

growing ministry together: EQUIPPING

How does your church equip people for their task or role?

Bible text

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. Ephesians 4.15,16 (NRSV)

Comment

Sometimes people find what they need by being thrown in at the deep end, sometimes they need to be given what they need before they actually do anything. What they actually need can be information, public recognition, briefing, a task description, etc. This will depend on the person, the task, the expectations, etc. If people are expected to work with or alongside others, they will need to find a shared way of doing things that makes sure they achieve what is needed. Churches can make many assumptions of what people already know or need to know to fulfil a task, whether as a welcomer, flower arranger or intercessor. If relationships are key to shaping and growing the kingdom of God, how we equip people is key to how a ministry in our communities can flourish.

Story

Carol agreed to be churchwarden for three years. Their small church had few people and Carol had more time now that she was retired. Former church wardens kept teasing her about swimming in the deep end but never volunteered to tell her what to do. They just handed over some files with a sigh of relief. When she asked about training, the vicar said she really didn't need it as she had done secretarial work before. He would tell her all she needed to know - that was last year...

Going deeper

- Share a story of when you have been well prepared or poorly prepared to do something.
- When given a role or task in church, who agrees 'what' people are supposed to do and 'how' to do it? Is there a different process for different roles or tasks? E.g. Sunday school teachers or health and safety overseers
- Is there deanery or diocesan training or networking relevant to roles or tasks in your church? and does anyone use them?
- How flexible are roles and tasks according to the gifting/skills of the person or people involved?
- How does your church's culture of ministry (or all the ways people 'do' and understand ministry things at your church) affect the way people do or don't agree to do tasks or roles?

Prioritising

How important is equipping people for ministry in your church?

Action planning options

- Find out more information from people with church responsibilities about how they felt they were prepared for the roles or tasks they took on.
- Choose one group or area of ministry that could make a significant difference to your culture of ministry if they were trained or prepared more fully.
- Design and implement an induction process for any new roles that people undertake.
- Busy people can find it increasingly difficult to make time for meetings- of any sort. Design a more achievable way of making a 'meeting' both short and effective. E.g. as part of Sunday coffee? At a local pub? Standing up? Before or after something else? Skyping or social networking?

Resources for action planning options

- Make a survey or sit down with people with church responsibilities about how they felt they were prepared for the roles or tasks they took on. Sample questions for this can be found online. (Link below.)
- Choose one group or area of ministry who could make a significant difference to your culture of ministry if people were trained or prepared more fully. Sample questions for working this through can be found online. (Link below.)
- Design and implement an induction process for any new roles that people will undertake.
- Busy people can find it increasingly difficult to make time for meetings- of any sort. Design a more achievable way of making a 'meeting' both short and effective. E.g. as part of Sunday coffee? At a local pub? Standing up? Before or after something else? Skyping or social networking?
- Working with volunteers material helps to understand the unique issues around understanding the needs, motivations and ongoing support of people 'helping' in churches and the community.

For further resources see: www.canterburydiocese.org/growingministrytogether