



## **Notes: Hospice-Hospitality Tool**

**(This is the first tool in the Reality Check 101 Kit)**

This tool talks about the culture or behavioral mid-point of a congregation. It introduces three 'H' words as categories of congregational behavior. Each 'H' has its own problems and opportunities. Changing one's culture requires intentional leadership.

**The following slide notes supplement the slide's text. Presenters should practice putting the idea of each slide into their own words.**

1. Each individual member thinks and acts differently, but taken together as a fellowship, congregations have a collective approach to their circumstances. Some call this the congregation's culture or DNA.
2. We are talking about how people behave as a group. An outsider coming into your church might say: "They act as if the church is getting ready to close," (Hospice) or "They are good at caring for their own," (Hospital) or "They really want to reach out to others" (Hospitality).

### **About Hospice...**

3. This way of thinking tends to make them behave passively towards their circumstances. They are focused on keeping the doors open and not much else.
4. If you discern that Hospice is what God wishes from your church, then your goal should be having a "good death" and leaving a legacy.

### **About Hospital...**

5. Because hospital churches focus on the needs of their membership, they tend to be reactive. That is, they tend to respond to circumstances that they perceive as threats. They work hard to prevent changes that might hurt the feelings of their faithful.
6. Hospitality churches tend to want their pastor to visit the sick and help organize the existing programs. They may not appreciate leadership that is challenging.

### **About Hospitality...**

7. They will place high expectations on their pastor and themselves for serving others. They appreciate creative leadership.
8. High hospitality churches tend to be proactive. They prepare for change. They want to be ready to respond when needs arise in their community.

### **Breakout...**

9. Break now into groups of two or three and decide which 'H' describes your church. You may decide that you are half way between two H's. Which way are you headed? (8 min. discussion may be followed by a polling of each group. On the next three slides, spend more time with the H's named by the group)

### **Summary...**

10. Hospice: Remember the object is to have a 'good death.' When the time is right, the faithful people of a hospice church can insure that their assets will continue to serve God and that each of their members will find a home in another congregation.
11. Hospital: The natural tendency of Hospital churches is survive day by day. They need to intentionally engage in evangelism & outreach programs and set goals that will excite their members about serving others. They should look for ways to do ministry with the poor. They should explore shared ministry.
12. Hospitality: Nothing goes without saying. High hospitality churches need to also practice verbalizing their faith. Their continued development and unity depends upon clarity about who Jesus is for them today. They need to intentionally train people to grow both in faith and service. They need to undergird every action with prayer.
13. To have positive change in a church, leadership (both lay and clergy) need to clearly communicate the church's current reality. Wishful thinking doesn't do any good. The desired behavior also needs to be stated and illustrated.

Note: The H-H-H concept was developed by Ed Kail of the UMC Iowa Conference.  
Reality Check 101 & other resources can be found at [www.notperfectyet.com](http://www.notperfectyet.com)