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What Every Staff Member Wants From Their Senior Pastor

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PLUNK

Stick a thermometer in your staff and you will get the temperature of the congregation.

Why Are Staff Relationships So Important?

1. MORALE affects Performance.
2. Staff relationships set the Atmosphere for the relationships in the church.

If a spirit of harmony and cooperation exist within the staff, the potential is exponentially higher for great relationships among those in the congregation — which affects their spiritual growth.

If there is tension amongst the staff, or if there is division, or lack of trust — that attitude is guaranteed to seep into the lives of the congregation. You cannot prevent a slow leak into the congregation — and sometimes the leak builds up enough pressure that the dam breaks.

This relational context is set by you as the Senior Pastor. You are the leader and you set the pace.

What Your Staff Does Not Want:

1. GRACE without Backbone.

Staffs do not want leniency without structure. They want and need grace at times, but not from a leader without backbone. If a weak leader gives grace, it's not really grace, it's an escape, and therefore means little. There is no comfort in cheap grace, it only breeds insecurity and potentially discontentment.

2. Discipline without Love.

"The idea expressed in the biblical context, 'love thy neighbor as thyself' implies that respect for one's own integrity and uniqueness, love for and understanding of one's own self, cannot be separated from respect and love and understanding for another individual. The love for my own self is inseparably connected with love for any other being."
Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving

The important point is that love must come before correction. You must earn the right to correct/discipline. This is done through caring and loving, not by a paycheck.

3. Expectations without Clarity.

"Have an understanding so you don't have a misunderstanding."
Charles Blair

The Gospel of Matthew was written by a tax-collector, and if this is true, the clarity and the simplicity of this Gospel comes as a surprise to anyone who reads it. Imagine, a Gospel written by a tax-collector! What do you suppose a Gospel written by the IRS might sound like today?

"Once there was an adult male named Joseph, a self-employed carpenter with two dependants, Mary, who was an unemployed housekeeper, and a minor son named Jesus. Jesus was born six days before December ended, and this provided Joseph with a full deduction for the entire year. Jesus was born in Bethlehem while Joseph and Mary were on a business-related trip, which could not be deducted. The family received considerable assets of gold, frankincense, and myrrh while in Bethlehem, and a ruling has not yet been made on whether this increase in net worth should be reported as income on line 12, page 2."

*Dr. Eugene W. Brice,
Books that Bring Life*

4. Encouragement without Sincerity.

Sincerity is honesty of the soul.

Insincere "pep talks" ring of hollow hype, and go down like an oversized pill . . . most people choke on them, and don't look forward to the next.

Sincerity is not just about sincerely wanting to accomplish the stated objectives, but encouragement to the heart, from the heart, for the heart . . . not just to "get them" to get the work done.

In other words, your staff will respond to encouragement that connects with them as a person, not just an employee.

Sincerity plus _____ allows encouragement to sink deep into the heart.

Sincerity brings _____.

Substance brings _____.

5. _____ **without** _____.

This is largely in the arena of lifestyle or leading by example.

- _____

Declaring the Great Commission as your mission, and the #1 responsibility of the staff, but not sharing your faith.

- _____ for a relocation project.

Requiring your staff to forego raises and give generously, but not sacrifice deeply yourself.

- _____

Declaring high numerical goals, but then fabricating the actual numbers at the end of the year.

The point is, your staff can see through all of that. And though they may loyally follow you and faithfully serve you, you have lost influence and respect.

Ultimately you will lose the thing you needed the most, performance.

The Wants and Needs of Your Staff:

Let me encourage you, at least half of the following list does not require a special talent or skill, but they do require an intentional effort — a genuine desire to give them the best, then they will give you their best.

The formula always goes that way, first you give, then they give.

One last introductory thought, though I have listed these as “wants” they are also very much “needs.” So don’t think your staff is needy and greedy, but merely human.

**1. Your staff wants to be treated as leaders with _____
and _____, not as “hired hands.”**

The hired hand mentality is one of hiring basically because you don’t have time or don’t want to do certain areas of the ministry. The idea is that you buy some time for a paycheck, but that’s about it, and that’s about what you get — some ministry hours — nothing near what you could receive if you see and treat your staff as valuable players and full of potential.

A. They need to sense that relationship is a _____.

B. They need to see a _____ from you to give them time.

C. They need to know you believe they are a valued member of the team who is capable of making a _____.

2. Your staff wants a commitment to “adult-adult”, open and mature _____.

Good communication is done with the heart as much as the ears and mouth.

You, as the senior pastor, are likely the best leader on the team. (I hope you are!) Yet, this can never become an “attitude” where you look down on the staff, or see them as so inferior that it affects your communication patterns.

Balance is key. You don’t need to ask your staff for permission, but you are wise not to give them parental like commands. That may have worked in “dinosaurish” command and control organizations, but it won’t work today.

A. Communication must be _____.

B. Communication must be _____ .

Don't store up stuff. Stay current.

Deal with issues of tension and conflict within 24 hours if possible, and no later than 48 hours.

C. Communication must be _____ .

This deals more with style. Inconsistent communication style challenges trust.

Don't be up one day and moody the next.

Don't be democratic one day and authoritarian the next.

Don't be negative one day and full of faith the next.

3. Your staff wants clearly understood _____ .

Even the best of the Top Gun pilots need a flight plan they can count on.

This is one of the biggest areas of tension amongst pastoral staff. They simply don't know what is expected of them.

A. They want to know how they "fit" on the _____ .

Let your staff know not only exactly what you expect, but how what they do fits the big picture.

B. They want _____ and _____ objectives.



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C. They want to be _____ but not _____.

Lean and mean is one thing, just plain mean is another!

Every staff member can handle different amounts. Don't compare them against one another, evaluate each one on their own merits, according to their responsibilities.

4. Your staff wants to be _____ for their work.

What gets rewarded— gets done.

Yes, we're all in this for the sake of the kingdom. Ok, now, your staff are also human with human needs and desires.

A. Give your staff _____ so they know they have done well.

B. Give your staff _____ and _____ affirmation.

C. Give your staff _____ that communicate your appreciation.

D. Give your staff _____ that compensates their results.

5. Your staff wants _____ for personal and professional growth.

"I don't think you want to hear this, but you're never going to get out of school. In an exciting world that changes all the time, your job will keep changing all the time. That means you'll need to keep learning new skills. The good news is that when you learn on the job, you have more fun. You use what you learn right away and everything you learn makes your job more exciting and makes you a better leader. A good leader is always curious, always looking for new answers."

*George Fisher, President / CEO,
Eastman Kodak Company*

The more you train your staff, the less you will feel a need to control them. And the more you train them, the more you will be able to empower them to do effective ministry.

The more you train, the more you can expect from you staff, without forcing or demanding performance. When you invest in them they naturally return the investment.

A. The training needs to be _____ in nature.

Informal, off campus, food, cultivate friendships . . . this is the best environment for learning and growth.

B. The training needs to be _____ in content.

Teach leadership! Not programs, visitation, and big events!

Training Resources:



Staff: *INJOY Life Club or Maximum Impact Tape Clubs*

Potential Leaders: *Joshua's Men, Mentoring Women*

Board Members & Staff:

The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership - 21 Days

Learning The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership - 21 Weeks

Living The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership - 21 Months

Reading Process for All Leaders:

The Success Journey

The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader

The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership

Developing the Leader Within You

Developing the Leaders Around You

6. Your staff wants opportunity for increasing their _____.

Turkeys and chickens are content to huddle within the confines of the yard, eagles insist on soaring to new heights.

- A. First hold them accountable for their _____ responsibilities.

Your staff must earn new and greater responsibilities. They are not to be given because they failed at what they currently have.

- B. Look for areas of _____ ministry development that benefit the church.

New responsibilities for the staff must always be a win-win. The staff wins because of the new level of leadership and opportunities; the church wins because the new responsibility directly benefits the church.

Don't give a staff member a new responsibility, no matter how much he wants it, and no matter how good he may be at it, if it doesn't benefit your church.

- C. Give them a chance — believe in them.

7. Your staff wants to be able to vent disappointment, disagreement and frustration without _____ .

“You have not converted a man because you have silenced him.”

John Morley, Author

Give them permission to vent, but they must own their own venting. In other words, don't allow third person or third party venting, each staff member must have the conviction to speak for him/herself.

- A. Create an environment of _____ .

This begins with the pastor being trustworthy. Trust comes when you allow them to vent, and don't slam or grind them in the process. If you do, they'll clam up, and possibly pull away.

- B. Create an environment of _____ .

- C. Create an environment of _____ .

An environment of honor is about all ministry staff treated as valued members of the team.

Honor is also about a code that says we stick together, in both supportive and "iron sharpens iron" ways.

8. Your staff wants the _____ needed to accomplish their work with excellence.

A. They need _____ to match their responsibility.

This is their #1 resource, and it costs no money! Give them authority, empower them, without it they can do little more than perform as "errand boys."

B. They need a _____ to back the ministry.

Money is usually tight in most churches. But there are things the staff need. Find the money. If its not in the budget, go to key members who can help you get what you really need.

C. They need _____ to get the job done.

Senior pastors want things done yesterday. A sense of urgency is great, but a little realism will go a long way to lift morale.

9. Your staff wants _____ from you.

"Loyalty never usurps authority. It refuses to accept inappropriate love or praise that might properly exalt another. Loyalty is the glue that holds relationships together, makes families functional and armies victorious. Loyalty is the fabric of society. Without loyalty, no enlisted man can dare to hope that his general cares whether he lives or dies. No captain can expect an inconvenient order to be obeyed. Without loyalty, marriage becomes a competitive minefield. Companies become dangerously paranoid."
Mark Rutland, Hanging By A Thread

The staff needs your _____ .

The staff needs your _____ investment.

Believe in them and take a risk.

One way relationships (one does all the giving) do not go well or last long.

10. Your staff wants _____ .

"People don't want to be managed. They want to be led. Whoever heard of a world manager? World leader, yes. Educational leader. Political leader. Religious leader. Scout leader. Community leader. Labor leader. Business leader. They lead. They don't manage. The carrot always wins over the stick, ask your horse. You can lead your horse to water, but you can't manage him to drink. If you want to manage somebody, manage yourself. Do that well and you'll be ready to stop managing, and start leading."

*A message published by
United Technologies Corporation*

As senior pastor you need to:

- A. Give Godly and inspiring _____.
- B. Provide clear _____ to reach the vision.
- C. Create the right _____ for success.

The Key To Making It All Work:

"When a gifted team dedicates itself to unselfish trust and combines instinct with boldness and effort — it is ready to climb."
Pat Riley, The Winner Within

At this point you may be thinking and feeling:

"Gee if I have to do all this for the staff, they're more work than they're worth."

Not true.

- A. You can't build your church without staff — so they are worth it.
- B. You don't have to do all ten things, all the time, and at the same time.
- C. Many of the principles are largely common sense, once you are aware and intentional about them.
- D. Always remember, the greater the investment, the greater the return.

The **key** to your effective leadership with the staff is: ***Balance play and productivity.***

Practical application:

Which of the ten staples do you need to improve in?

Select three and write a brief plan for improvement.

For the truly courageous:

Give your staff permission, without penalty, to tell you which one or two things they would like to see some improvement in.

"I have long been profoundly convinced that in the very nature of things, employers and employees are partners, not enemies; that in the long run the success of each is dependent upon the success of the other."
John D. Rockefeller, Jr.



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Answers: Morale; Performance; Atmosphere; Grace; Backbone; Discipline; Love; Expectations; Clarity; Encouragement; Sincerity; Substance; Warmth; Depth; High Standards; Integrity; Evangelism; Sacrifice; Honesty; Value; Potential; High Priority; Willingness; Significant Contribution; Communication; Candid; Current; Consistent; Expectations; Team; Tangible; Measurable; Stretched; Overloaded; Rewarded; Praise; Public; Private; Perks; Pay; Training; Relational; Relevant; Responsibilities; Current; Potential; Condemnation; Trust; Respect; Honor; Resources; Authority; Budget; Time; Loyalty; Support; Emotional; Leadership; Vision; Strategy; Atmosphere

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