Linchpin Leadership

Segment 3

Board Governance

Discussion Guide

(Dear Pastor/Leader…please be aware that this particular Linchpin Leadership session lends itself to a lot more discussion than the previous two segments. Do not be discouraged if Segment takes you two sessions to get through and even sparks the need for a “board retreat” or an additional meeting time to adequately discuss all the items mentioned.

Two more things…If you’ll do the hard work mentioned in this segment, the governing board will be focused on the work they should do and the pastoral staff will be free to run the “plays of ministry” they discern are the best ones to be run, without the board having a “loan officer” mentality.

Finally, don’t get so bogged down in this session that you skip the last session, session four. Session four is all about how the governing body should take are of their pastor – it’s a critical component of being a Linchpin Leader!)

**Intro: Before watching Segment 3**

Getting Started…

A gold medal motivates an Olympic athlete to do their very best.

A national championship motivates a professional athlete to perform at their peak.

Providing employment for others and the stock value of the company motivates a CEO and their leadership team to help their company perform well.

Think of the many roles you have in your life.

A parent

An employee

Someone who lives in a neighborhood with others

A spouse

A member of an extended family

A player on an intermural team

Involved in your city council

Pick one of the above or another of your choosing. What motivates you to do a great job in that role?

**Watch Segment 3 of Linchpin Leadership**

**Our Compelling Why**

In this segment, Chris talks about our “Compelling Why.” A concept that comes from Simon Sinek, but is as old as scripture. Each of us has a “why” that compels us in life.



For more great discussion items about Simon Sinek’s “Start with Why” go to <https://www.startwithwhy.com>

You can also watch his compelling ‘Ted Talk’ here: <https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?language=en>

As a linchpin leader who provides key leadership for our local church, discuss what motivates you do that job well. What fills your sails with passion to serve the cause of Christ in our local church?

* Honoring Jesus?
* Lost people in your life?
* The need for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done in your community?
* Providing a healthy, vibrant, outreach-oriented, discipleship-making church for those who call your church home?

**What – How – Why (Board Governance Models)**

Why does this matter? Because one of the greatest causes of dysfunction in a boardroom is confusion over **who** is responsible for **what**. And when there is confusion about that, the likelihood for misunderstanding or frustration skyrockets.

There are many different models being used by churches—some are very formal and some very relaxed.

Here are a few examples:

***Robert Rules our Board*** – These are church boards that are highly structured in nature. They use protocols that are often seen in formal board settings.

***Flip Flops, Sunglasses and Shorts*** Board Governance – These church boards are on the other side of the continuum from the previous approach. They have a very laid-back approach to Board Governance. They take their job seriously (at least most of the time) but they go about it in a very relaxed informal style.

***Path through the woods Governance*** – This is when we simply follow the path of board governance that our church has always followed. We assume that this governance model was instituted by the Apostle James in the church in Jerusalem. We never give much thought to how we do our church business, just as we don’t give much thought to following a well-traveled path in the woods. We just do what we (and others before us) have always done; regardless of whether or not it is still serving us and our church well.

Discussion Question:

In this segment, Chris mentions a model of board governance he calls the “Loan Officer” model of governance.

What are some of the pitfalls of this type of governance?

(Hint: Getting caught up in micromanaging instead of focused on accomplishing the church’s mission; the church does not reach its full redemptive potential; a spirit of suspicion and mistrust is an undertone in these meetings; leaders are stymied from accomplishing the ministry God has placed on their hearts).

For sake of illustration and for quick discussion, imagine you were given an impossible task of building a 100’ story skyscraper in a matter of six months; a job that typically would take several years. To up that ante, let’s say that for some bizarre reason, your literal life depended on this job being completed in six months; in other words, you were highly motivated to complete this job in the ridiculously shortened time allowed. The only caveat is that you were given 30 days to prepare before your six-month deadline began. You couldn’t start construction, but you could do as much pre-work as possible during those 30 days.

Discussion Question:

What do you think your leadership would look like over that seven-month period?

Chances are you would spend the first 30 days hiring the very best people you could possibly hire. People who are leaders in their fields who were gifted/talented to build, get inspections passed the first time, coordinate various trades to work together (project managers), etc.

You would recognize quickly the only way to meet your “impossible goal” would be to have the very best leaders you could have and then release them to do their jobs well. You’d realize that if you micro-managed them, there would be no way you could be successful. It was up to the leaders you chose to bring the job in on time and on budget.

Think about the urgency of Christ and His Kingdom. The Bible makes it clear that we do not know the “day or the hour” of Christ’s return. He could come at any time. This means there should be a sense of urgency in what we do. As Linchpin Leaders, we have a responsibility to recruit and empower leaders to do their jobs and then get out of their way so they can accomplish them with the gifts God has given them.

Discussion Question:

As a governing body, do we tend to micromanage or empower & release?

As this segment talks about, our role is to help set up the boundaries. Examples of these boundaries exist in various places (we’ve included some on the Linchpin Leadership site).

Discussion Question:

Do we have our boundaries already set on paper?

If not, how can we begin to work together to discern and writing our “boundary principles” so they can be adopted as a board in the next 60-90 days?

If we have discerned together the boundary principles we want to live within, have we also discerned together the goals we are going after?

If so, can we clearly articulate those together?

What benchmarks are we setting for our pastor(s) and leading volunteers to “go after?”

If we have not yet discerned these together for this church year, when are we going to do this?

Once the boundary principles and the goals of the church have been discerned, the pastor(s) and other leadership teams are then freed up to accomplish the mission and goals of the church in the way they feel best and the board can give themselves to the work that matters most to them.

Do you remember Pastor Kevin Myer’s words from our last discussion together in Segment #2?

*Our purpose as a board is not boundary-less.*

*It’s purposeful; it’s narrow and specific to the mission.*

*When a board can discipline their leadership and let go of things that grow with the church, they free the church up to grow. When they can’t, they create sidewise energy, small thinking and help shut the church down.*

In closing:

What governance model are we presently operating under?

What governance model do we believe will best allow us to accomplish the urgent mission Jesus has given us in reaching the world for Christ?

Should we read “Winning on Purpose” by John Kaiser together as a board – or at least have a few of us read it and then report back to the board with a summary of the book and their recommendations?

Do we want to discern together our boundary principles and our goals?

We all understand the “**Why**” of what we do: We want our church to glorify God.

We understand that “**What**” of our mission. We want to see people come into a relationship with God through His son Jesus Christ and grow to reach their full redemptive potential.

As a board or elder team gains crystal clarity about “**How**” they do that, not only will they greatly decrease the amount of misunderstandings and frustrations they encounter; they’ll actually be able to accomplish the **mission** of the local church more effectively.

You are a linchpin leader! Discern a model and run with it like it matters, because it does!