

Church, make sure this list of things doesn't describe your church!

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Leadership  Network *Advance*



## 14 Things That Kill Once Great Churches

*By Tim Nations, Director of Communication and Design*

At one of our recent Accelerator experiences hosted by Google, we were reminded of a couple of things regarding innovation by one of the great innovative companies of our time:

- **Being successful does not equal being safe.** This has always been true, but never at the speed that it's happening now.
- **Innovation is no longer a buzzword, it is a buzzsaw!** Companies (or churches) that rest on past success will be chewed up and spit out by the pace of change.

A [recent article by Innovation Leader](#) outlined the 14 most common things they see that kill once-great companies. It's this kind of thinking, saying, and doing that turns industry leaders into declining, irrelevant has beens.

It's a good, quick read that has implications for great churches like yours.

That's why we took the time to reframe this list based on our view of the large church landscape over the past 30+ years. Many of the same attitudes and actions (or inactions) have led toward the stagnation, decline, and eventual death of once-great churches.

Take a few moments, read the list, and ask if these characteristics are true of your church and leadership team.

1. All the smartest people are on our team. We don't need to look outside for solutions, ideas, or help.
2. Marketing is the only group allowed to communicate with the customer. (But they can run a focus group for you in six months.)
3. Every new ministry concept needs to have an iron-clad case showing how it can get more people through our doors.
4. We need to cut costs now, without rethinking our ministry model/building format/worship experience. That can come later.

5. Digital channels to reach, connect, keep, and grow people are a low priority and underfunded. Most resources still go to things related to the weekend experience.
6. We need to wait until the annual staff retreat or budget review rolls around to discuss the need for a strategic shift or any new investment.
7. We need to wait for the new building program to be completed. Then we can focus on innovation.
8. We need to wait for the consultant we've hired to finish up an 18-month review that will tell us how to innovate.
9. It's far more important to connect with people inside the building on the weekends than to try and be where the people are throughout the week.
10. We already have laid out the tech road map for the next five years, and [this new thing that is obviously gaining momentum] is not on it.
11. We can't learn anything from unknown churches or younger pastors, so let's wait and watch our list of well-known churches to see what they will do.
12. The leadership team spent three days at a conference and brought back a notebook full of new ideas, so we are all set on the innovation front.
13. Innovating is what our student pastor is doing.
14. We know we aren't able to hire top talent like we used to, but let's just keep hiring the same way we've always hired.

Hopefully none of these sound familiar. But if they do, or if you're struggling to figure out how to quickly move the needle on a key area of focus for your church, it's time to see, think, and do in new ways.

### **That's why we developed Accelerators.**

Accelerators provide a next-level approach to learning, planning, and implementation that challenges church leaders to see, think, and do in more effective ways. For leaders that don't want to wait and become a victim to the ever-increasing pace of change, Accelerators provide the peer group, process, and resources necessary to stay ahead in your mission.

### **When you're ready to move beyond buzzwords to measurable progress in areas such as:**

- **Engagement Through Data, Analytics, & Precision Messaging**
- **Generosity and Stewardship**
- **Leadership Development**
- **Multisite**

**...click or tap on the button below to visit our Accelerators page and get in touch.**

**But hurry, we're already on to a waiting list for our next Engagement Accelerator launch, and only a few spots remain for our upcoming Leadership Development and Multisite Accelerators.** Click or tap on the button below to learn more.

[Learn More](#)

## Our Research: The Closer to Retirement, the Better You Feel About Your Plan

*By Dave Travis, CEO, with research by Warren Bird, Ph.D., Director of Research*

Part of my job around here these days is to help churches in their succession plans. In fact, I just spent two weeks on the road with a few churches doing just that. In both these cases the church, pastor and their advisors have done well in preparing financially for that day.

Our star research director Warren Bird asked a question on our recent pastor's poll as well to this end.

We are working all this data up into a larger upcoming release, but here's a peek just to tease you a bit.

We asked the more than 1500 participants to respond to the statement: "I have confidence in my personal retirement plan." Participants chose a number between 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) to determine their feeling.

### Specific Roles

Senior or Lead Pastor - **3.6**

Executive Pastor - **3.2**

Campus Pastor - **3.3**

Surprisingly that reflects churches of all sizes not just super large ones. It also didn't matter the gender of the respondent.

Age did matter, and the easy way to say it is, the older you are the more confidence you have.

Dr. Bird does such a great job on these things.

**Right now we are in the middle of our latest research project that we do every two years.** It is our whole study on compensation and economic issues. And we also ask a few questions to dig a bit deeper and find out some more texture to give you better guidance.

I really need you to participate. Simply click or tap on the button below to get started.

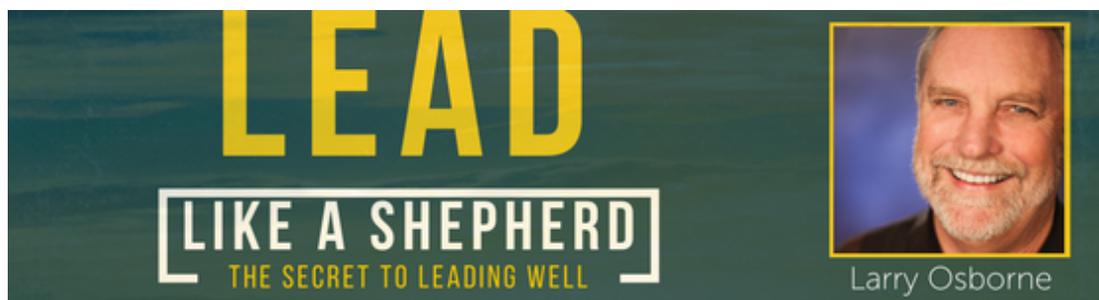
**PLEASE HELP EVERYONE by participating with your church.**

[Begin Survey](#)

**Additionally, this year we have a section about economic impact that churches have in their communities.** This is going to be a key issue for the future as churches related to governmental authorities, and we want to be able to describe well the impact your church is having. We even have some special incentives for that part of the survey.

**Go do it today!**

And look for a release coming that really breaks down many aspects of how pastors feel about various issues surrounding their own finances.



## Things You Want to Know About

*Opportunities and resources for you and your team*

### ***Sam Chand Webinar and Book Giveaway***

Our good friend Sam Chand is hosting a **Leadership Essentials online event on Thursday, April 26**, noon to 2 p.m. EDT. It's free—but you must register.

He's also giving away his new book ***Leadership Essentials: Indispensable Tools for Effective Influence***. It's free to the first 1,000 people online April 26.

He'll be joined by three amazing visionary leaders with remarkable influence:

- **Samuel Rodriguez:** President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, America's largest and most influential Hispanic/Latino Christian

organization with 40,118 U.S. member churches.

- **Priscilla Shirer:** Founder of Going Beyond Ministries, which equips believers nationwide through books and Bible study resources.
- **Chris Hodges:** Founding and senior pastor of 38,000-member Church of the Highlands in Alabama, co-founder of ARC (Association of Related Churches), and founder and president of Highlands College ministry training school.

Space is limited, so [click or tap here to register today](#).

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