

Reality Check 101 Workshop

Tool 1) Hospice - Hospital - Hospitality

(From Ed Kail)

This tool deals with a congregation's average behavior. Each individual member thinks and acts differently, but taken together as a fellowship, congregations have a collective approach to their circumstances. They will behave as if their church is on hospice, a hospital, or serious about hospitality.



Church Type:	Hospice	Hospital	Hospitality
Snapshot	Church is dying and unlikely to attract new people.	Church is comfortable and comforting for its members.	Church reaches out to its community and the world.
Mode & Focus	Passive / Survival Building concerns and cost reduction.	Reactive / Healing Current Members. Seeks to improve worship & fellowship.	Proactive / Serving The needs of those outside the church.
Danger	- Failure to die well. - Members scatter - Assets get taken over by others.	- Becoming a self centered clique that no one is invited to join. - Dying by attrition.	- Outreach without the foundation of faith in Christ. - Loss of identity - Leadership burnout
Opportunity	<i>To provide a new church home for those that remain and leave a legacy.</i>	<i>To faithfully represent the love of Christ in their neighborhood.</i>	<i>To participate with God in transforming the world</i>

Circle one: (you may be halfway between two)

Hospice - 1/2 - Hospital - 1/2 - Hospitality

Note:

- Hospice churches may become depressed and past oriented, **but** they can make decisions that both care for their membership and leave a legacy.
- Hospital churches may become a self-centered clique, **or** they can become mission minded, winsome examples of Christian Community.
- Hospitality churches run the danger of losing their Christian identity, **but** they are in position to grow when they focus on the gospel.

Tool 2) The **Spiral Rule**

1) You cannot move Upward
without moving Outward.

2) Institutions that are moving
Downward naturally pull Inward.



Selfish Singularity

Each of the above H's has an Upward&Outward goal:

- Hospice: see that your assets serve Christ after your church is gone.
- Hospital: intentionally invite the broken of your community to find healing in Christ.
- Hospitality: clearly identify the people of need that you are being called to serve. Seek to work ***with*** the poor.

Be aware!

Churches that are growing tend to attribute their growth to their mission and outreach. Churches that are declining tend to blame their circumstances.

Exercises:

1) Choose one of the following areas and develop several ideas for making your church more outward oriented in that area:

worship

community involvement

youth ministry

seniors adult ministry

building use

ministry with the poor

children's outreach

evangelism

recreation/sports

2) For your "H" (Hospice, Hospital, Hospitality) list one specific action, activity, or program that you could do to move your church outward.

Tool 3) What Phase are you in?

Like a washing machine, every church goes through phases.

What is sought for and emphasized depends upon their phase.

Moving from phase to phase requires a willingness to change...

1.Churches in **Transition** focus on healing and developing better process (ways of making decisions). Their energy is focused on getting through the wilderness. Adapting to new circumstances, partnerships, and/or new leadership is the goal of transition.

2.Churches in the **Deepening** phase grow by developing and an authentic faith, outreach, and love for each other. People today are only attracted to authentic congregations. Authenticity is the opposite of 'survival' mode (when a church is only interested in keeping its doors open).

3.Churches in the **Management** phase work to realign assets so that their structures support mission and ministry. They must continue to focus on being authentic. If they turn inward and become survival oriented, then management will lead them to have beautiful empty buildings and good committees doing work that is little value to the Kingdom of God. The challenge of the management phase is to follow Christ's example in sacrificially loving others, even if it means letting go of programs and structures that have become our "sacred cows."



I wash,
I rinse,
I dry...
then I do it all over
again!

Exercises:

1)What phase is your church in today? What signs do you see indicating this is your current phase?

2)Given your current phase, what should you expect from your leadership?

3)Given your current phase, what resources and programs might be helpful?

Beware! Churches can easily become stuck and refuse to do the work of their current phase:

For those in **Transition**, the danger is **Escapism**. Looking for a quick fix they may sabotage transitional leadership (interim ministry) or seek for a way to return to the good old days.

For those in **Deepening**, the danger is **Religiosity**. They become inauthentic, putting on the form of Christianity but not acting for missions, with justice, or being loving.

For those in **Management**, the danger is **Idolatry**. They worship existing structures or leaders and become change adverse.

More resources may be found at www.notperfectyet.com

