
TWO EXTREMES OF DELEGATION

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This is a short article taken from one of “Daniel’s Travel Journal” entries he made while traveling, sharing relationship and ministry with friends and churches in various parts of our country and overseas.

We know from research that churches tend to get stuck at predictable sizes; if we “count” the average attendance at the weekly service (including children in the count), we see 90% of churches all over the world plateau at 40, 60, 90, 120 and 200. Only 10% get larger than 200. We know, also, that delegation-of-responsibility is one of the keys to busting through whichever growth barrier a church has encountered. In other words, the more areas of responsibility a pastor has relinquished—and the degree to which it has really been let go—the more likely that church is to grow.

I have been amazed as I travel the world just how similar pastors’ thoughts are on the subject of delegation. Most pastors I know fall into one of two extremes:

1. They delegate too quickly, and give too much responsibility (authority) to unproven individuals, who inevitably disappoint the pastor by dropping the ball or by usurping the pastor’s authority, vision, etc.
2. They never delegate completely, and always retain just enough oversight to interrupt leaders’ plans or ideas with suggestions and details of their own; without warning, pastors use their “I’m-the-pastor” authority to hijack their leaders’ work, and “correct” what’s been planned.

Both strategies are ill-informed and unspiritual. Both will bottle-up a church’s growth.