

# Own Your Role: Breaking the 200 and 500 Barriers - Episode 412

You know the story: the numbers rise then stall. Two steps forward, one step back. Maybe your church has a history of *hovering around a number*—a familiar attendance line you just can't seem to cross. Or maybe a rapid growth season occurs, but eventually, something—people, systems, culture—plateaus the momentum and drifts you right back to where you started.

## Sound familiar?

In this new series, we tackle **the real reasons churches stall out** and what it takes to lead past them. We'll help you push past the barrier you're facing now, and the one after that, by equipping the senior leaders of your church (lead pastor, executive pastor and board members) to **own their unique roles**.

In this episode, the focus is on the 200 and 500 attendance barriers. Amy and Sean are joined by Chad Hunt, who has been on our consulting team since 2015 and has helped hundreds of churches navigate these barriers, to discuss how each senior leader can be equipped to break through.

## Key Quotes

1. CHAD: "The intent of the 'family church,' where everyone knows everyone, sounds nice but that mentality will not drive the biblical mission of the church."
2. CHAD: "Unfortunately, when the wrong person or the wrong people have decision-making rights, it removes permission for the pastor to lead and cripples action to move the church forward."
3. CHAD: "Get away from the insider language, and create a step that people can take."
4. CHAD: "Churches, once you hit that 500 mark, you have to have different systems and different strategies for retention. If not, your back door is just as big—if not larger—than your front door."
5. CHAD: "Developing leaders requires time, effort and relationship."
6. AMY: "Mission has to trump methods at any size of church."

## Self-Assessment: How Are We Doing?

*Churches facing the 200 barrier: Review the statements below to see if they are true or false for your church. If you find yourself answering false for more than one, choose an area to champion in the coming months to help you break through the barrier.*

1. There are three to five leaders on our team who take ownership of certain ministry areas so that our lead pastor can focus on their primary responsibilities.
2. Our messages are relevant, real and intentional.
3. Our lead pastor has dedicated time in their calendar to spend time developing leaders.
4. We have clarity around decision-making rights, specifically when it comes to our board(s).
5. Our leadership board regularly evaluates current ministries through the lens of effectiveness rather than just tradition.

*Churches facing the 500 barrier: Review the statements below to see if they are true or false for your church. If you find yourself answering false for more than one, choose an area to champion in the coming months to help you break through the barrier.*

1. We deliberately shift from the insider focus that we gravitate toward to look at our weekend experience through the lens of someone outside the faith.
2. Regularly auditing our weekend experience to ensure it maintains an outsider focus is a priority for us.
3. We are constantly streamlining our programming to help newcomers take a next step and go deeper in their faith.
4. Our board empowers our senior pastor to lead the church; they know we support them as they push us all to fulfill the vision God has given our church.
5. We provide accountability to our lead pastor through our board by approving budgets, protecting policies, helping our pastor guard their calendar and more.

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