

Developing a Personal Ministry Philosophy PART THREE: LEADERSHIP STYLE

By Gregory Wiens, State Pastor

This is part three in our four-week series of developing a personal ministry philosophy. The first week I shared about identifying “assumptions of ministry,” which starts by asking, “What are the foundations for my ministry?”

The second component of a ministry philosophy is identifying one’s gifts, followed by understanding and exploring your leadership style.

I know there were times early in my life when I thought a leader was a leader. Someone is in charge and that person is a leader. Pretty basic, I know.

Then, life happened and I started seeing the different dimensions of leadership played out in and around me. I observed strong, silent leaders, who knew how to communicate with their eyes. There were the “messy” leaders who brought much-needed energy to each situation. And of course, there were strategic thinkers. It all seems to work, with one important caveat. Leadership is not one-style-fits-all-dynamic so effective leaders must know their style and choose to operate from their strengths. Nor is it that one is always leading, it seems that each of us have unique styles of leadership and we flow in and out of leadership throughout the day.

This sort of awareness on the part of a leader is also essential to developing effective teams, which is a whole other topic.

From my time at General Motors in industrial engineering to my work in the church, I have always loved helping people figure out why they do what they do. That is why I pursued my Doctorate in assessment.

If you search “assessing leadership styles” on the Internet, you’ll find options numbering in the millions. Don’t be intimidated by this sea of information. If you’d like a recommendation on an instrument to use, drop me an email.

Through my own choice of assessments and life experiences, I’ve learned that I’m a catalytic leader. I love to cast vision, critically think, create chaos, communicate truth, coach leaders, challenge the existing quo and closely relate to a few. Each of these strengths is dependent on healthy relationships with others. By the way, it only took me 25 years of journaling through failures and successes to figure those seven C’s out; but it is well worth the effort. Knowing this about myself helps to direct my steps as I seek to serve in my “A” game and develop teams.

Let me suggest that you think about the times when you really get “juiced” in ministry and ask yourself, why? What was it about that environment or situation that caused you to feel energized? Also think about the times when you are drained and ask yourself, why? What was it about that environment or situation that drained your energy?

Journaling through these times builds kind of a collective memory where you can compare and contrast these varied contexts. After enough experiences have elapsed, you will begin to see some patterns. You will begin to see some commonalities among the times you are pumped as well as the times when you are discouraged. For example, after about 5 years I identified the first four C's, but it took the next 20 years to identify the next three C's. That is fine, this is a life long process. I may have a few more, as I get older!

This directly relates to knowing the kind of people I need on the teams I work with in ministry. First, my teammates need to know what I am called to do and second, I need partners who can complement these attributes to ensure the ministry is done well. There are so many other kinds of leaders needed.

Let me suggest a way to look at ministry and how all of the leadership styles and strengths are needed to work together to produce excellence in ministry; it is called the Leadership Wheel. I will be going through this during our State Ministries meeting, October 20th, and would be more than willing to help you and your leadership, staff, or elders work through it. It actually makes much more sense as we go through it a step at a time, than it does to look at the whole wheel.



As you continue to work on your Personal Ministry Philosophy – remember that leaders are not wired the same. If you have not taken time to understand your “wiring” -- let me encourage you to schedule the time on your calendar as soon as possible. The Kingdom needs you and your God-given gifts!