

Why Is the XP/SP Relationship So Hard to Get Right? - Episode 456

Of all the relationships in your church, there's *one* relationship that determines whether everything else runs smoothly or grinds to a halt—the relationship between the senior pastor and the executive pastor.

When it's healthy, the whole organization feels it. And when it's not... the whole organization feels it, too.

We invited **Jimmy McLoud**, lead pastor at First Christian Church in Canton, Ohio, and a consultant on our team, to speak into this topic. Jimmy has served as both an executive pastor and senior pastor, so it's safe to say he's experienced in the relationship between these two roles.

In this new series, Sean and Jimmy will dig into how to clarify these two roles and strengthen the partnership between them. And in this episode, they're starting at the foundation: **Why is this relationship so hard to get *right*?**

Key Quotes

- “There's naturally friction between these roles, but when it's healthy, it's what keeps the church from being all dream and no delivery.”
- “If you keep pretending that you're great at everything, you'll never build the partnership that you actually need.”
- “Most leaders are surrounded by people who affirm them no matter what, which is great for our egos but completely useless for our growth.”
- “As the lead pastor, you have to actually empower your executive pastor to be the integrator, to lead the staff team day-to-day and to drive your vision forward.”
- “Executive pastors that honor lead pastors are going to go further faster in leadership because they're going to garner trust that leads to empowerment.”
- “When the lead pastor and executive pastor are genuinely locked in together, there is nothing more effective and more powerful to help a church grow and move forward in the mission.”

Self-Assessment: How Are We Doing?

1. In light of our assessment results from [Leading From Your Strengths](#) and/or the [Working Genius](#), how can we make our natural wiring work for us rather than against us?
2. Thinking through the [Four Roles a Senior Pastor Can't Delegate](#) and the [Three Roles an Executive Pastor Can't Delegate](#), how can we empower one another to better own the roles that only we can do?
3. On a scale of one to five, how clear are the decision rights for our two positions? If less than five, what do we need to do to improve clarity? Which areas seem the most murky?

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