

## Notes from San Francisco Convocation 2005

### **Minister and Musician Planning Worship Together:**

*Can You Top This?*

Monday, July 11

Two One-Hour Sessions

#### **Group “Snapshot”**

Musicians: 48

Ministers: 8

Others: 6

Those that plan worship as a team: 41

Those that do not use a team approach: 21

Those from small churches: 23

Those from large churches: 39

#### **Consensus Exercise**

*After dividing into groups of 3-5 to find out 3 things each group had in common, the question was asked: “What was the process by which you reached consensus?”*

#### **The response** (Each group submitted comments)

Questions were asked, to help in meeting the goal

We brainstormed our responsibilities

Each person listened/We all talked and listened

There were broad ideas

Everyone contributed ideas

All asked questions/ No one judged the answers

We found common ground

We moved quickly to commonality

We stated the obvious

There was a visual profiling of each other

Each person tossed out ideas & reached consensus

A leader or leaders emerged

All participated in the conversation

## **Role Play Exercise**

*Volunteers were recruited to play different participants in a worship planning team. The roles were as follows: Senior Minister, Director of Music, Contemporary Music Leader, Associate Minister, and Organist. They were asked to begin a process for planning Easter worship. Easter was 90 days away. No other instructions were given. After 7 minutes of role play, the group was asked to comment on process issues with three perspectives:*

- 1) General Observations;*
- 2) Creative Opportunities; and*
- 3) Creative Challenges. The observations were as follows:*

### **General Observations**

The was a lack of focus

There was no strong leader

The group was territorial rather than seeing the big picture

They remained focused on Easter (?)

A hierarchical structure was present

The Associate Pastor deferred to the Senior Minister

One person was dominant – pushing their own agenda

The roles were very typical

A “ME” instead of “WE” attitude existed

There was negative tension between the pastor and musician

Each person had their own agenda

The initial response to creativity was negative

They began with prayer

The group sought leadership from Sr. Minister

There was no meeting agenda

## **Creative Opportunities**

The group could focus on a new idea  
Read the Scripture FIRST, then discuss and interpret  
The different personalities and worship styles add options  
The mention of the cemetery provided an opportunity  
The Senior Minister was open to idea  
There was an invitation to The Holy Spirit  
It was possible to create the Easter story in new ways  
There could be multiple services for many styles & ideas  
The were considering how to best use the resources  
The could use diversity positively  
The entire team could be used in planning

## **Creative Challenges**

Everyone needed to feel valued  
Both goals and meeting were unfocused  
Having sensitivity to other's ideas  
Turf wars were apparent  
Presenting the "Big Picture"  
Turf protection & limited feedback  
There was no shared vision  
There was no process for decisions  
No sense of collaboration was present  
A leader needs to emerge to facilitate the vision  
Nobody was selling new ideas  
The conversation was fragmented  
The situation and relationships were artificial

### ***Hugh's reflections***

*The role-play group was given no instructions as to the team dynamics, history or any other team expectations. They did, however, play the roles of individuals in the typical church staff from their own experience and background. Even though there were times we laughed at the interaction, it was evident that the characteristics portrayed were true to the experience of many of those present as observers. It demonstrated the need for strong leadership that understands the benefit of group synergy and creative energy.*

## ***Hugh's reflections continued***

*The atmosphere created in the class was that of open communication with interactive sessions for those gathered to reflect and learn about team process. The idea of minister and musician planning together is a team concept. The role-play exercise expanded this principle to include other staff members. The larger the group is the more difficult it is to make complicated decisions. If the planning team is large, it is best to bring in ideas or recommendations that have been thoroughly thought out in a smaller group and brought to the larger group as a final concept for approval, endorsement or comment.*

*The environment for team meetings must be one that is "safe" for everyone to contribute, disagree and debate. This will drive the conversations to rich ideas that everyone can support. Someone must plan the meetings thoroughly and be the leader. There must be a method for making team decisions. There must be room for meaningful dialogue, way to elicit clear ideas and conclusions, and ways to allow the entire group to participate. There are different dynamics when collecting data or ideas that when discussing tough or sensitive ideas. Respect for each member of the team by others is essential as is respect for the team process by each individual team member. Therefore, a set of articulated guideline for the team is most useful in avoiding or minimizing conflict, disappointment and unfulfilled expectations. One method is to construct a Team Covenant.*

*For ideas on conducting efficient meetings consult chapter 8 in Hugh's book **Moving Spirits, Building Lives: Church Musician as Transformational Leader**. The chapter is titled "Meetings, Meetings, Meetings: Effective Time use, Building Consensus. Or download Hugh's **Ten Tips for Conducting Power-Packed Meetings** from <http://www.hughballou.com>*

## **Team Guidelines**

*The class explored ways to develop a set of team guidelines. It is most helpful to define the team expectations and determine where the differences of opinion might be. This can eliminate wasting time later debating issues that can be defined a general operational procedures. In fact, the process of developing the guidelines can create a new vision for the team and build trust and understanding. Reaching consensus is now about giving up individual perspectives or that each person has to agree about everything. Consensus is about working together. The class was asked to brainstorm ideas that could be used in creating a team covenant. These ideas are listed below without judgment. The next step is to sort the ideas by concept, combine those that are similar and prioritize the final conclusions. It is essential that everyone participate in the entire process.*

### **Parts of A Team Covenant**

Non-Triangulation

Don't promise someone else's services

E-mail does not qualify as direct communication

Don't hold the group hostage

There must be clarity in the decision making process

Honor your team members and team decisions

Support the group outside of the meeting

There must be clarity of roles

Everyone participates

Value each idea

There must be agreed upon times for meetings & decisions

Pledge to communicate directly

Develop mutual trust

Make a promise to God

The team must have clarity of purpose

Know your purpose

Agree to disagree

Do your homework

Maintain open communication

Expect and give accountability

Make a commitment to show up on time

Two other books Hugh recommends:

**Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal With  
Destructive Conflict** -- by Kenneth C. Haugk

**Speaking the Truth in Love**  
by Kenneth C. Haugk, Ruth Koch