplishments, and service. Each area is important, but new and even experienced ministers are sometimes confused about the relative importance of these areas in terms of reward and respect. They want to know how their time and effort should be balanced among all areas, and how work in the areas obtains or enhances the respect from fellow ministerial colleagues. Ministers need to understand how the roles are interrelated.

The basic problem, however, is that new ministers desire proficiency in both roles immediately, when such success requires both time and experience. The new minister cannot expect to excel in all roles at once. In addition, the organization does not expect a new member to be fully proficient in all roles immediately. More experienced ministers do, however, expect each minister to strive towards obtaining expertise in all roles as expeditiously as possible within the capabilities and desires of the person.

Scholarly and Ministerial Accomplishments

This is defined as scholarly and ministerial accomplishments to include productivity in research, effectiveness in consulting, and active ministerial society participation.

Scholarly and ministerial accomplishments describe activities not generally classified as service (although there may be some overlap with service). The term takes on special significance in that it is one of the factors defined as criteria for recognition as a true minister. The following discussion must be read in the context of this definition. It does not attempt to cover all possibilities; it should, however, get you started.

Research

Scholarly activities usually fall into the category of research. Whether theoretical, methodological, or empirical, research involves the minister in the ideas, concepts, issues, and procedures of the ministry. Research may include the development of new information or it can be an analysis of existing information to provide new insights or relationships. The minister may begin with a knowledge base built through education, or may have spent 20 years working in the field, or both. How we have earned our expertise is less important than that we use it and expand it. To that end, ministers read appropriate works of scholarship by others in journals and books, conduct research, and present the results to the larger ministerial community for scrutiny, criticism, and comment. These activities allow us to maintain, develop, and strengthen the ministerial level of our vocation. Perhaps most important for the development of ideas and approaches is interaction with one's coworkers both in the organization and in the discipline at large.

New ministers sometimes look at finished research and wonder how (or when) they can complete such a project. More experienced folks have learned that getting started is what matters. The first step is to focus attention on an area within the discipline that needs analysis or that simply engages your interest. Begin to read, talk to other interested

ministers here or elsewhere, and attend conferences and colloquia where the topic of interest is likely to be discussed. Take notes. Keep records.

Consulting

Consulting covers those activities in which the minister's expertise and knowledge are provided to assist some outside organization. Lengthy, detailed consultations frequently have broad implications or applications for increasing the corporate body of knowledge in a discipline. For such consultations, documentation and publication (through reports or articles or both) are appropriate and desirable. Indeed, when you are consulted by an organization, look for the broader implications of the work done or useful results with a general application that will interest a wider audience. The purpose is to discover possibilities for publication or other documentation of the information so gathered.

Consulting can and does take a variety of forms. Co-workers and other organizations may provide many opportunities for consulting. Other opportunities for consulting include providing written analysis and recommendations, serving on Task Groups, Teams, and acting as advisors, negotiators, or disinterested third parties.

Documentation

Because ministers are evaluated and recognized on the basis of "productivity" in research and "effectiveness" in consultation, the minister needs a means by which to measure those qualities. Documentation, that is, a record of the results of the research or consultation (the work done and the logic behind it) makes the contribution available to the ministerial community at large and extends the life of the work. The documentation itself and the documentation's availability to a wider ministerial community finally distinguish these activities from other kinds of ministerial activities expected of the minister. By and

large, ministers most frequently would submit research results to wider audiences through presentations at ministerial meetings and publications in journals or technical reports. Other possibilities include, however, computer programs, formulae, and applications for grants. Work related improvements and documentation are less traditional methods of publication. While acceptable, they place a special burden on the minister to ensure that they clearly provide evidence of a level of ministerial effort and achievement equivalent to that of traditional publication. Such forms of documentation often lack the credibility of an article subjected to peer review, and the minister cannot reasonably expect all his fellow ministers to invest the level of effort necessary to ascertain the scholarly or worth of such efforts if it is not inherently obvious in the documentation itself.

Participation in Appropriate Societies

Participation in societies can introduce the minister to various research activities. Societies usually sponsor journals that publishes research and conferences where members present ideas to other interested people. The comment and feedback from interested listeners is useful in improving ongoing work, and the presentations of others at such meetings can be a rich source of research ideas. New ministers should make membership in at least one society a priority. Possible societies include Biblical Archaeological Society, Creation Research Institute, Christian Management Association, and so forth. Senior members of each church should know the major societies connected with the ministries represented by the organization.

Participation in the management of societies (working on committees, holding office on the local or national levels, or serving as referee or editor for journals) is discussed under "Service."

Service

Ministers use their ministerial expertise in service to the organization, the community, and the profession. Because service activities are separate from vocational assignments or particular research endeavors, they constitute a second area of effort for the minister.

Within the organization, service activities include committee work on the department or organizational level, usually in the area of committee work and/or leadership, holding office within special sub-organizations within the organization, and working with organization administrators on problems that affect the entire organization. Within the local community, Ministers use their individual expertise to provide leadership to community and civic groups. Oral presentations about the organization or on topics within our particular area of specialty, use of our special skills (computer programming, editorial, or lecturing) for civic or non-profit groups, serving as guest lecturer at a workshop are just a few examples of possible community service. Paid consulting can also be considered community service.

As ministerial members gain experience and build reputations through research and participation in local and national conferences, they will have the opportunity to provide service on the national level. They may be elected to office in appropriate societies, they may review articles for scholarly journals, and they may serve as leaders in symposia and conferences or hold offices in national ministry organizations within their fields of expertise.

Balancing the roles

Ministers must find equilibrium within their ministerial lives for these roles. None of them should dominate one's time and energy to the exclusion of the other. Although at different times in a career one area or another will outweigh the others in its importance to us, we cannot forget that the other areas also have their place. Ministers are expected to show results in all areas. Experienced ministers look for a range of effort when they evaluate fellow ministers. While they do not expect a perfectly balanced account, they look for attention to both areas.

What now follows is a possible approach for new ministers within a typical organization to use as they move forward toward fuller recognition as a minister in their area of expertise.

A STRATEGIC PLAN

This sample description cannot be considered the only or even the preferred means for insuring steady recognition and/or acceptance by fellow ministers. The purpose, however, is to provide the minister with a plan which they may personalize based on their specific desires and experience. We recognize that some new ministers may bring considerable experience with them to the organization. We do not try to tell them how to proceed. On the contrary, this plan has been developed for the new Ministerial with little or no experience. We try to explain basic expectations for the first four years of one's Ministerial life.

Year 1

The new Minister should:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic vocational tools that are available to him/her within the organization.

2. Demonstrate proficiency within your specific field through your performance within the work environment.

3. Become involved with organizational issues by attending appropriate meetings. Get to know the committees and begin to volunteer for committees.

4. Begin a research project within your field of expertise.

5. Become involved in a local community group that uses your ministerial expertise.

6. Join appropriate societies.

7. Attend local, regional, or national conferences.

Year 2

The Minister should:

1. Demonstrate proficiency with available vocational tools by implementing innovative methods using available assets.

2. Be recognized by colleagues as proficient within your field through invitations within the organization as guest speaker, consultant or lecturers.

3. Continue involvement with organizational issues and obtain recognition from colleagues through assignment to committees of significance to the organization. Continue to improve existing vocational capabilities; create additional capabilities within your area of expertise.

4. Continue work on research project. Begin to consolidate material for submission to conferences for presentation.

5. Continue to provide expertise to local community groups. Offer your expertise to assist in providing solutions to local community problems.

6. Increase your involvement within societies.

7. Attend local, regional and national conferences and begin to submit proposals for papers at the same.

Year 3

The Minister should:

1. Continue vocational capability improvement efforts.

2. Continue the research effort and/or develop additional research efforts as required to maintain proficiency within your field. Demonstrate acceptance of your work by publishing the results.

3. Produce quality and meaningful improvement to the operations of the organization through service to the University.

4. Broaden your research efforts for publication purposes.

5. Demonstrate local community involvement by participating in important decision making policies.

6. Submit for publication initial results from the research that you initiated the previous year. Publication should be in some refereed or highly respected journal within your field.

7. Submit two or more papers for presentation with local, regional or national conferences.

Year 4

The Minister should obtain the following:

1. Demonstrate an acceptance of your understanding of vocational strategies especially as they apply to your field through publishing in refereed journals within the your arena.

2. Demonstrate national acceptance of your expertise through invitations to national conferences and conventions where you would be a lead in a workshop, symposium, etc.

3. Begin to be recognized as an important member of the organization as evidenced by inclusion on important ad hoc committees concerning the administration of the organization through your efforts to produce quality work.

4. Continue to develop the implications of your broadened research. Publication and acknowledgement by colleagues of your work should begin to be seen.

5. Your expertise should be recognized by the local community.

6. Service to the appropriate societies should increase to appropriate levels; including serving on important committees, etc.

7. Continued participation with local, regional and national conferences should be seen.

Year 5 and Beyond

1. Continued immersion in the advancement of your field in the roles identified for a Minister.