

# Structure Moves That Fuel Lead Pastor Burnout - Episode 442

Pastoral burnout is one of the most critical issues facing church leaders today. And it's not just about overwork or lack of boundaries: **Your structure might be the very thing that's creating the conditions for burnout**—for both you and your staff.

We're seeing this pattern play out in churches everywhere. Lead pastors are drowning under impossible spans of care, unclear role definitions and organizational structures that create silos. Meanwhile, growth is creating momentum that feels exciting but leaves no time to build the systems that would actually sustain health.

In this series, we're going beyond the symptoms to address the structural realities that either fuel burnout or create space for sustained health. This week Sean and Amy discuss the structure moves that lead to burnout and provide a set of structural questions to ask to help relieve it.

## Key Quotes

- "Structure is like a distributor; it either distributes the weight appropriately or inappropriately."
- "The key for a healthy span of care is determining how many people you can effectively develop, coach and shepherd."
- "When eight to 14 people report to a lead pastor, executive pastor or ministry leader, that's not a team—it's a crowd."
- "If everything escalates back to the top, the lead pastor doesn't just get busier. They actually get worse at their job."
- "When the right executive pastor is in place, it is a game changer for ministry teams."
- "Burnout isn't inevitable, but structural dysfunction often is—especially in growing churches—until someone names it and does something about it."

## Self-Assessment: How Are We Doing?

*If you're a lead pastor who resonated with the structural issues mentioned in this episode, use the questions below to reveal where you may need to make changes to avoid total burnout.*

1. **Span of Care:** How many people report directly to me? Are they leaders or doers? Does this span of care feel healthy and helpful? What's holding me back from changing if it feels unhealthy?
2. **Integrator Role:** Who is the integrator for our church? Is this person in the right role? Are they managing too many areas?
3. **Ministry Alignment:** Is our ministry siloed or aligned? Do we have shared targets for reaching and discipling people?

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