



Leading Staff and Council Retreats

LEAD's Best Practices for leading Staff and Council Retreats include:

- ⊕ Go offsite overnight. Retreats that happen on a Saturday in the Fellowship Hall are just long Council Meetings. People will push back due to busy calendars but the future of your congregation's ministry is worth 48 hours from the leadership. There may be old stories of retreats being a waste of people's time. That raises the bar for your next retreat.
- ⊕ **Spend the first 25% of the retreat Getting to Know Each Other.** It makes a huge difference when you use high or low ropes activities, an outside consultant, personality indexes like Strength Finders, or anything that moves people past Sunday morning relationships, so people feel known and like they know others in the room.
- ⊕ **Spend the second 25% of the time doing Spiritual Practices.** Christian leaders need time Dwelling in the Word, in grown-up Bible Study, in silence, prayer, meditation, and journaling. These practices will shift the culture of your leadership as they begin to grow a deeper faith. Create practices for the retreat that they can share with others and use in their own personal lives.
- ⊕ **Spend the third 25% of the time on Adaptive Change.** This is the time to look at the huge changes in our world and ask what this means for your congregation. This is a great time for big-picture dreaming, for evaluation of ministry, for clarifying the congregation's purpose and Core Values, etc.
- ⊕ **Spend the final 25% of the time on Technical Changes.** This is time for planning, for alignment, for calendaring, and for setting up the next steps to be carried out during the year.

Please Note: There are times for strategic retreats focused on specific topics that may alter these percentages but regardless of the agenda we recommend these four practices be incorporated into the retreat.

LEAD Consultants are available to assist your congregation with a Staff and Council Retreat. Plan ahead as we never seem to have enough weekends. Invite local pastors or leaders in your community to bring an outside perspective, to lead any of the four areas above, and to affirm the leadership.