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LEADER GUIDE: EPISODE #2 BEST PRACTICES TO EMPOWER FEMALE LEADERS

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH CHANGER:

It's time to rip the lid off your leadership and push past organizational pain points holding you and your church back. **Church Changer** is designed to equip church leaders with practical tools, proven strategies, and best practices to help you reach more people for Christ and shatter growth barriers in your ministry. Listen today, and put key takeaways into practice tomorrow! We're here to collaborate with you and cheerlead for you. Join Co-hosts Pastor Tim Lucas and Lauren Bercarich, along with special guests, as they outline a clear path forward so you can increase your impact, and let's have some fun in the process! New episodes drop the first Tuesday of each month.

EPISODE NOTES:

Overview

Women should be the backbone of your strategy for re-building the post-pandemic church. The problem is, women hold only 10% of church leadership roles. We're talking about positions of influence and authority.

"Let me tell you why women are the backbone of your strategy for building the post-pandemic church. More women volunteer at church. Women give twice as much in tithes and offerings. Women represent 61% of your church attendance. And women control the schedule in the household. If you want a 7th grade student to show up to small group, guess who's making that decision? A woman!

- *Kayra Montanez*

In this episode of Church Changer, our promise is to share 3 Best Practices to Empower Female Leaders in your ministry. The truth is ministry can be a male dominated workspace, especially when you're talking about leadership, but there is a pool of talented, capable, creative, and passionate female leaders in your midst! And we're going to talk about how to unleash those female leaders!



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Our Guest

Kayra Montanez is part of the Senior Leadership Team at Liquid Church. She serves as Pastor of Campuses, overseeing all 7 locations and their Campus Leadership Teams. Kayra is also part of the Teaching Team, preaching from the main stage regularly. Kayra started her journey at Liquid as a volunteer and has ascended to the highest levels of leadership at Liquid Church!

Our Audience

This episode is not advocating for a change in the theology of our listeners, instead we simply want to encourage our listeners to do more for the women in your church, regardless of your theology. With that said, we are speaking to 3 groups:

- First, to **men...** as the leaders who hold the majority of leadership roles in churches and who have the power to open leadership doors for women. Many good-hearted men want to pour into the women on their teams but may be scratching their heads as to why there seems to be an invisible barrier to recruiting and retaining high quality female leaders!
- Second, to **seasoned female leaders...** your faithfulness and presence in ministry does make a difference! It matters that you show up and it matters *how* you show up. If you have the power to open doors for other women, resist the ***“Queen Bee syndrome.”*** Queen Bees haven't learned that God has room for everyone! Leadership and influence are not scarce in God's economy!
- Finally, to **up and coming female leaders...** who are in the early stages of their leadership journey. Be encouraged! May this conversation help you see your *potential* and your *pathway* more clearly!

Trend #1: The Pandemic Drove 3 Million Women Out Of The Workforce

When COVID first hit, and schools and daycares closed, women's **double shift** really went through the roof! The double shift is what we call the work that women do *after* they finish their full-time jobs. Women close their laptops and the second shift begins... There's dinner to make, children to bathe, homework to help with. It's a reflection of the 75% of women who carry the “mental labor” of home life during the workday. The end result is that COVID pushed more women than men out of the workforce because of all of these challenges.

Best Practice #1: Upgrade Your People Practices

We want to be careful that a temporary situation like a worldwide pandemic doesn't become a permanent situation. So to combat that, we want to apply Best Practice #1: Upgrade Your People Practices. Kadi Cole has a wonderful book called [Developing Female Leaders](#) that unpacks this concept fully, but we will focus on one item: a **Flexible Schedule**. A flexible schedule can look like offering work from home days, respecting guardrails around work hours, and offering flexible hours that accommodate personal appointments. It's understanding that kids get sick, schools close even when offices are open, and women are owning most of the “juggle.” What you communicate with a flexible schedule is TRUST. You can trust women to get their work done on a schedule that works best for their life and your needs. That's putting people first!



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Trend #2: Less Women Believe They Are using Their Talents & Gifts At Church

61% of women make up your Sunday morning attendance and yet only 10% of church leadership roles are held by women. That's confusing for women, who find themselves asking, why are there so many of us and yet so little of us in positions of authority? It's also discouraging. So how can you find more ways to include women in the life of your church?

Best Practice #2: Be A "Door Opener" For Female Leaders

The solution is to be a "door opener" for female leaders. This is about 2 things: Putting females in positions that stretch them as leaders; and simultaneously mentoring them through it.

The mistake churches make is they shy away from putting women in positions of influence and then they make it even harder for women to gain access to coaching or mentoring. But, there are women in your churches who have killer marketplace experience who could have a tremendous impact on your ministry

*****Bonus Tip For Men**

To be a "door opener" we have to change the "Men Mentor Men" mentality. Men, if you feel uncomfortable mentoring women, it's time to challenge that thinking. You can have a 1:1 with a woman over zoom or in your offices, you can text with females over work projects and be friends with them. You can be a bounded leader that still mentors women! Don't fall into binary thinking: that you can either have guardrails or you can mentor. You can actually have both.

Whether it's vision casting, volunteer team building, managing budgets, public speaking/preaching... give a female leader an opportunity, and then mentor her through it. Cause when a woman feels she's not using her gifts and talents in the church, it's our responsibility to reverse that trend.

Trend #3: Only 10% Of Church Leadership Roles Are Held By Women

More women attend and serve at church than men, yet less women are in positions of authority and influence. What can you do about that?

Best Practice #3: Create A Culture Where Women Can Lead

Well, if you want to understand the *holdup* to a culture of female leadership, you have to understand the *pushback*. And the pushback for women comes from two categories: the ***"stained glass ceiling"*** and the ***"sticky floor"***. Credit to Kadi Cole for coining both terms.



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The stained glass ceiling represents things that aren't in a woman's control because they're not in charge. For example, equal pay for equal work or equal titles for equal work.

On the other hand, the sticky floor represents *"the attitudes and learned behaviors that women do to themselves that keep them from growing in their leadership abilities."* The sticky floor is different for every female... but here are some common examples:

- Asking for permission to give an opinion, even if she has a seat at the table.
- Staying silent in meetings and just taking notes, even though she is the subject matter expert on the topic being discussed.
- Feeling pressure to "do it all," which hinders her ability to ask for help.
- Waiting to apply for a job until she is 100% sure she can do the job (Contrast that to men... they're ready to apply if they feel they can do the same job at 60% capacity).

"If you want to create a culture where women can lead, you'll need to slow down and seek to understand the roadblocks currently keeping your female leaders stuck."

- Kayra Montanez

For example, If you have a female leader hesitant to take on a new role with more responsibilities, can you coach her on how to lead at a higher level, not just add more to her full plate? Or, if you have a female leader who minimizes her voice with qualifying statements (i.e. does that make sense?) Can you challenge her to remove those words from her vocabulary?

When leaders discover the sticky floor their female leaders are stuck on, then the result will be an integration of male and females in the decision making process, in budgeting decisions, and in roles of authority and leadership.

*****Bonus Tip For Women:**

Ladies, take advantage of every opportunity given to you and "always say yes." Don't underestimate the leadership voice God has uniquely given to you. If He's called you, He will equip you so you can:

- Do multiple things at once.
- Take on big challenges.
- And confidently add to your plate.

We're not advocating to let anyone take advantage of you. We're advocating for a bias to say "yes" to opportunities that come your way. Don't count yourself out!



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Churches Making Waves: The Journey

As part of the Church Changer podcast, each month we want to spotlight churches “making waves” and doing great work. It’s not just about giving them a shout-out, but about pointing you in the right direction. For anyone working in ministry, it’s a great idea to see how others are excelling to discover some key takeaways that would work for you and your church.

This episode, we’re spotlighting [The Journey](#) based in Delaware. Pastor Kayra chose The Journey because of how they elevate female leaders, giving a special shout out to Pastor Abby Ecker, who is the Next Steps Pastor, sits on the Executive Team, and is one of The Journey’s secondary communicators, sharing the platform with Lead Pastor Mark Johnston. Not only does The Journey raise up female leaders, but they have demonstrated a willingness to develop and mentor them.

Book Recommendation

Pastor Kayra recommends the book [“Find Your Leadership Voice in 90 Days”](#) by Kadi Cole. This book intersects leadership development with spiritual formation. You read two pages a day and Kadi gives you practical tips on how to apply what you’re learning. So, if you’re a woman struggling to believe that you have a unique leadership voice, or you want to continue to develop that voice, this book would be a useful tool!

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Continue the conversation! Here are questions to ask yourself and your team to help your church thrive. We hope Church Changer will inspire you to put into practice what we discuss each month!

- 1. Who is ONE woman who you can identify and develop this year?**

- 2. Does your church need to upgrade its people practices? What flexible schedule practices exist for women? Are you communicating that you trust the women on your staff?**

- 3. What percentage of your attendees and volunteers are women? Now, contrast that with the percentage of church leadership roles that are held by women at your church. These are positions of leadership and influence.**

- 4. How are you actively opening doors for women (offering them opportunities)? And are you mentoring them through the process to set them up for success?**



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5. **What sticky floors are women on your staff experiencing? Do you notice women staying silent in meetings? Asking permission to offer opinions? Feeling pressure to “do it all?”**

We are rooting for you! May 2022 be the year you shatter growth barriers in your ministry!

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