



LEADER GUIDE: EPISODE #12

LEAD YOUR CREATIVE TEAM TO INNOVATION AND EFFECTIVENESS

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

How do you navigate the natural tensions between church leaders and the staff creative team? Leaders push for results, while creatives push the envelope and sometimes all you end up with is frustration on both sides. Executive Pastor, Ben Stapley, shares clear tactics to build better team dynamics, minimize communication gaps, and increase effectiveness.

About Ben Stapley

For over 20 years Ben has created and captured moving and memorable moments for individuals, nonprofits and corporations across the globe. Ben received a BA in Video Communication from MBI in Chicago. After graduating he worked in Toronto as a television news reporter and producer for Context, a national news program. For a decade he designed compelling services at [South Ridge Community Church](#) as the Director of Programming & Media. In 2011 he received a MDiv from Missio Seminary. For 3 years he worked at [Liquid Church](#) in NJ as the Creative Arts Pastor, followed by 3 years at [Christ Fellowship Miami](#) on the executive team as the Experience Director overseeing worship, creative, production, online, communications, and guest services.

Ben currently serves as the Executive Pastor at [The Life Christian Church](#) leading staff and volunteers to execute the vision and mission of the church. You may recognize Ben's name - he speaks at a lot of leadership conferences that we're fans of - from the First Impressions Conference to The Church Online Summit.



Something Free - Article From Ben

Oftentimes the creative process can need a little refining. It's not just about inspiration, it's about preparation and that includes hosting powerful brainstorming meetings

[ARTICLE: BRAINSTORMING MEETINGS THE POUR DOWN IDEAS](#)

Churches Making Waves

Ben recommends looking at churches in entertainment epicenters for creative inspiration. In these regions people are used to high-end experiences and won't settle for anything less. So, the standards are high. While some things might strike you as flashy if you're not in Los Angeles, Orlando, or Las Vegas, it's okay to take an idea and right-size it for your context. That said... go ahead and take a look at: [Church By The Glades](#) in Coral Springs, Florida & [Central Church](#) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

A Handful Of Key Takeaways From Our Time With Ben Stapley

We had a lot of fun with Ben and want to bullet point a few powerful takeaways from the conversation to jog your memory as you review the content.

- When it comes to feedback of your creatives, the reason you need to be more gentle with creatives is because their work is being reviewed a lot more. When's the last time you went to your finance team and reviewed their spreadsheets? Creatives are creating work to be put on display and to be reviewed constantly. So, we need to realize we may need to reduce feedback at times so it's not an onslaught.
- Use clear language with feedback. What's an *instruction* and what's a *suggestion*. Those are different types of feedback, and creatives need to know the difference with the input you're providing.
- Be clear with your creatives. When do you need to swing and hit a homerun? And when can you swing and miss? Great environments for that are internal pitches, staff meetings or retreats, and youth ministry. Creatives can feel boxed in with no room to stretch their creative muscles. So, consider how you can give creative team members room to actually be creative and even permission to fail.
- In brainstorming sessions, you want to evaluate the idea and not the person. One way to do that is by voting on ideas in an anonymous fashion. Sometimes creatives are soft spoken and someone else "sells" an idea through sheer charisma. You want the idea to win and not the sales pitch! Also, don't bring your Lead Pastor into brainstorming sessions. Your first meeting is to weed out the bad ideas and let the good ones rise to the top. Bring in leaders on round #2, when you're ready to present your best concepts.



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- Lead Pastors - if you like two ideas, let the team decide what to pick. They will feel empowered to create their art and that will be a “win” for them. So, if you’re on the fence, delegate the decision to your creative team.
- Most projects fall into 3 categories of work: pre-production, production, and post-production. The mix of time spent on each should be 70 / 20 / 10. The vast majority of work should be done up front and the big encouragement here is to devote more time to pre-production.
- General praise doesn’t mean much to a creative person, but specific praise does. So, take the time to understand the work of your colleagues. Know their language and understand how to speak with them about their work.

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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. Are the creatives at your church (graphics, video, worship, etc.) given the opportunity to be creative or do you get the sense that they are being boxed in without room to innovate? Where can you provide new areas / projects for creatives to flex their muscles?



2. How do you run brainstorming meetings? Do you find them to be effective? Would it be beneficial to you to try and share or vote on ideas in an anonymous fashion?

3. How can you improve the feedback culture at your church by using specific language such as differentiating between instructions and suggestions?

4. For creative projects is your team spending enough time in the pre-production phase of work? How can your process be improved?

5. What churches most inspire you? Here's a challenge: Create a list of creative churches and businesses to follow for inspiration. Have each person on the team add three to a living document, with website links and social media handles for each. Then, when the well of ideas runs dry... you have a list ready to go to search for inspiration!

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