

The Missing Middle

Why your church has a clear purpose, a full calendar, and not much movement.

A teaching session for church and ministry leaders

- Purpose
- Mission
- Goals
- Plans
- Tasks

Strategic Planning

Regular Meetings

Work Habits



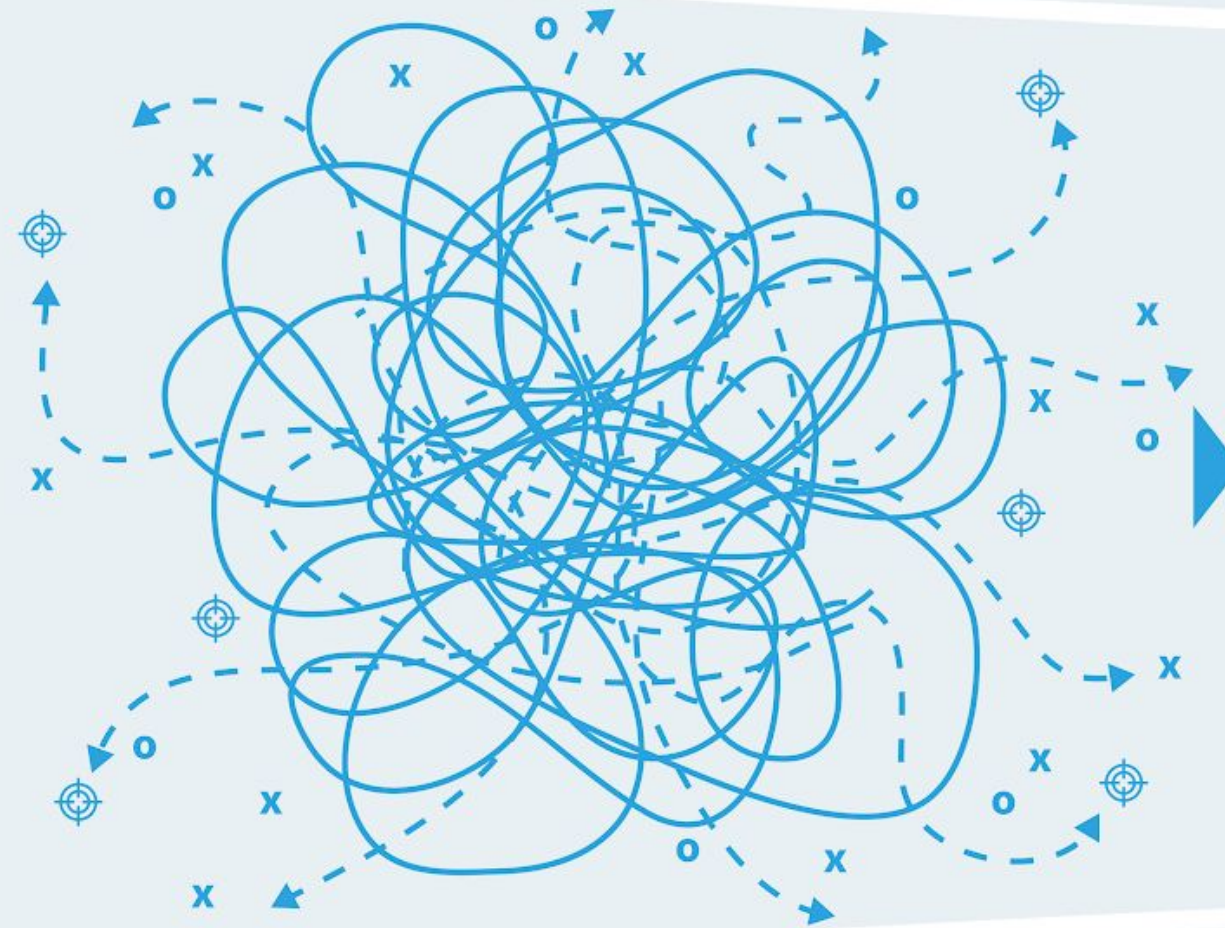


Purpose



Mission

Goals and Plans



Tasks



Purpose

Mission

Goals

Plans

Tasks

Purpose

Timeframe

Forever

**The deepest, most important,
most eternal reason you exist.**

You are always pushing toward it. You are never going to check it off.

Your church: make disciples. Love God and love people. You will never finish it — that's what makes it a purpose.

NASA: explore space

There is no day where somebody walks into mission control and says space is fully explored, everybody go home.

Purpose is not the bottleneck.

I have never walked into a church and found the problem was that nobody knew why they existed.

Purpose tells you what to say no to. It cannot tell you what to say yes to this quarter.

95%

of employees do not understand their organization's strategy.

Kaplan and Norton

Not people forgetting the purpose — people who can't connect it to their work.

Mission

Timeframe
1 to 3 years

Your current objective — what you're rallying everyone to accomplish in the near term.

It pushes you toward your purpose. Unlike purpose, it has a due date. You can say mission accomplished. While purpose doesn't change, your current mission is updated.

NASA: go to Mars

They can hire to it, fund it, put it on social media. Nobody needs a paragraph of explanation for go to Mars.

Goals

Timeframe

Annual and quarterly

Specific objectives for the year and the quarter.

The organization sets annual goals. Everyone on staff can name them without looking.

Individuals set quarterly goals. A year is too long to hold. A month is too short to finish anything.

From **X** to **Y** by **When** and **Why**

X

From 15 small groups

Where the number stands today.

Y

to 20

Where it needs to land.

WHEN

by June 30

A date, not a season.

WHY

because small groups are how discipleship happens here.

The line back to the mission.

Ask your staff this week.

"What are the three most important goals for our church this year?"

Ask them separately, so they can't look at each other. Write down what they say. That answer will tell you more about your church than any survey.

55%

Donald Sull

Plans

Timeframe
90 days

**A written plan for how you will accomplish a goal.
Goals are WOW. Plans are HOW.**

Written, simple, visible. One page that gets used beats a beautiful document in a drawer. If they can't see it, you have an intention.

When a goal goes off track, fix the plan. Don't change the goal.

Write the vision, make it plain.

Habakkuk 2:2. If you want people on the same page, make an actual page. Nobody has ever read a sixty page strategic plan.

The Six Parts of a Good Plan

1

Goal

The one you're serving, written out in full so the plan can't drift off it.

2

Approach

How you intend to get there, in a few sentences a new hire could follow.

3

Key activities

The handful of things that actually move it. Not everything you'll do.

4

Milestones

Checkpoints with dates, so off track shows up in week three, not month three.

5

Success criteria

How you'll know it worked. Agreed before the work starts.

6

Sign-off

A name. This is what turns a private intention into a shared commitment.

Tasks

Timeframe
This week

The daily and weekly to-do items. You are already excellent at this layer.

The problem isn't volume. It's parentage — every task should trace back to a plan.

That's how a to-do list becomes a graveyard of other people's priorities.

Where the extra work comes from

Most of the time the task is there because somebody emailed and saying no felt rude.

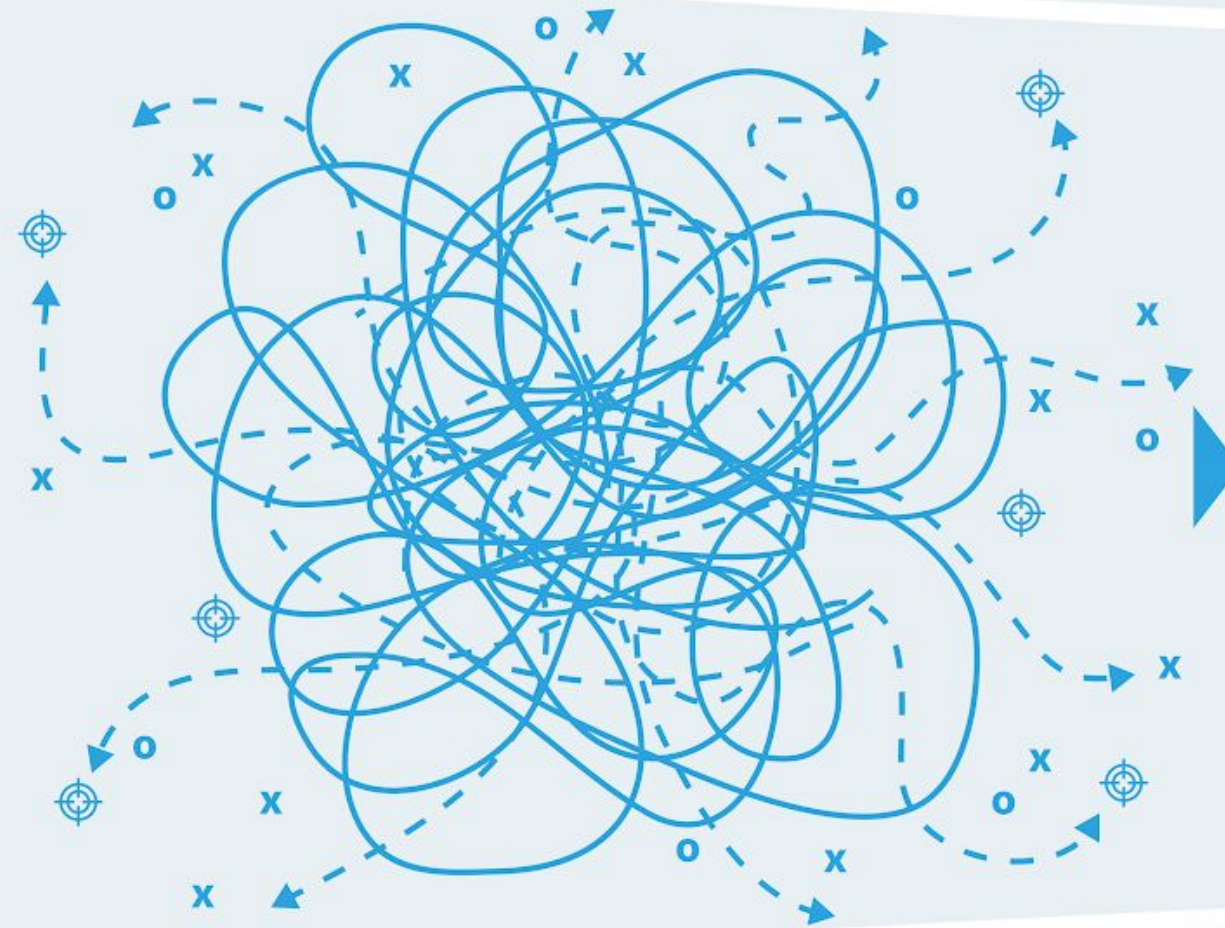


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Five Questions

Answer honestly.

- 01 Can everyone on your team say why this church exists?
- 02 Can they name what matters most this year?
- 03 Can they name the church's three goals without looking?
- 04 Is there a written plan attached to each one?
- 05 Does the work on their list trace back to those plans?

Fix the middle.

You probably don't have a vision problem.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Pick a date in the next three weeks.

Get the people who carry the work in a room.

Name three goals for the rest of the year.

Give each owner a week to come back with one page.