



# **Strengthening Your Christ-Centered Team**

**Pastor Don Sutton  
WELS Leadership Conference  
January 17, 2023**



**Pastor Don Sutton**  
Executive Director  
Grace in Action

**8+**

**11+**

**7**

**50+**

**5**

**200+**

# Grace in Action Team



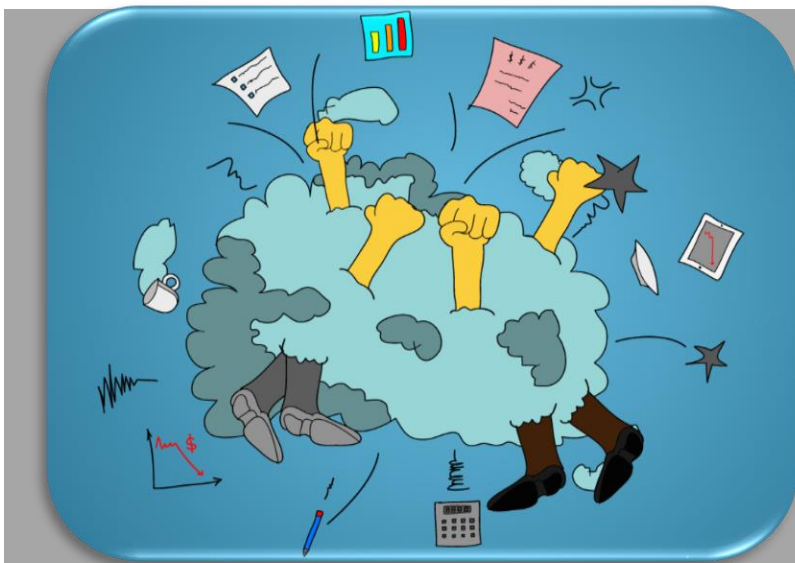
**Greg Schmill   Todd Russ   Steve Granberg   Scott Gostchock**

**Peter Wolfgramm   Gary Jeffers   Chuqee Fletcher   Don Sutton**

## Ephesians 4:11-16

<sup>11</sup>Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.



# Key Take-Away

That you are able to ...

... **build and grow** your team ...

so that you can better **seize ministry opportunities** and ...

... **meet challenges** ...

with a **united team** that **maximizes the strengths** God has given you.

# Team

A group of **interdependent people** committed to a **common purpose** who **CHOOSE to cooperate** in order to achieve exceptional results.

# TEAM

- **Church Ministry Teams – pastors, staff ministers, & support staff**
- **Church Leadership Teams – Lay Leadership & Ministry Staff**
- **Lutheran School Teams – Principal, Faculty, Support staff (& Ministry Staff)**
- **Church Organizations – Congregational & WELS Affiliates**



# Where to Begin?

## Recruitment

- **Aligned** – *Mission, Vision, & Values*
- **Engaged** – *Worship, Bible Study, Service...*
- **Fit** – *Strengths, Capabilities, Team ...*

# What Next?



# Orientation

# Orientation

- Core Values – Mission Vision - Plan
- Structure – Flow Chart - Accountability
- Key Policies - Procedures
- Staffing - *Ministers/Faculty/Staff/Leaders*
- Financial Info & Procedures
- Meetings – *Schedule, Format, Prep, etc.*
- Team Assumptions

# Orientation

## Team Assumptions

- *Growing in faith & spiritually mature*
- *Loving & respecting each other as brothers / sisters*
- *Appreciating & using the diversity of team gifts*
- *Innovative & open to new ideas & programs*
- *Growing in knowledge & skills*
- *Partnering in trust, healthy vulnerability, commitment, accountability, & attention to results*
- *Meeting regularly to collaborate & support one another*
- *Communicating regularly & clearly with the team so all are informed & own the overall ministry*
- *Delegating and elevating when & where necessary*

# Development

## Wellness

### Spiritual – Emotional - Physical

GROW Action Plan of \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Accountability Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Content	Spiritual Resiliency	Emotional Resiliency	Physical Resiliency
<b>G</b> <i>Goal/ Purpose</i>			
<b>R</b> <i>Current Reality (Obstacles)</i>			
<b>O</b> <i>Options</i>	1. Commit to regular devotion time in God's word 2. Use the <b>S-O-A-P</b> method for Bible readings 3. <b>Partner-Up</b> 4. Others	1. <b>I-V-A</b> 2. Use the <b>Trouble Tree</b> 3. Use <b>God's Three Free</b> : Laughter, music, nature 4. Others	1. Eat better and smarter <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a food journal</li> <li>Focus on portion control</li> <li>Eat more fruits and vegetables</li> </ol> 2. Move more – walk, strength, _____ 3. Develop a healthy Sleep <b>routine</b> 4. Others: Use <i>Eat Move Sleep</i>
<b>W</b> <i>Way Forward (Be Specific &amp; Commit)</i>			

# Development

## Leadership & Ministry Resources

*Cont. Ed. Class*

*Webinars*

*WELS.net*

*FIC Articles*

*Time of Grace*

*KW*

*TLIM*

*Devotional Materials*

*Gallup Items*

*Blogs*

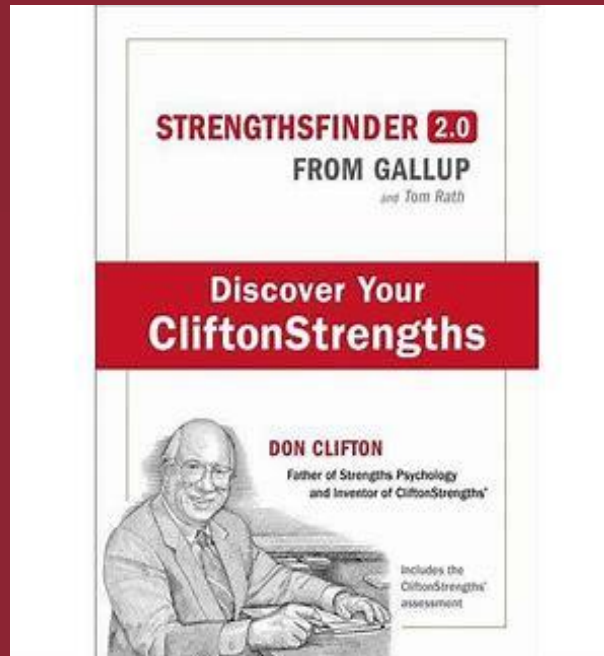
*Videos*

*Book Chapters*

# Development

## Clifton Strengths

Know Your Strengths; Strengths of others

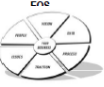


Appreciate self & others; Partner up

# Development

## Planning - Traction / VTO

### Mission – Vision - Strategy




### VISION/TRACTION ORGANIZER™

MINISTRY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

VISION [Primary "Owner of the Vision": \_\_\_\_\_]

CORE VALUES		3-YEAR PICTURE™
<b>CORE FOCUS™</b> (core mission)	<p><b>Purpose/Cause/Passion:</b> Christ's love for us; compels us to "make disciples" both inside and outside the walls of this church and to be servants for Christ</p> <p><b>Our Niche:</b> Grounded in Biblical instruction, training, and forward thinking</p>	<p><b>Future Date:</b> 11-2-2021</p> <p><b>What does it look like?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>50% in weekly worship</li><li>20 adult confirmations/year</li><li>Fully implemented plan for Bible study participation</li><li>35% of members well trained and actively engaged in volunteer ministry</li><li>50% of congregation have completed a Spiritual growth/StrengthsFinder assessment</li><li>Fully implemented leadership academy</li><li>Carry out fellowship plan</li><li>ESL classes for Hispanic ministry</li><li>Building debt cut in half</li><li>Develop and implement final campaign</li><li>Update every 3-years</li></ul>
<b>6-YEAR TARGET</b>	<p><b>Gather –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>60% of members in weekly worship</li><li>A membership that is "Growing Younger"</li><li>20 adult confirmations/year (120 adult confirmands)</li></ul> <p><b>Grow –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>45% of congregation involved in a form of Bible study outside of worship</li><li>92.5% of members well trained and actively engaged in volunteer ministry and using their talents in service to the Lord (currently 300)</li><li>Fully developed leadership academy</li><li>Quarterly fellowship events for the entire congregation</li><li>Maintain and increase mercy ministry visibility and participation (e.g. shut-ins, counseling, family relief, hospital calls, prayer list, prison)</li></ul> <p><b>Go –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fully functioning regular Hispanic worship service at _____</li><li>_____ work team for community (Three \$10,000 projects/year)</li></ul> <p><b>School –</b> _____ School continues to pursue excellence as it fits in with the entire _____ ministry (following separate VTO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fully utilized school and ECM as an outreach process</li></ul> <p><b>Financial Stewardship –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Building debt retired</li><li>10% of members through Financial Peace Univ</li><li>Fully funded ministry</li></ul>	
<b>OUTREACH STRATEGY</b> (for gathering and growing audiences for the Gospel)	<p><b>Target Audience/“The List”:</b> new members; the straying, school/ECM unchurched families; member families and their circle of influence; unchurched communities; world</p> <p><b>Three Uniques:</b> 1) Salvation by grace through faith alone 2) Outstanding accredited Christian education/school 3) Family atmosphere 4) Facilities and resources</p> <p><b>Proven Process:</b> Gather, Grow, and Go</p> <p><b>Guarantee:</b> Share with you the peace found in Christ!</p>	



"Now bring your long-range vision down to the ground and make it real." (Gino Wickman)

### TRACTION

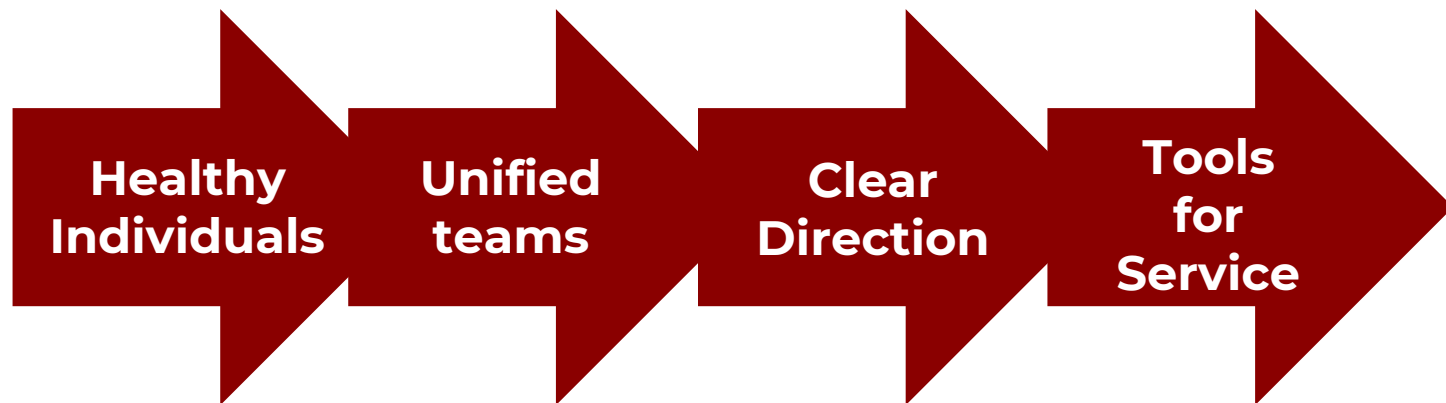
1-YEAR PLAN	ROCKS (quarterly ministry goals)	ISSUES LIST																																																																								
<p><b>Future Date:</b> 11-2-2019</p> <p><b>Goals for the Year:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 more fully trained shepherds</li><li>Completed worship survey (times, style, etc.)</li><li>Fully developed and implemented Growing Young plan</li><li>20 adult confirmations</li><li>2 BIC per year and additional classes as needed</li><li>Complete Bible study program fully developed</li><li>15-20% of congregation have completed SG SF assessment</li><li>Fully developed and implemented member assimilation program</li><li>Fully developed younger generation leadership academy</li><li>Fully communicated VTO plan to congregation</li><li>Identify, recruit, and train fellowship committee</li><li>Fully functioning and organized outreach GO strategy (including Hispanic strategy)</li><li>Social media fully utilized and kept current</li><li>Find I.T. management solution</li><li>School has fully developed and implemented VTO</li><li>Add 2 additional Financial Peace trainers</li><li>Operating debt retired</li><li>Tracking completion of debt retirement</li><li>Youth director replaced and developing plans for youth involvement</li></ol>	<p><b>Future Date:</b> 02-02-2019</p> <p><b>Rocks for the Quarter:</b></p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>Who?</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1. Identify 20 candidates for fully trained shepherds; begin development of training process</td><td>BB</td></tr><tr><td>2. First draft of worship survey</td><td>RP</td></tr><tr><td>3. Re-evaluate attendance tracking process (e.g. average age of congregation)</td><td>RP</td></tr><tr><td>4. Begin exploration of Growing Young</td><td>RP</td></tr><tr><td>5. Complete current BIC</td><td>PJ</td></tr><tr><td>6. Identify first group of members to participate in SG SF assessment</td><td>DP</td></tr><tr><td>7. Initial recruitment of potential members of younger generation leadership academy; seek input from younger generation</td><td>RH</td></tr><tr><td>8. Identify people for fellowship committee</td><td>RH</td></tr><tr><td>9. Develop celebration points – thanks to those who help in ministry</td><td>LB</td></tr><tr><td>10. Identify potential growth group leaders</td><td>LB, TF</td></tr><tr><td>11. First draft of Bible study offerings</td><td>TF</td></tr><tr><td>12. First draft of member assimilation program; add new member; lay out clearly defined goals</td><td>DD, DP</td></tr><tr><td>13. Communication of plan</td><td>PJ</td></tr><tr><td>14. Complete first draft of GO strategy (prospect mgt, strategies, new contacts)</td><td>PJ</td></tr><tr><td>15. Social media plan with deliverables developed</td><td>PJ</td></tr><tr><td>16. Introduce VTO process to BCLB and set dates for completion</td><td>JV</td></tr><tr><td>17. Begin search for I.T. management solution</td><td>PL</td></tr><tr><td>18. Develop debt management tool and include in scorecard</td><td>DS</td></tr><tr><td>19. Identify two additional FP trainers</td><td>MS?</td></tr><tr><td>20. Initial call for youth director</td><td>JV</td></tr><tr><td>21. Update Rocks quarterly</td><td>all</td></tr></tbody></table>		Who?	1. Identify 20 candidates for fully trained shepherds; begin development of training process	BB	2. First draft of worship survey	RP	3. Re-evaluate attendance tracking process (e.g. average age of congregation)	RP	4. Begin exploration of Growing Young	RP	5. Complete current BIC	PJ	6. Identify first group of members to participate in SG SF assessment	DP	7. Initial recruitment of potential members of younger generation leadership academy; seek input from younger generation	RH	8. Identify people for fellowship committee	RH	9. Develop celebration points – thanks to those who help in ministry	LB	10. Identify potential growth group leaders	LB, TF	11. First draft of Bible study offerings	TF	12. First draft of member assimilation program; add new member; lay out clearly defined goals	DD, DP	13. Communication of plan	PJ	14. Complete first draft of GO strategy (prospect mgt, strategies, new contacts)	PJ	15. Social media plan with deliverables developed	PJ	16. Introduce VTO process to BCLB and set dates for completion	JV	17. Begin search for I.T. management solution	PL	18. Develop debt management tool and include in scorecard	DS	19. Identify two additional FP trainers	MS?	20. Initial call for youth director	JV	21. Update Rocks quarterly	all	<p><b>Use Issues Solving Track – Identify-Discuss-Solve (IDS)</b></p> <table border="1"><tbody><tr><td>1.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>2.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>3.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>4.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>5.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>6.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>7.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>8.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>9.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>10.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>11.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>12.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>13.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>14.</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		6.		7.		8.		9.		10.		11.		12.		13.		14.	
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## Level 10 Meetings



# Move Ministry Forward

Ministry moves forward when we have healthy individuals and leaders, unified teams, clear direction, and the skills to serve others. At Grace in Action, we partner with you to build all these things in your ministry so you can share the Gospel more efficiently and effectively.



# Identify Positive Team Qualities



# Five Essentials of Team

## Lencioni – Pyramid of Team



# Goal: 4's All Around!

**1. Never    2. Sometimes    3. Usually    4. Always**

<b>Trust</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Positive Conflict</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Accountability</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Results</b>	<b>4</b>

# Strength from God

**Philippians 4:13** – I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

**2 Corinthians 12:9** – But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for **my power is made perfect in weakness.**" Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that **Christ's power may rest on me.**

# Let's Grow in These 5 Essentials

1. Build a foundation of **trust**
2. Grow through **positive conflict**
3. Construct **commitment**
4. Build in **accountability**
5. Focus on and measure **results**

# **“Why?”**

- **To utilize purposely all we are – our spiritual gifts, strengths, talents, and personalities for common goals**
- **To be effective parts of the “body of Christ”**
- **To be in the best possible position to share Jesus and all He has done for you, your teammates, and the people you serve**



## Team Keys



# Team Keys



# One Definition of Trust

**Confidence** among team members that their peers' **intentions are good**, so you can be **vulnerable** with one another

# Three Trust Busters?

- **Trust Destroyer #1 – lack of follow-through**
- **Trust Destroyer #2 – hurtful words.**
- **Trust Destroyer #3 – self-centeredness**

# Trust

1. Team members quickly and genuinely apologize to one another when they say or do something inappropriate or possibly damaging to the team.

—

2. Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes.

—

3. Team members ask for assistance without hesitation.

—

4. Team members acknowledge and tap into one another's strengths, experience, and knowledge.

—

5. Team members know about one another's personal lives and are comfortable discussing them.

—

**Self-Rated Scale:**

**1. Never 2. Sometimes 3. Usually 4. Always**

**Trust Ratings Average:**

# Keys to Trust

- **Make and receive prompt apologies**
- **Admit weaknesses and mistakes**
- **Willingly ask for help**
- **Acknowledge and tap into strengths**
- **Truly know and appreciate one another**
- **Possess vulnerability-based trust**

# Step 1: Build a Foundation of Vulnerability-Based Trust

## Task 1: Demonstrate leadership integrity & vulnerability – **Starts with the Leader**

### ➤ **Be vulnerable –**

- Recognize & acknowledge need for others
- Admit sin, shortcomings & mistakes,
- Seek forgiveness when appropriate
- Request help from the team
- Let people know you sweat
- Set aside ego

### ➤ **Get into the Word and prayer**

### ➤ **Be the example of trust, love, vulnerability**

# Step 1: Build a Foundation of Vulnerability-Based Trust

## Task 2: Carry out multiple follow-throughs

- Do what you say you were going to do and communicate if you can't (**SayDoCo**)
- Be responsible in the small and large things
- Design opportunities for all to demonstrate follow-through (set up for success)

# Step 1: Build a Foundation of Vulnerability-Based Trust

## Task 3: Apply meeting norms that build trust

- We will treat each other with respect.
- We will be present both physically and mentally
- We will be concise when we speak – encouraging others to participate.
- We will address conflict by dealing with the issue not the person.
- We will practice SayDoCo.



# Step 1: Build a Foundation of Vulnerability-Based Trust

## Task 4: Create shared experiences

- Define shared experiences
- Recognize the value
- Keep goals in mind
- Keep them simple, but continuous

# Build a Foundation of Vulnerability-Based Trust



# Prayerfully, trust will deepen when . . .

- Each team member **buys into the mission, vision, and values**
- Each team member consistently **follows through** on his/her commitments
- Each team member speaks **constructive, edifying words**
- Each team member acts for **the greater good**

# Team Talk – Build Trust

- Identify 1-2 individual goals
- Identify & discuss 1-2 team goals
- Record goals on your action plan

**Building  
TRUST is a  
continuous  
process.  
Keep on  
keeping on!**





# Team Keys



# Not-so Positive Conflict



# Positive Conflict

- Demonstrate passion and openness in team discussions
- Voice opinions even at the risk of causing disagreement
- All are empowered to share their opinions during meetings
- Hold compelling meetings
- Discuss the important issues



# Step 2: Grow through Positive Conflict

## Task 1: Define & demonstrate positive conflict

- Clarify **Mission** and **Vision** and **Values**
- Focus on **Issues** and **Ideas** not personalities
- (Consider building **Vision/Traction Organizer – VTO**)
- Encourage **healthy conflict**

$$\text{Positive conflict} = MV^2 + I^2$$

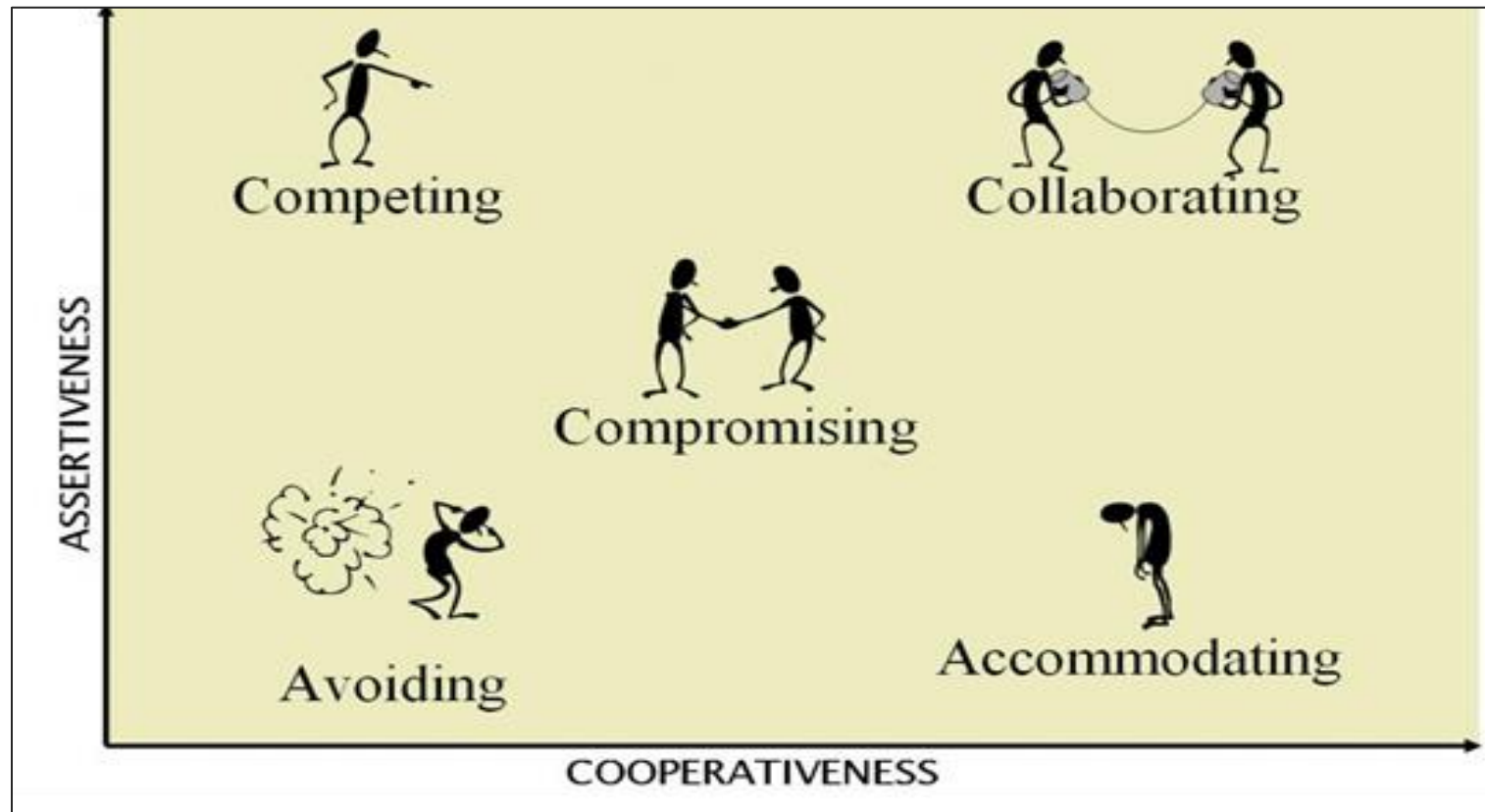
# **Step 2: Grow through Positive Conflict**

## **Task 2: Organize for productive conflict**

- Clarify that disagreement is okay
- Set and hold a time limit for issue-solving
- Identify, discuss, and solve issues (IDS)
- Seek input of all without anyone dominating
- Choose best possible solution (avoid paralysis)
- Assign to-do's so things get "to-done"
- Curtail negatives; team members show respect

# Conflict Resolution Tool

- Conflict resolution style quiz (10m)
- Conflict resolution style survey (45m)



**Be decisive.**

**Right or wrong,  
make a decision.**

**The road of life  
is paved with  
flat squirrels  
who couldn't  
make a decision.**



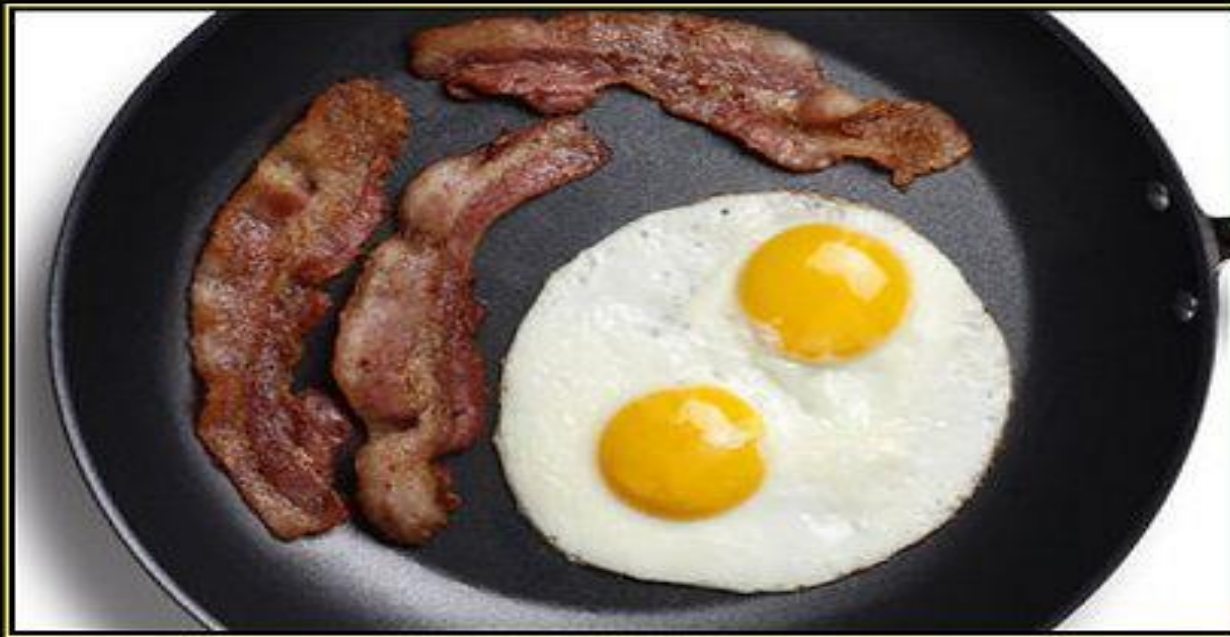
# Team Talk – Positive Conflict

- Identify 1-2 individual goals
- Identify & discuss 1-2 team goals
- Record goals on your action plan



# Team Keys

# Commitment



**COMMITMENT**

The chicken was involved. The pig was committed.

# Commitment

- Clarity in & support for direction & priorities
- Support group decisions even if they disagree
- Discussions end with clear and specific resolutions and calls to action
- Members leave meetings confident that their peers are completely committed to the decisions that were agreed upon
- The team follows through on its decisions



# Step 3: Construct Commitment

## Task 1: Achieve clarity and buy-in

- **Identify, discuss, & solve (IDS)**
- **Listen** to, **consider**, and **discuss/debate** members' opinions
- Tap into the **collective wisdom and experience** of the group
- **Build to a decision** (not always to consensus and certainty)

# Step 3: Construct Commitment

## Task 2: Bring debate to a conclusion

- Align team around **mission, vision, and values**
- **Make a decision despite uncertainty**  
(Understand you could be wrong, but a decision is better than no decision or indecision; avoid analysis paralysis)
- Leaders may need to make **final decision**

# Step 3: Construct Commitment

## Task 3: Commit to a decision

- **Maximize clarity**; destroy ambiguity
- Breed **confidence** that the **Lord will bless**
- Seize **opportunities**

# Step3: Construct Commitment

Task 4: Once a Decision is made ...

- Use Contingency and Worst-case Scenario Analysis
- Build a communication plan – Cascading messaging: to whom, from whom, by when, by what method; request prayers
- Practice accountability

# Team Talk – Commitment

- Identify 1-2 individual goals
- Identify & discuss 1-2 team goals
- Record goals on your action plan



# Team Keys



# Accountability

- Values collective success more than individual achievement
- Does not let teammates down
- Willingly challenges one another about their plans and approaches in light of the mission
- All are held to the same high standards
- Appropriately address one another's deficiencies or unproductive behaviors



# Step 4: Build Accountability

## Task 1: Engage in the highest form of value and respect – accountability

- Affirm the **importance of the person** to the team
- Stress the **importance of the task** for the ministry

# Step 4: Build Accountability

## Task 2: Encourage peers to help and support the ministry team

- Aligned on core values, use **positive “pressure”**
- Tolerate **interpersonal discomfort** and have vital conversations for the good of ministry
- Use the **Empathy-Fact-Action** (EFA) technique

# Step 4: Build Accountability

## Task 3: Destroy ambiguity

- Ambiguity is the **enemy of accountability**
- Develop and follow **clear processes**, understood by all

# Team Talk – Accountability

- Identify 1-2 individual goals
- Identify & discuss 1-2 team goals
- Record goals on your action plan

# Team Keys



# Ministry Results

- Makes willing sacrifices for the good of the team
- Has a reputation for high performance
- Achieves its objectives consistently
- Morale is significantly affected by the failure to achieve team goals
- Quickly points out contributions of others while not drawing attention to self

# Step 5: Focus on and Measure Results

## Tasks

- Focus on the **collective results of the team**, not individual results
- Recognize/affirm only behaviors and actions that **contribute to team results**
- Develop, share, and review appropriate and **pre-determined metrics/objectives**
- **Quantitative vs. Qualitative results**

# Team Talk – Results

- Identify 1-2 individual goals
- Identify & discuss 1-2 team goals
- Record goals on your action plan



# Encouragement

## Colossians 1:28 & 29

<sup>28</sup> He (Christ) is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

# Questions and Final Thoughts

- 1. Build a foundation of trust**
- 2. Grow through positive conflict**
- 3. Construct commitment**
- 4. Build in accountability**
- 5. Focus on and measure results**

**Building a cohesive and high impact ministry team**

# Other GIA Services to Consider

- Team-building with CliftonStrengths
- Wellness – Spiritual, Emotional, Physical
- Strategic Planning & Traction Meetings
- Cultural Competency
- Cohort-based Leadership Coaching
- Good Board Governance
- Nurturing a Warm & Welcoming Culture
- Great Commission Leadership



*Grace  
in Action*



***Grace  
in Action***

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Executive Director**

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**[www.grace-in-action.com](http://www.grace-in-action.com)**

***Your Partner in Moving Ministry Forward***

**Thank you!**