

## **Characteristics of successful HCI churches**

1. The church has a prayer team focused on and dependent upon God's grace and power to bring about new spiritual life for existing members and new spiritual life for unchurched people the church will reach through her ministries.
2. The church has a clear vision for positively making a Christ-life and Christ-like difference in their community. They are stimulated through the prescriptions to reach higher goals for themselves and their community.
3. The church believes that reaching, healing, restoring, freeing, teaching, discipling, and baptizing new people for Jesus Christ really matters.
4. The clergy, staff, and lay leaders are focused and committed to the implementation of the prescriptions and move from the "old normal" to the "new normal" even though occasional "ambiguity," "push back," and temporary chaos may flare up.
5. Top leaders retrain or replace ministry leaders who cannot or will not provide a positive work/ministry environment or a positive culture conducive to growth aligned with the vision of the church.
6. People at all levels of the church are invited to meaningfully participate in the transformational process and toward a common mission (make disciples of existing members and new people) and vision/purpose.
7. Accomplishments are celebrated every step of the way.
8. Turf battles cease and communication effectively flows vertically and horizontally within the administration of ministry departments.

Characteristics of unsuccessful HCI churches are the opposite of those mentioned above.

## Best practices

Best practices are effective initiatives, programs, churches/ministries do to resolve and/or enhance ministry (worship, music, Christian ed, age-level ministries, etc) with people.

For example:

**FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN:** Parents and children are involved in community based team sports and participate in weekend tournaments. The weekend tournament participation of church parents and their children, in turn, reduces the adult and children's attendance at Sunday School. The adaptive question for Christian education is: "How can the church offer faith formation for children who are absent from the 10 am hour Christian education hour because they are busy/over-committed to other competing alternatives for families?"

Best practices would include, for example:

1. Web-based Christian formation that includes video learning, family activities, age-level curriculum, etc.
2. Flexible scheduling that fits in with family scheduling
3. Children can log in from home and participate in a lesson at 8 pm on a Tuesday or Thursday for example as part of a distance learning opportunity.
4. Etc., etc., etc ...

The work of searching for and implementing best practices begins by looking at a ministry challenge or opportunity from different angles and seeking out what other churches or ministries in your area or beyond are doing to resolve them. You then take what you learn from others and determine what adaptations you can make to your existing ministry to increase its effectiveness and fruitfulness.