

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

# 2 Roles an Executive Pastor Can't Delegate - Episode 307

## *Sharpening Your Executive Leadership Skills*

When senior leaders are clear on their roles and their giftings complement each other, the church is well positioned for health and growth. On the other hand, when those same leaders don't own the responsibilities they can't delegate, the vision and team begin to suffer.

In this episode, we're kicking off a new series on "Sharpening Your Executive Leadership Skills" with a conversation on two key roles an executive pastor can't delegate.

### *Role #1: Making the vision actionable.*

In other words, executive pastors must own the responsibility for closing the gap between vision and execution through **strategy**. While vision may answer the question, "Where are we going next?" A strategy answers, "How are we actually going to make that a reality?"

Senior pastors need to clarify the vision and then release the "how" to their executive pastor. From there, it's the XP's job to organize the teams, systems and deadlines to see the vision through. They need to manage the tension between delegation and micromanagement, maintaining organizational alignment while empowering their team to do the work. And it's also their job to keep the team's key initiatives and priorities moving forward alongside the execution of day-to-day ministry.

To do this, executive pastors must have certain traits:

- **Strategically Gifted:** They're wired to drive the creation and execution of organizational goals and priorities.
- **Wired as an Activator/Implementor:** They're able to lead strategy and execution in accomplishment of vision.
- **Organized and a Systems Builder:** Things won't fall through the cracks because they've created systems for all the things they have to juggle.

## *Role #2: Driving core initiatives.*

In other words, executive pastors own the responsibility for driving core initiatives to free the senior pastor to focus on the roles only he/she can do.

A great way to figure out if you're actually leading or just managing people is by asking, "**Are you out in front of your team?**" If you're not intentionally looking five steps ahead and driving future initiatives, they're probably not going to happen. And in order to stay ahead of your team, it's your responsibility to keep your head out of some of the details and focus on the big picture.

Another key part of driving core initiatives is keeping the team focused and aligned, including the senior pastor. Here are two ways to keep the focus on completing key initiatives when senior pastors are continuing to dream bigger dreams:

1. **Be the bridge between reality and possibility.** Don't be a wet blanket on your senior pastor's dreams but do help translate what their new ideas would require in terms of the team's energy and resources, including how that might impact the progress of other key initiatives that have already been identified.
2. **Help your pastor recognize momentum.** Visionary people tend to thrive off of energy and momentum, which is what often attracts them to new ideas. Find ways to regularly communicate to your senior pastor the steps your team is taking toward fulfilling your strategy so that they can feel that sense of momentum.

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