

Dave
Ferguson

Inspire

4 Secrets of Great Team Based Leadership

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There are some things you would never say out loud, even though you know they are true. If you uttered these secrets people would probably misunderstand you. Or maybe you'd decide they aren't really true after all. So you keep your mouth shut, and they remain secrets. Fourteen years ago, five people—a childhood friend, a college roommate, a brother, a friend-of-a-friend and I—made up the team who pioneered the adventure called Community Christian Church (CCC). We started as a team partly because of a shared dream and partly because it sounded like a lot more fun doing it together than doing it on our own. And from the beginning when it was just the five of us until today where there are more than 3,000 of us at three campuses, CCC has always been led by teams.

The leadership team I'm a part of today—Jon Ferguson, Troy McMahon, Eric Bramlett and myself—is the finest team of which I've ever been a part. And during those 14 years there have been some things about these teams that I knew were true (I have a hunch we all knew they were true), but we never said them out loud. We might be misunderstood. We might be wrong. So we kept these as secrets. However, now I'm more confident. I think these secrets are true, and I'm willing to risk being misunderstood. So I've decided to tell all! Here are four secrets of great team-based leadership:

"We are committed to the cause first and each other second."

Great leadership teams are always clear about the cause. A lot of other stuff may get fuzzy, but the cause is always very clear. At CCC there is sometimes a lack of structure and policy, but the one clear thing is the cause. It's embodied in our mission statement: "Helping people find their way back to God by reproducing congregations, campuses, and churches that celebrate, connect and contribute to the dream of God."

Last week my assistant, Pat, got an e-mail from a pastor requesting a copy of our staff policy manual. Her answer: "Our policy is not to make policy." I love that! Why? Policy is what happens when we can't get

people to do what we want them to do because people are not championing a clear cause. Policy occurs when the ethos of a church culture is weak and the cause is not compelling.

Why all this talk about cause? Because I believe our leadership team is committed to die for the cause of "helping people find their way back to God." And when I say "die" I'm not using hyperbole. The four of us who lead CCC today are willing to die for the cause, whether it is one day at a time or all at once.

We are committed to the cause first and each other second. This is scary to say out loud. That's why it's a secret. But the truth is that it's the cause that brings us together and keeps us together. It is when we put other things or other people before the cause that we compromise what God dreamed of in the church and in the Great Commission.

I believe this is at least 50 percent of what it takes to create great team-based leadership, an uncompromising loyalty to a clear cause. There is never a great lead team when the cause is not clear! In Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith's great book, *Wisdom of Teams*, they make it very clear: "The primary objective of the team must be performance results (cause), not becoming a team." One of the great mistakes is forgetting that the cause is what creates community or team. Ask yourself, "Why do men always remember athletic teams or army platoons as the place where they experienced the most genuine community?"

Answer: because a clear cause created community. The cause of winning a game created a team. The cause of defeating a common enemy created a team.

Why is it so hard for athletes to retire? Listen to them talk and you'll see it's not the money they miss as much as the team.

The Acts 2 church was also brought together by a clear cause. It was the cause called the Great Commission that brought about koinonia or community. That first great leadership team of apostles had a clear cause for which they were willing to die.

"We don't know when we are working and when we are playing."

I love the way Eric Bramlett describes working at CCC: "Working here feels like recess." I fell the same way. Sure, there are times we fight about who gets to go down the slide first; but it's still a playground, and it feels a lot more like recess than school. In my 14 years as a part of the leadership team at CCC I don't remember one day (literally) that I looked at my watch thinking, "When is it going to be 5 o'clock so I can leave work?" It sounds trivial, but being a part of the leadership team at CCC is just plain fun! Working and playing feel the same! When we are looking for new staff, my team mates have been coached to consider the three C's of character, competency, and chemistry. For us, chemistry is always the first priority, because that's what draws someone into our church culture and draws us to them.

We have a chemistry test that a prospective hire must pass. We call it the "parking lot test." The "parking lot test" is comprised of one question we ask ourselves before we put someone on our staff team: "When we drive up, are we glad to see their car in the parking lot?" If we are excited about seeing their car and knowing we will find them inside, they pass—there is chemistry! If we feel our stomach sink knowing they are inside, they fail—no chemistry! All this is to say that there is a great chemistry with each of the people on our leadership team.

What contributes to the chemistry of a great lead team? First, complementary gifts help create the chemistry, Second, chemistry comes when we all buy into a common strategy. And third, none of the four of us can imagine doing anything else. We all have had offers to do other things in other places for more money, but we just can't imagine doing anything else.

"We may look crazy to you, but there is a method to our madness."

When other churches visit and see the open office concept we use, where almost all of our 35 staff are in the same room with one another,

they will often say, "how do you get anything done in the middle of this chaos?"

When other teaching pastors find out that we write all our messages as a team of people from not only multiple campuses, but multiple churches using video conferencing, they say, "Oh, my style would never work in that environment." I used to be concerned that outsiders might think we are crazy, chaotic, or even out of control, but now I understand that is one of our secrets. One of the secrets of a great leadership team is that in their relentless pursuit of the cause they become a community with unique characteristics according to how God made them. This may appear crazy or chaotic to the outsider, but there is a unique method to their madness. These characteristics are often paradoxical. Here are some of the paradoxes you would see in our lead team:

Highly Collaborative AND Very competitive.

Every person in our lead team is very competitive. We want to win in basketball, and we want to win the argument. But at the same time we know if we are going to win our part of the world for Christ (back to the cause that creates community), this will take collaboration. So we collaborate on everything. I started to make a list of things that we collaborate on, then it hit me that the much shorter list would be those things on which we don't collaborate.

Very Compassionate AND comfortable with Conflict—Patrick M. Lencioni, in his book, *Five Dysfunctions of a Team* tells us that healthy teams are comfortable with conflict. We are definitely comfortable with conflict—confronting, challenging, debating and sometimes yelling (and later apologising). But, I also know that when I need a group to

rally around me, they will be there for me. There is no doubt about it—my team loves me!

Loves Spontaneity AND Wants Accountability—

"Lead with a yes" is a saying you hear from our leadership team. We love being flexible and spontaneous enough that we lead with a yes to new ideas. The new idea could be anything from going for shakes during our lead team meeting to starting a new service in a few weeks. We love leading with spontaneity and the "yes". That spontaneity however is balanced by our desire (that might be a stretch—I think we just know we need it) for accountability. We want accountability for how we are doing versus the goals we set for ourselves a year ago. We want and expect accountability for the ministries we oversee. We want accountability for our budget areas. To the outsider we may look like an overly competitive team that is constantly fighting about our goals. But come back next week, and we may look like this highly collaborative group in love with one another. To the outsider it might look crazy, but it's just how God made us. And it works!

We REALLY are going to change the world."

It is the lead team more than any other team that will create the culture and the ethos for a church. When you have a lead team that is clear about the cause, willing to die for the cause, and where serving feels like recess, you have created a church culture where people start to believe that we really are going to change the world!

When people get wind of that kind of opportunity, tremendous sacrifices become normal. Tim, a leader in our church, came to us and told us that he would like to take early retirement and work for the church without a salary for one year. After that year was over he wanted us to evaluate him. If we felt he added enough value to our church, then we would hire him, if not, then he would find another job and continue as a leader in the church.

Today's church is undergoing major changes in its endeavour to reach and disciple our world.

Come and hear from people who think outside the box, voices of innovation—people of cultural relevance who will help us reach the 80percent of the world not presently being reached right now.

Come and hear:

DAVE FERGUSON

Dave Ferguson is a founding pastor of Community Christian Church—an innovative multi-site missional church with nine local locations that have grown in average attendance from five to over 5000 since beginning nine years ago.

www.communitychristian.org



We said, "Sure!" (Talk about a deal you can't refuse!) One year later, Tim proved himself so invaluable that we brought him on staff. Now he oversees hundreds of unpaid servants and all of our ministry teams. I could tell you many stories like this.

Tremendous sacrifice is normal here. Why? Because of a belief (that starts with the lead team) that this might just be the church that actually does change the world! There is a vibe in our church that we are up to something big and something special. This is not something that we talk about in a prideful manner; in fact we are very careful to make sure that God gets all the credit.

It starts with a lead team that is the microcosm of the rest of the church. They are very clear about the cause and willing to die for it. When they serve it feels like recess, and together they believe that they really are going to change the world!

O.K. I've said the secrets out loud. What do you think? Do you agree, or am I just plain wrong?

At the time of this writing Dave's church was 6 years ago with 3000 people in attendance. Today Dave's church has been running for 20 years and it has 5000 people in attendance that meet in nine different locations.

Dave travels the world and has authored numerous books with the latest one being "The Big Idea."

Email: davef@communitychristian.org



KIM HAMMOND

Kim is a gifted, inspired and engaging speaker. He uses a blend of humour and passion in his speaking and is a great storyteller. He has a deep passion for God with a great level of personal transparency.

KEVIN WILCOCK

Kevin has pioneered and pastored a number of growing churches. Kevin's realness and ability to relate to the Australian culture has allowed him to travel extensively across the nation and beyond.

www.lifechurch.org.au



INNOVATE



13th & 14th November 2009

Newcastle

Book now—see brochure

To register for the Innovate Conference—complete the attached Registration Form.

Cost of conference is just \$30.00 per day for registration and \$20.00 per day for lunch.

Child minding will be available.

Some of the Innovative Extra's at the Conference are:-

Art Exhibition—Friday 5:30pm to 6:30pm

Serving in Soul Café—Fri & Sat mornings at 7:30am

Senior Ministers Lunch—Friday 12:30pm to 3:00pm

Jazz in the Vines—Saturday night from 6pm to 9pm



GlobeReach some of the works we support overseas

Indonesia—Colin & Kim Crago

God has given us a great bunch of students to work with for the next two years. They are good at praying to start with. Already they are making their presence felt. Five of them are from Central Kalimantan, one from Manado, one from Ambon and five are from Solo. There is a maturity among this group which was not evident in previous groups. There is a definite calling in most of them which tells us that these men and women will build churches in the future.

Indonesia is ripe for the harvest—let's make sure we can reap it. Your contributions are vital to keep this ministry operating. Students can be supported for \$48.00 a month. For this amount you can help evangelise the fourth largest populated country in the world, the largest Muslim country in the world, the area with the largest assemblage of un-reached people groups (137) in the world and the largest country on Australia's doorstep.

At the moment it is more popular to support orphanages and help educate poor students across the world, all commendable projects. Who is going to run such organizations in their home countries? People trained in institutions such as ours—that's what we do with people who can't plant churches.

Colin & Kim Crago

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Indonesia—Testimony

A Muslim University Student Healed!

Shalom, my name is Kristia, I am a graduate of Life In The Spirit Institute (now known as Academy of Ministry, Solo) and currently I am the Assistant Youth Leader in L.I.T.S. Church. I am also studying Teaching at University.

I have a Muslim student friend named Ika. She has had breast cancer for approximately two years. After one operation to remove lumps she found out

recently that swelling had re-appeared in her breast. When she went back to the doctor he diagnosed it as more cancer.

I began to talk to her about miracles that happen at our church. One day she came to the church and stayed overnight with me.

In the morning I introduced her to Pastor Colin and Fieko, my Youth Pastor. We offered to pray for her and she accepted. In a few days she went back to the doctor who

gave her the original diagnoses of cancer and he declared that she was completely healed.

For more testimonies of God's faithfulness and promises check out "From the Heart Ministries newsletter at :

www.fromthehearttotheworld.com

Cambodia—Donna Byham

We at Sure Destiny Cambodia and Empower Asia International would like to thank you for your faithful support. Your financial donations toward Cambodia have assisted in providing food, education and a loving family home for our students. You have given them an opportunity to come out of poverty and see their dreams start to come true, unlike the 99 percent of young people who will never get a complete education in Cambodia!

Many of our students have done very well with their yearly marks and all of them are progressing to their next grade. Notably this year we will have six students matriculating, which will give us a total of eleven students at University, while we will have thirteen students at High School, and one in Primary School. We also hope to accept three new students into Deborah House this new school year.

Here is a story from one of our students:

ROS VIGOL

"I was like an orphan before but now life is much better because God has prepared a way for me to come to Joshua House."



About Vibol

Vibol was born on 10 March 1989 and is from the Kandal province in Southern Cambodia. He is one of five siblings who are now cared for solely by their mother since their father's death in 2000. Before coming to Joshua House, Vibol's family life had many problems due to his father's alcohol abuse. At home Vibol did not have the time or money to study and did not think about, or plan for, his future.

Since coming to Joshua House Vibol's outlook on life has changed. He now wants to be a lawyer and to serve God by seeking justice for his fellow Cambodians. *"I want to serve God by telling the good news to*

villages and help people in their weaknesses, orphans, widows and disabled who cannot help themselves," says Vibol.

Through the relationships he has built at Joshua House, Vibol has come to know Jesus as his Lord and Saviour. *"I understand that Jesus is my saviour because Mum and Dad (JH House Parents) taught me about Jesus and they shared with me about their faith."* Because of his faith, Vibol's mother and siblings also believe in Jesus and their lives have been changed. Vibol describes Jesus like this: *"He gives me hope where I never had hope before and He understands my heart no matter what I tell Him."*

Donna Byham

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Being Missional without losing your mandate

At the moment within the body of Christ, the big talk is the whole missional and emergent theology of the church missionalising itself into the community.

In anything that is new in the body we need to be wise in what we do with it, so that we don't lose what we have. It saddens me to see some churches neglecting the church services or other aspects of their church life in their quest to build their missional endeavours of the church. We need the teaching, the discipleship, the celebration, the giving and the corporate fellowship of the main worship services to build from. Whether we like to admit it or not, what we do on a missional level will flow from the strength of our corporate gatherings. They are the coaches pep talks in the locker room before the big game.

We need always to be careful that we don't missionalise so much that we just become a charity or social justice arm and are forever trying to convince the public that we are a worship centre. I will never forget reading William Booth, General of the Salvation Army telling his son not to let the welfare side of things become greater than the Salvation side of our movement.

For our churches to have spiritual influence within people's lives and later eternal effect on our community we will need to make sure we are not dropping the ball when it

comes to the discipling of believers when it comes to the celebration meeting, really when it comes to anything to make lost people fully devoted followers of Christ. We need to massage our missional expression in the mandate of our church. We do not need to rob Peter to pay Paul. We are good leaders, we can pay Peter and Paul and see our churches move into a greater missional position.

Some of you might be thinking "is Kevin backing off his missional stance?" by no means—I'm constantly increasing it.

I would confidently say that for a church our size (about 200 people) we would be more missional than most churches ten times our size when it comes to a grassroots missional expression.

I think of everything we host from our church and within our building and it amazes me at times. Let me share a few things we host:

Over 250 people a week attend at least one of the recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Sexaholics Anonymous and Sex, Love and Relationships Anonymous as well as Celebrate Recovery.

From our Soul Café we feed 800 people a week with four lunches and three breakfasts. We take volunteers from the community and

offenders that are required to do community service to assist and the odd work for the dole program.

We run a number of activities from within the café like a six week lifeshapers course, a Thursday church service at 10:30am.

We oversight a Lifehouse that is for men with housing crisis.

At our Soapbox Venue where we run our Jazz and R & B nights which operate approximately eight times a year with acts like Renee Geyer, James Morrison, Vince Jones, Steve Clisby and The Bodacious Cowboys. We open a fully licensed restaurant.

We run fashion shows, fine beer dinners, wine degustations, book launches and have began to work with local companies in catering and hosting their corporate functions.

From all of these events we have seen lost people become fully devoted followers of Christ.

Some just starting, some halfway and some are really moving with God.

So build missional, but don't lose your mandate!

Kevin
P.S. I will be speaking on this at the Innovate Conference

Follow Kevin on TWITTER
<http://twitter.com/KevinWilcock>

Soul Food Cook Book

I was raised in a family of 8 kids, a loving mum and dad and the best upbringing a child could ask for. My younger years were great; I completed Year 10 school certificate and found a great job, fell in love and married. We had a beautiful son and I felt my life was perfect. After 13 years of marriage my wife and I divorced. This was a huge shock for me and I found myself finding comfort in drugs and alcohol and mixing with the wrong people. Within weeks I had become an out of control addict. For 2 years I fought and lost with

my addiction, always feeling hungry, tired and sick. I was at the bottom of life's barrel and I had lost the will to live. A friend invited me to Soul Café for something to eat. There I met 2 men who would change my life—Bill and Ken who offered me help and which I willingly accepted. Since then I have changed so much for the better, I became a Christian, was baptised and now believe there is a God who really does love me! I am finally free from drugs and have a purpose in life once again.
Cameron 2005.

Get Nourished Today!

A church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. I've gone for 30 years now, he wrote, and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all.


This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column. Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:
"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this... they all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my

wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing...God is UP to something!

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Soul Food Cookbook



Recipe's on a shoestring & tales of the city
By in house chefs
Tony Broughton & Nikki Gibson

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