



Global youth ministry network

Five C's of Leadership

YOUTH CONNECTION

October 2009

One book that has greatly influenced my ministry is "The Next Generation Leader" by Andy Stanley. This book was first published six years ago yet the principles are very much applicable for those who work with the youth today.

Let me share with you these principles as well as some thoughts on how these can be applied to our ministry with young people:

1. Competence – Accomplish more by doing less.

From the outset, the book shares an astonishing idea: concentrate on that which makes you most effective. Where others would preach the need for balance and improving weak areas, Andy asks us to focus on where our gifting lies, echoing Romans 12:6, 8 *"If a man's gift is...serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;"*

For example, my gifting is in teaching rather than music. Instead of trying to lead the youth in singing, I should spend time honing my communication skills and equipping young people using Biblical principles.

One thing that keeps people from playing to their strengths is the idea of being a well-rounded leader, but says Stanley: *"...read the biographies of achievers in any area of life and you will find over and over that these were not well-rounded individuals. They were men and women of focus."*

When we focus on our leadership strengths, we raise the bar for our ministry and allow other individuals with giftings where we are not to work alongside us. Other leaders with a talent for music could step up in my ministry, in my case.

One thing you can do for your ministry is use the 80/20 principle, which states that 20% of your work is most likely producing 80% of your effectiveness in ministry. Can you identify that 20% of your work that needs to receive more time? These are usually the things that only you can do and where your abilities are maximized.

2. Courage - Leaders are the first to seize an opportunity. (and not necessarily the first to see an opportunity)

Take the account of the battle between David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:19-32, it was the young man delivering food to his brothers who seized the opportunity and not the seasoned soldiers. Here Andy states *"As I listen to leaders tell their stories I hear little about strategic planning and goal setting. I hear a lot about identifying and acting on opportunities."*

At our seminars goal setting and planning are essential, participants do not graduate without making specific goals for ministry. Still, we know it is all just vision until it gets applied into the ministry. I love, and get caught up in, the big plans that youth leaders want for their ministries but the step of acting on their ideas is very critical, that is why one of our trainers always remarks on written plans: *"Make it happen!"* Have the courage to make that critical first step in your plans.

Another way courage can be expressed is in the courage to say "No." In the field of youth ministry many opportunities abound, yet a leader must focus on the ones that reach towards the group's goals. Stanley says *"We fear disappointing people. We fear being passed by. We fear missing out on a good opportunity.... [but] refusing to say no eventually robs a leader of his ultimate opportunity—the opportunity to play to his strengths."*

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choosing the best
path or program
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leader.

3. Clarity – A leader will carry out clear and precise actions even in the shadow of uncertainty.

The higher you rise in leadership, the more uncertainty there is, not less. Andy writes, *"It took me several years to figure this out. As a young leader I was tormented by the assumption that I should know what to do in every situation. If I were a good leader I would reason, I would know exactly what to do. After all I am the leader! Leaders should know. Leaders are supposed to be able to stand up at any given moment and give direction with absolute certainty. Or so I thought. Time and experience have taught me differently... Uncertainty is a permanent part of the leadership landscape."*

Leaders are called on to give clear instructions on where our ministry is to go even in the midst of uncertainty.

For example, if you are the leader of a basketball team with limited time remaining in a game and you are behind by 2 points, what would you do? You would not just point everyone to the court and tell them to keep playing because you were uncertain of what strategy would win the game. You would draw up a play with specific instructions based on what you know your team is capable of. Only as the game reaches the final buzzer will you know if your decision was the right one or not.

In youth ministry, many decisions come with uncertainty. Fear of not choosing the best path or program can paralyze a leader. And so might the thought of consequences of failure. But sometimes we do not pick a course of action until it is too late to carry out any action at all. ➔

Times of uncertainty occur during transitions in our ministry, when we are adopting a new program or phasing out a program that is not working towards our purposes. There will always be hesitancy to change, but as leaders it is our job to chart out the steps to make, be clear in what must be done and hold people responsible to carry out their assignments.

4. Coaching – to be the best leader you can be you must enlist the help of others. We can go further and faster with someone coaching us than we can on our own. Furthermore, an effective coach does not need to have more skills than the person he is coaching.

Particularly striking is the example given: Solomon's son lost more than 80% of the tribes of his kingdom because he did not listen to those who were older and wiser than he. This thought has made me consider well those who are many years ahead of me in the ministry and has taught me to not dismiss their thoughts as irrelevant for the times.

This applies to giving an ear to what our senior pastor, elders and parents of our young people tell us. And it would involve not just listening but also actively seeking their wisdom and advice.

5. Character – Those who follow you will judge you not so much from where you led them but how you led them.

To lead with character will cost you more in terms of effort, time and money than to lead without. But in the long run, character makes us into leaders worth following. If we are to lead young people into Christ-likeness, character is essential. Our young people pick up our traits and habits. They are quite quick to pick up the bad habits. I keep the thought of Robert Murray M'Cheyne in mind on this *"The greatest need of my people is my personal holiness."*

Some ways this could apply personally are:

- A. Your public life should also be the one you live in private. Not to have the same morals in all areas of our life will undermine your character.
- B. If you are married or have children, your family needs to take greater importance than your ministry. Young people will notice if we do or do not do this, and in our age where family is often sacrificed on the altar of work, this positive step will be a good testimony on prioritizing relationships.
- C. Also: let your close friends know the kind of person you are struggling to become. They know who you are and can be of help should you drift on certain areas.

There you have it. These 5 C's: Competence, Courage, Clarity, Coaching and Character have been of great help to my ministry. May you also draw upon them to be the best leader you can be, drawing the youth closer to Christ. Dream big dreams for them... then make them happen.

Alvan Tauli
Philippines Training Coordinator – alvan.tauli@global-youth.com

Reflection and Action Items:

1. On Competence: What are the things in your youth ministry that only you can do? Ask others in the leadership team also, since we tend to be less objective with ourselves. Come up with a list and write down how you can prioritize your time for these items.
2. On Courage:
 - a. Go over the plans you still have to do: are there plans that you are hesitant to start on?
 - b. Go over the programs you do: are there programs you need to say "No" to?
3. For Clarity: Can everyone in the leadership answer these questions clearly: What are we doing? What is my specific role?
4. On Coaching: Who are you allowing to coach you in your ministry or personal life? If no one, what steps do you need to take to have a regular mentor in your ministry and life?
5. On Character: Think about your greatest temptations. Who have you told them to?
6. For more help on youth ministry leadership, contact us on our website www.global-youth.com and connect to our blogs at

gymnintl.wordpress.com, gymnafrica.wordpress.com,
gymnasia.wordpress.com.

Global Youth Ministry Network – Asia
50 Anahaw St.,
Project 7, Quezon City, 1105 Philippines
(632) 7382522
asia@global-youth.com
www.gymn-asia.net

If i would apply this, and surely I will, to our church all the youth in our place can be reached. Thank you for bringing this seminar to our place now I know how to be a leader. And I can say now that I'm ready to be a leader.

Shyne dela Cruz
Tagnipa, Palawan
Level 1, September 2009

What I learned from the seminar motivated me to follow the Lord's great commission. I thank God for sending pastor Rey for our youth group at the proper time. We really need what the seminar says to us.

Kim Hyun-sook
Busan, South Korea
Level 1, July 2009

References:

1. Stanley, Andy. 2003. **The Next Generation Leader**. Multnomah Publishers Inc.
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