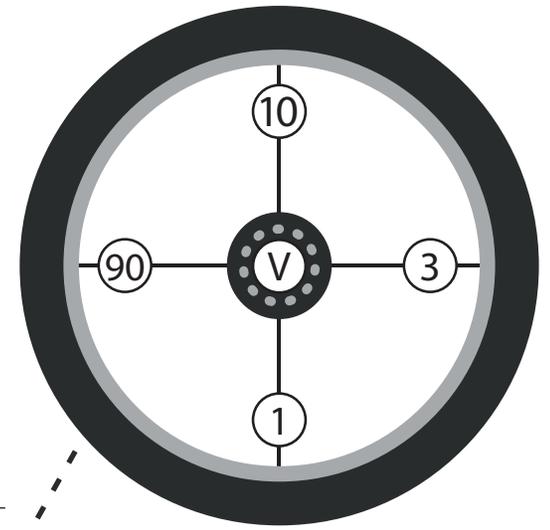
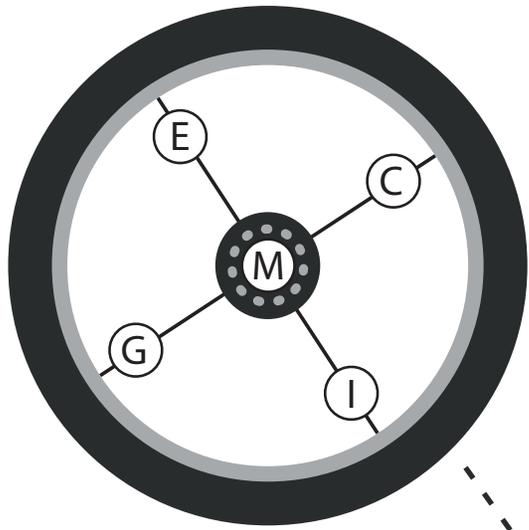


NextLevel LEADERSHIP
LIFECYCLE™



S _____

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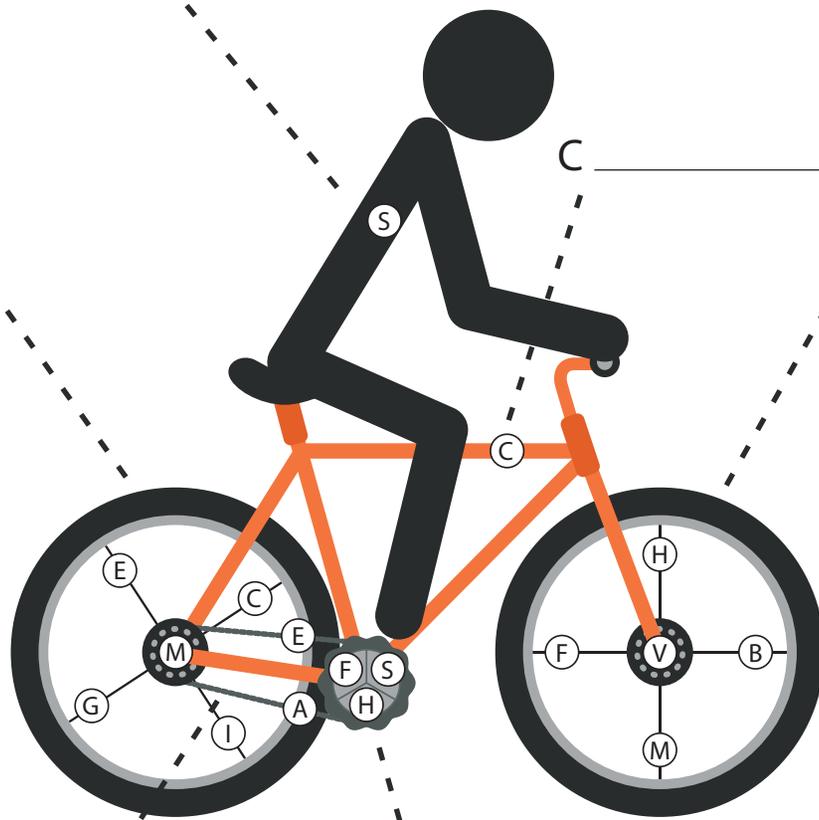
3 _____

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E _____

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Power

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LIFECYCLE™

Life is not linear. Neither are its pursuits. There are turns to navigate, hills to climb, and valleys to endure. Any worthwhile endeavor comes with challenges, setbacks, and even failures. Strong leaders prevail. Wise leaders look for a guide who has been down the path and can save time and trouble getting there.

Every leader needs to be able to answer the following questions with clarity:

Why do we exist? Let's call this **mission**. The mission states our reason for being and our core, ongoing activity.

Where are we going? Let's call this **vision**. Vision is a clear and compelling picture of what must be moved from the future—to the present.

How will we get there? Let's call this **strategy**. Strategy is a workable plan that enables us to achieve our mission and vision.

How will we measure progress? Let's call this **metrics**. The important thing about metrics is to measure what is important.

How will we focus all of our resources to make maximum impact? Let's call this **power alignment**. It's the alignment of all of our resources to make the impact we want.

What will we cherish along the way? Let's call this **culture**. If the mission and vision have a chance to succeed long term, culture will decide.

Am I prepared, equipped, and ready to lead? Let's call this **soul care**

Success depends on how these questions are answered and executed!

S=Soul Care

Lance Armstrong is infamous for his doping scandal, but the book he wrote prior to the scandal catches the truth about life and leadership: it's not about the bike. If not careful, it's easy to get focused on the mechanics and processes while missing the 2nd most critical component of leading: you!

Diagnostics can help discover the preparedness of the leader in six key areas: passion, discipline, self-awareness, resonance, resilience, and health (relational, financial, and physical). Coaching can help the leader make progress in each of these areas.

M=Mission

The mission of every church is the same: make disciples. It is our core activity and the reason we exist. A clear and succinct mission statement that includes a predetermined path and plan for disciple-making is absolutely critical. Many church mission statements fall short of this. One of the problems for churches in the 21st century is that it's so easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of activity that IS church work—the tyranny of the urgent, the unavoidable frequency of Sunday—that we lose track of what is most important.

The attractional model, popular in the last half century, primarily employs a three-pronged approach: guide the person to be involved in worship, connect them in a small group, and involve them in service. While the results have been satisfactory in some cases, most lack the one critical component in making disciples: personal multiplication. A reevaluation of the mission statement and disciple-making process can sharpen the leader's focus on four main objectives in making the disciple: training them to engage the gospel internally and externally (**E=Engaging the gospel**), connecting to a disciple-making group (**C=Connecting to a disciple-making group**), investing in kingdom work (**I=Investing in kingdom work**), and gathering as the congregation of God (**G=Gathering as the Congregation of God**).

This is just the beginning. A two-step process can then be employed: utilizing effective diagnostics that reveal the key drivers and strategies that maximize desired outcomes; the construction of a simple scorecard that monitors all major activity relative to the mission and vision.

V=Vision

If mission generates motion and progress, vision gives us direction. Jesus said, "As you are going, make disciples." It's the 'as you are going' that is sometimes difficult to ascertain. Vision is a clear and compelling picture of what should and must be. It takes us a direction that we might not have been before. Feasible, common sense steps can be taken that enable the leader to gain a clear sense about direction and future impact.

This requires more than just a statement of intent; it needs a plan that moves us to a desired outcome in the stated amount of time. Setting clear and attainable objectives within four fixed time frames is the key: 10 years, **3-5 years**, **1 year**, and **90 days**.

C=Culture

It may not be surprising that a church or enterprise can have a great mission and clear vision, but if the culture is not healthy, it continually struggles to accomplish either or both. Truth is, what holds a

church together is not the mission or the vision; it is the values and behaviors of its members as they relate to each other and their community.

Discerning the existing culture is the first step. Diagnostics can be employed to identify core values and relational behaviors that determine culture. Measured steps can be employed to extract toxic cultural elements and infuse healthy, desired elements.

Power Alignment

Power Alignment features two dynamics. The first is accountability and execution. Accountability and execution become the chain that transfers power to the mission and ministry.

Accountability (**A=Accountability**) begins with determining who has responsibility for a particular task, process, and goal. The difficulty comes in holding those accountable in a way that breathes life into them and success in the endeavor. Execution (**E=Execution**) is accountability's cousin. What do we focus on, execute, and measure in order to leverage our efforts and energy to maximize outcomes? Tools can be employed that enable the leader to discern what actions need to be taken and what is to be measured in order to give the greatest likelihood of success.

The second dynamic is God Himself. We noted at the beginning, that Soul Care was the 2nd most critical component of healthy and impactful ministry. But nothing, nothing is more important than tapping into the infinite source of power that only God can provide.

Sermon prep. Band rehearsals. Connection teams. Leader training. Web sites. Social media. Strategies. Metrics. If we're not careful, we miss the indispensable source of power for all that we do: the power of God. Hudson Taylor, great missionary to China in the 19th century accurately diagnosed our problem: "**We give too much attention to method and machinery and resources, and too little to the source of power.**" If this was a problem in his day, we can only imagine how destructive it is in ours.

So how do we move past the tyranny of the urgent and find the source of power that saves souls, changes lives, and glorifies God? The answer is to focus on the Triune God. Contemporary Christianity has in many ways lost the wholeness of the Trinity. Calvinists might focus on the glory of God the Father. Baptists might focus on the Redemption of the Son. Pentecostals might focus on The Work of the Holy Spirit. To the degree we allow this to happen in our lives and ministry, to that same degree we short-circuit the full power of God.

Puritan Thomas Watson wrote: "**If there be one God subsisting in three persons, then let us give equal reverence to all the persons in the Trinity**". **Thomas Watson**. So how does one 'give equal reverence' in life and ministry? By developing the discipline of giving equal reverence in our devotional life, sermon development, preaching, planning, meetings, and ministries. (*back to expanded power sprocket*) Simple tools and methods can be implemented that help the leader give equal reverence to all persons of the Trinity (**F=Father; S=Son, H=Holy Spirit**) in each area of life and ministry.