A SIMPLE PLAN TO DEVELOP LEADERS

Simply Develop Leaders

Hey, it's Michael. And in this month's, "Master Class," we're gonna talk about a very simple plan to recruit leaders all throughout your church. So if you need leaders to serve in your church, this master class is gonna to help you.

Well, thanks for watching. And today I wanna talk a little bit about leadership development in your church. And the reason we're addressing this, and that we're actually creating more resources on the idea of leadership development, like a resource called "Train your team to help you do leadership development in your church." The reason we're talking about this so much, because it really is one of the number one questions that we get.

Pastors and church leaders just like you are saying, "Hey, we've got a lot of vision, we've got plans, we wanna see all these things happen, what we don't have is enough leaders. We don't have enough people to lead, and we can't do all the things that God has called us to do."

And so, leadership development, really, is one of the number one topics that we're hearing from you, our Church Fuel One members. And it's also...I've always believed this, that it's really the number one growth barrier that so many of our churches are facing. I'm absolutely convinced that the reason a lot of churches are not growing, it's not all the time, it's not like a hard rule, but the reason a lot of churches are not growing has

nothing to do with their service times or their style or their location or their area is changing, but it has so much to do with the fact that leader-development is not happening. And when we focus on leadership development in the church, what happens is all the ministries, all the programs, all the services, everything gets better when the leaders in the church gets better.

And so, it could be for you, it could be a huge growth barrier that has nothing to do with your size. We work with mega churches who are telling us, "We need to find more leaders." We work with very small, brand new, rural church plants that say, "We need to find, like, another leader." And so it is a common, common issue and that's why we want to address it. Now, the good news is this, is that there's a huge payoff, and it's not really expensive for you to fix this problem. It's not like the solution is that you've got to

renovate the sanctuary or build a new building or hire a bunch of staff. The way to improve leadership development and a leadership pipeline that we'll talk about in your church is not expensive, it doesn't require much of money, it just requires intentionality, it requires focus, not funds.

And so it's going to be not an easy thing for you to address, but it will definitely be one of the more inexpensive things you can fix and address in your church. And so what I want to do in our time today is just lay out kind of three steps of how I would advise getting started or improving your leadership development systems in your church. And so the first principle is this, is start where you are. Just start where you are. And I'm sharing this and saying this, because I want it to be encouraging to you. Don't go to a conference and come home with 17 pages of notes, and be stressed out

that there's so much stuff that you can't do. Sometimes conferences can be demotivating to us, because we see all the lights in the show and we come back home to our church and we're like, "We don't have any of those things." Start where you are.

In one of the very first Church Fuel One modules, we talked about having a growth mindset, and that is a great video to come back and watch periodically. Because I have to constantly challenge myself that I need to have a growth mindset versus the stuck mindset. The growth mindset embraces limitations, it says, "These are our people. This is our building. These are our numbers. This is what we have. And now I'm going to be a good steward with this, I'm not going to complain, I'm not going to compare, I'm not going to say, 'I wish we had, I wish we had, I wish we had.'" That's a stuck mindset, you know, "Our people don't give. Our people don't serve. Our people don't

volunteer." That's a stuck mindset.

A growth mindset embraces where you are and says, "This is what we have, these are our limitations, these are our blessings. Now, how are we gonna be a good steward, going forward?" And so I really believe that leadership development in your church, it begins with the conviction that we're gonna develop leaders, that we're gonna do what Paul said, is to go and equip the believers to do the work of the ministry, not to do the work of the ministry, but to equip people to do the work of the ministry. That's leadership development. So when I say, "Start where you are," let me give you a very practical way to do that.

You can open up a document on your computer, you can take out a piece of paper, or you can go up to the white board, and I just want you to write the word "Potential leaders," and then underline it. And then make

a list of people who are potential leaders in your church. Your list may have one person on it. You may get on a roll and come up with one 100 people. But there are potential leaders in your church who are not leading right now, but they are potential leaders. You don't have to create the plan, the system, the process, or the pipeline yet, you just simply start where you are and identify your potential leaders.

Now, one caution I wanna give you here when you're looking for potential leaders. It's very easy to just look for people who are volunteers, who are serving, who are showing up. Sometimes we think people's presence means that they're good leaders, and there's a big difference between somebody who is a consistent volunteer and somebody who has a leadership potential. Volunteers, a lot of times, want to do things, but leaders want to lead things.

And I remember walking through this in our church, when we did the same exercise, and we said, "Who are our potential leaders?" And we came up with a list of people until we realized that we were just putting the names of people who just did stuff, they didn't necessarily have followers, that's the mark of a leader, is do they have followers? And a potential leader would have potential followers. We were listing people who worked hard. And a hard worker is not always the same as a leader. So as you work through your page, just think through, just your people in your mind, like God bring people to your mind and think, "Who are our potential leaders?" Not, "Where are they leading in our church right now?" But, "Who could lead in our church?" If God called them, if we equip them, if we help identify them, if we got them in the right spot, "Who could be a leader?" Maybe they're leading somewhere in the

community. Maybe they're running a business or teaching a third-grade class, guess what? Those are leaders. Those are, at least, potential leaders to identify for your church.

So identify you potential leaders. This maybe your staff, this maybe be elders, it may be deacons, it may be key volunteers. But just identify leaders who could step up in your church if you had some systems into place. And what you're gonna do, because you're starting where you are, is you're gonna begin to identify these people and then make developing them a priority. And we'll talk about how to do it, but it starts with starting where you are and just identifying who you have. God may bring more people to that list, God may bring people into your church who are great leaders already, but you're gonna start where you are, adopting that growth mindset and say, "These are our people, who do we have that is a potential leader?"

Regardless of their age, regardless of where they work, regardless of even their spiritual development, because you can move people forward, right? You can help people move forward but, "These are our potential leaders," okay?

And we gave you a worksheet, it's a very simple worksheet, you can make your own, but we gave you a template this month that is a potential leader worksheet to where you could print it out and just pass it around in a meeting with a couple people, and just begin to brainstorm who these people are. So principle number one, start where you are.

Okay, principle number two is help your potential leaders, these are the people you just identified. Help potential leaders create a personal growth plan. Help these potential leaders create a personal growth plan. A lot of times in churches, and we see this mistake, and I've made

this mistake when I was pastoring, is we identify potential leaders, and then we give them a bunch of staff to lead. That's a mistake, that's too big of a step. What we wanna do is we want to identify potential leaders and not just give them a bunch of work to do and say, "Okay, well, now you're in charge of this ministry," or, "What do you wanna do?" We want to identify these leaders and then help them grow into the roles that they need to have. So it's not just getting them and then hand it off, over delegating, it's getting them and developing them, and making sure they get in the right spot.

So a great way to do this, a great tool to do this is to create what we call a personal growth plan. A personal growth plan is a sheet of paper, you can do it on your computer, or again, you can write on a dry-erase board, it doesn't matter. But it's simply a look. And I recommend that you start with

yourself. It is simply a plan for how I'm gonna grow as a leader in this next year. So here's how it works, you get the piece of paper out and you say, "All right, I'm a leader," right? You say, "We don't have any leaders in our church." Well, your church has you, you're the leader, okay.

So start with you, and you get out your one page plan, and you say, "How am I gonna grow as a leader in this next year?" And then you work through all the different boxes, you say, "Are there books I'm gonna read?" Don't decide to read a book because, you know, a friend published it, or because it came out, or somebody sent you a link to it, or it's half off, those are bad reasons to decide to read a book. Identify how you wanna grow as a leader, and then go on purpose, find the best book on that topic and decide to read it.

What conferences are you gonna

attend? Don't decide to attend a conference because I send you an email and it's half off, or a buddy is going. Those were okay reasons to go, but the best reason to go is to go to an event that will further your leadership development in an area that you've identified. What about people that you want to connect with? What about coaching groups or mentors or just people to know? You know, what about podcasts to listen to? You know, instead of just kind of freelancing through all these different things that are available to you, what if you just took a sheet of paper and said, "All right, if I wanna get better in this area, in the next 12 months, here are the specific things I'm gonna do."

So I make a...just, you know, a personal story, at the beginning of the year, I think through what 20 or 25 books I want to read in the next year on purpose, and I choose those books with some intentionality. I do a little research, and I go ahead and buy them all, and I sit them on my desk. And I say, "This is what I'm gonna read, on purpose, in the next year."

Now, I may take a couple off as things change, I may add a few things because things come out that I didn't know about, but I create a reading plan based on what I want to learn, not just based on what's out there. And the same principle is true for you: if you wanna become a better leader, then create your plan, use the template that we've got. Now, here's the secret sauce, okay? As you create your plan, you go to your potential leaders that you've identified and you said, "Hey, here's how I'm trying to become a better leader. I just want you to know what I'm working on." And as you share your own plan, what you do is you invite yourself into the process to help them create their plan. And so you can do this with your staff, you

can do this with deacons and elders, you can do this with key ministry leaders to say, "Hey, this is how I'm trying to get better in this next year. How are you trying to get better? Let's have a conversation about that."

And so leadership development in your church, it probably looks a little more relational, probably looks a little more conversational, it probably looks a little more one-on-one than it is some big class. You're not gonna start a university at your church to develop leaders, probably. It's probably gonna look more relational, it's probably gonna look more like, "Here's what I'm doing, what are you doing? And let me walk through this with you." And so this is not a big sign up thing, this is not a big recruitment thing, it's not a big event, it's not a big class, it's not even a whole pipeline, right? We talk about pipelines, this is not a pipeline. This is simply a start, this is simply to identify some people and have intentional leadership conversations around the church,

and saying, "Here's how we're gonna get better, and here's what we're gonna do in the next 12 months."

So principle number one, start where you are. You can use a worksheet, brainstorm some names. Principle number two, work on your personal growth plan, and encourage those around you to work on their personal growth plan. And again, we've given you the template there so that you can do that. And then principle number three is this, use simple tools to help your leaders get better. Use simple tools to help your leaders get better. So a few tools that I recommend. In fact, I had just a call with a member just yesterday, we had a video call yesterday, I'd set it up, and they were asking, "What do we do? We have some people that we need to develop, what do we do?" And here's some of the things that I shared with them, it's the same things I would share with you. Is I think there are three great tools that you can use to develop leaders, okay?

The first is books, it's books. I mentioned earlier that I like to read books. I understand everybody doesn't love to read books, and that's okay. I actually don't believe every leader is a reader, I believe every leader is a learner. A lot of leaders are readers, and I personally enjoy reading books. And so this may not work for everybody, but books are a great place to start. Some people may prefer to listen to books, some people prefer maybe to read summaries of books, some people like conversations, some people like of events. But books are a great place to start.

And so I linked in the notes, I linked to seven recommended books that we recommend that you could read with your staff. And the reason I love this, even more so than blogs and podcasts and all the other things, is books, typically, not always, but typically, are very well researched if you read good ones like the ones we recommend. They're very well researched, they're edited, they're vetted, they're published. And when you read a book, you know, for $15, you have tapped in some cases years and years and years of somebody's life work. And so imagine being able to...you know, all the conversations they had, all the articles that they read, they've summarized, they've organized, they've put it all together, and an editor has proof read it and worked through it conceptually. It's been vetted, it's been published. And now, you've, for $15, you have what took somebody two or three or four, or...I read one book that's like this book is 10 years worth of research. I mean, that's an amazing return on investment.

And so, books are a great way to do leadership development, and you can do it one-on-one, "Hey, let's read this book together." You can do it one on a group, and say, "Hey, let's read this as a team." Or you could have all your leaders read certain things together and share the things that

you're learning and the applications that you're learning. So books are a great way. Now, not everybody is a reader, so I understand that.

That's why another great way to develop leaders is intentional conferences. And I mentioned this when we were talking about the plan. But an intentional conference, where are we gonna go that's gonna help us get better as a leader in the area where we want to get better at as a leader? And so if you have staff, I highly recommend that you carve out a percentage of your staff budget for leadership development, and some of that should involve going away. There's something about going away to an event, going away to a conference on purpose, not just because it's popular, but on purpose because it's getting out of the ordinary and working, probably, on you and on your church and on your organization, rather than just talking about ideas in the normal frame of meetings that you already have. So conferences can be great. So as you

look ahead toward the next 12 to 18 months, is there a conference you wanna go to?

And then the third thing I would recommend is, I know this will sound a little self-serving, but I want to recommend one of our resources to you. I really wanna recommend a research we have called "Train Your Team." The reason we created, "Train Your Team," was because we heard from so many of you that said, "Hey, we know we need to develop our staff, we know we need to develop our leaders, but we don't have a good tool to do it. Our people don't read, we don't have enough money to all get on a plane and go to a conference, but we need to do leadership development, and so what do we do?" So we created, "Train Your Team," and it's designed for you to use in your existing meeting structures.

So if you have a staff meeting, maybe you meet every week, maybe you meet every month, maybe you

meet once a quarter, if you have a staff meeting, what if you took just the first 20 minutes of that staff meeting, it's already scheduled, people are already coming, and you use, "Train Your Team," it's video coaching from some of our favorite leadership experts?

And so we ask people not with necessarily big platforms, although a lot of them have big platforms, but who actually have something to say and help you in the area of church leadership, we invited them to come and talk on video like they were showing up at your staff meeting. And so we've identified core skills that all your leaders need to develop, and we asked our coaches to teach on these core skills to your staff right in the meeting. And so if you've got a staff meeting, use "Train Your Team," for the first 20 minutes. If you've got an elders meeting, use "Train Your Team," for the first 20 minutes. Deacons meetings, leadership team meetings, volunteer meetings, use this resource in your existing meeting

structures and you will get better over time.

And so it's a fantastic resource, we can tell you more about it, just, you know, send me an email and let me know, but it's trainyourteam.com. And it's really designed so you can just push "play" and do leadership development. It is intentional, it is on purpose, it's short, it's byte-size, and I think it would really help. And so just imagine what would happen in your church. Now there's so much more we could talk about on this, but imagine what would happen in your church if you just said, "Hey, for the next year, we're gonna just focus on developing leaders. We're gonna help every leader that's currently serving just get better." Imagine what would change in your church for the better if every leader got better. And that's what leadership development is about, it's really discipleship in the context of church leadership, it's helping people know and follow Jesus, and then help other people know and follow Jesus. And that's

what leadership development is in churches discipleship but with the structure and with the organization and the ministry of the church in mind.

So imagine what would happen in your church. If you started where you are and said, "Here's our leaders. Here's our potential leaders," imagine what would happen if just all of those people got better. There's gonna be a trickle-down effect that will affect every ministry, every program, it will help your budget. When you focus on developing people, good, good things will happen in your church. So there's quite a few resources for you this month.:I gave you a PDF of that personal growth plan, I've linked to some articles, I've linked to some interviews that we've done on leadership development in the church. I've got a list of books for you. I've got a couple of PDF templates that you can download to get started, to brainstorm.

There's quite a few resources that go

along with this idea of leadership development. And then when you're ready, come jump into, "Train Your Team," so that we can apply these things and push this stuff out through your church staff. So as always, if you need anything from us, just email, jump on our office-hours call, jump on a members' round-table call, participate with us, engage, work through this stuff, ask questions, and let us help you, because that's what we're here to do. So thanks so much for watching, have a great rest of the day, and God bless.