



NINE SOLUTIONS

Every Church Leader Needs



The Hardy Group

We surveyed over 1,100 pastors and church leaders, and the results were strikingly obvious.

The #1 desire of church leaders is to see growth in themselves and those around them. They want to be better as individuals. They want to lead better, and they want to help others lead better.

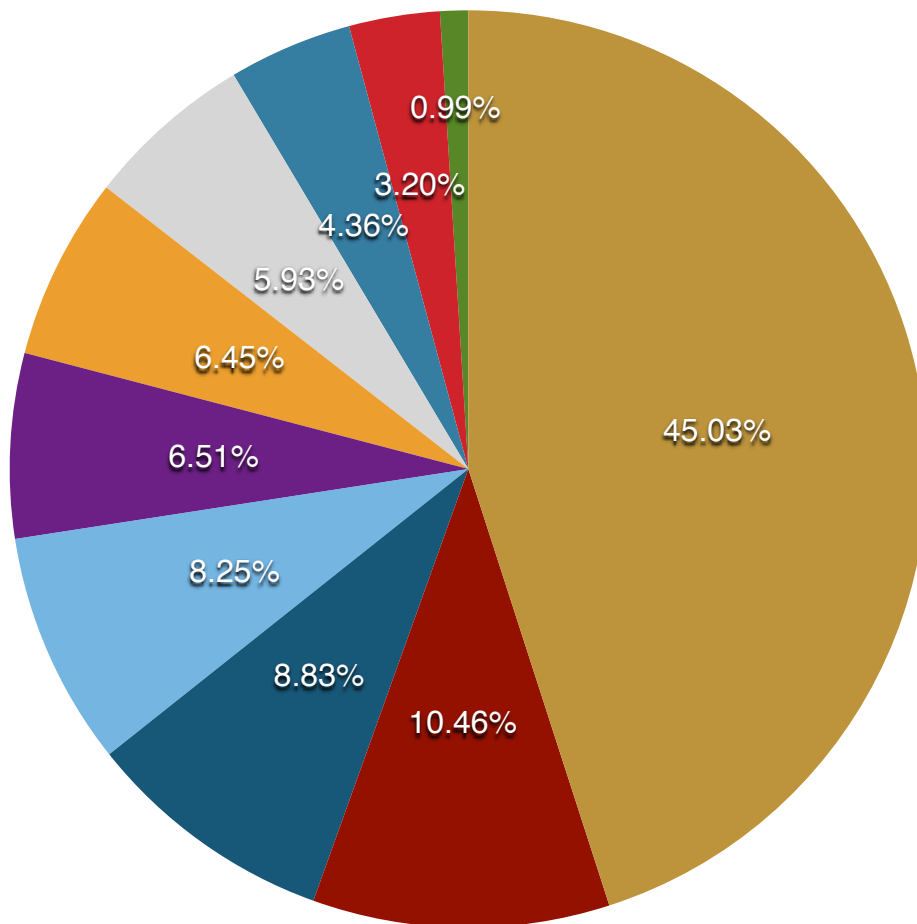
They want to manage their workload better, and find balance between ministry and home life. They want to make better decisions. They want to navigate challenging situations.

Simply put ...

They want to grow!

They want to be better!

They understand that ***if they grow***, the others around them grow and they become better, then their ministry will be better. And if their ministry gets better, then it will grow and its influence will expand.



THE HARDY GROUP SURVEY RESULTS

Areas church leaders said needed most attention.

- Leadership & Personal Growth
- Culture & Society
- Church Growth
- Ministry Relations
- Administration
- Volunteers
- Discipleship
- Systems & Strategy
- Church Ministries
- Governance

*Combined results of two surveys over an eight-month period.

OUR ANALYSIS

At The Hardy Group, we asked ourselves why leadership & personal growth is such a great need. Why do church leaders feel they need help in this area?

It's an overwhelming majority of the responses, but why?

Certainly it's not because of a lack of resources. In fact, general leadership is probably one of the most written about topics out there!

It's not because they lack purpose.

It's not a lack of knowledge.

It's not a lack of education.

It's not because they lack desire.

So why is it?

We've concluded there are three primary contributors to why there is such a great need for leadership and personal growth.

These are broad stroke conclusions. No leader is the same, and we recognize these may not all be true for every individual.

But in general, it seems as though these three contributors are the primary reasons why leadership and personal growth is the #1 desire of pastors and church leaders.

Reason 01...

INTENTIONAL EFFORT

Leaders aren't intentional about making this actually happen. There's simply:

- Too much going on.
- Too much ministry to be done.
- Too many relationships to juggle.
- Too many events to plan.
- Too many meetings to sit through.

Time is precious, and if it's not on the calendar, it doesn't get done. Tasks trump development every time when there's no intentional effort. Hence development takes a back seat.

Reason 02...

STRATEGIC FOCUS

There's a lack of strategy on the part of the leader. In fact, we'd be interested to know your answer to this question:

Do you have a strategy?

We have found that most people don't. They don't have a plan. They go through life day-by-day, week-by-week, and year-by-year without a strategic focus on how to improve themselves, both their leadership and personal development.

Reason 03...

SYNTHESIS

Leaders oftentimes don't synthesize the content they acquire. Ideas for growing one's leadership and personal well-being don't actually become a part of who they are.

In other words, leaders may read blogs or listen to podcasts, and say, "Wow, that's good!" but it's left there. It comes TO them but it doesn't go INTO them, and therefore they remain the same leader -- the same person -- still wondering what they can do to be better.

SO WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

We've identified nine key solutions to help you grow both personally and professionally. We encourage you to take your time through these and reflect on how you can grow and be better.

Don't be like so many who read something, and say "Wow, that's good!" and then move on to the next thing. Unless you're an anomaly, most people can't implement everything they see right away.

So for you that may mean giving consideration to one of these nine solutions until you've taken action. Then move on to the next and so on.

Let's jump in...

1

Create a plan for growth.

1. Create a plan for growth.

So many people don't have a plan in place to grow, and they don't have a plan for helping the people in their ministries grow either. No plan means there's no mechanism to hit the target. And if you never aim (plan) at the target you're never going to hit it.

Now we're not necessarily talking about setting goals here. Certainly that's a part of it, but really the ultimate goal in this case is growth. Here we're thinking more in terms of developing a strategy to see growth.

What are ways that will best work for you to grow as a leader?

What are ways you can help those under your leadership grow?

2

Schedule time for professional development.

2. Schedule time for professional development.

Leaders who continually grow not only have a plan, but they work the plan. In other words, they make it happen somehow, some way. They fit it in!

The fact is, time is a precious commodity for everyone, and there's no lack of work to accomplish. Everybody's busy and yet some people have figured it out.

One of the best ways to ensure leaders take time to get better occurs through time blocking. In other words, you create rigid boundaries with your time at various points throughout the day, week or month when you set aside all distractions and follow your plan for growth.

The key is it has to get on the calendar. If it's not on the calendar, it won't happen. Our intentions can be the best in the world, but life happens. Things come up, emergencies take place, and when it's not a priority, development continues to take a back seat.

Are there things on your calendar that you should eliminate?

When is the best time to incorporate professional development in your schedule?

3

Invest in your teams.

3. Invest in your teams.

Investing in others requires diligence, commitment, and consistency. While it often feels like an unnecessary task, it is one of the most important components to strengthening your overall organization.

It forces you to be better because you have to live out what you're telling others to do. And then of course it encourages them to be better. It shows the status quo is not good enough.

When you invest in your team, you're raising the bar. You're making your key leaders better. When you make your key leaders better, you're expanding their capacity to lead. And when their capacity to lead increases, the ministry's ability to grow expands.

Who are the people you need to make a concerted effort to invest in?

When are the best times and frequencies for this type of investment?

4

Listen to others.

4. Listen to others.

Leaders who are approachable and willing to listen to others are most likely to grow. While you may not want to admit it, you may have a blind spot. Everyone does.

Allowing other voices to speak into your life will make you better off. When people provide feedback or insight, genuinely give thought to it.

That doesn't mean you'll accept everything they have to say, but there are times when you can avoid unnecessary obstacles by listening to others' feedback.

What people can you trust to speak candidly with you?

Are you genuinely willing to listen to others and give consideration to their feedback?

5

***Do what only
you can do.***

5. Do what only you can do.

Delegation can be hard because it means letting go, and you risk it not being done “right.” However, if your time is filled with accomplishing the minutia or managing what you have, that means:

- You’re not developing as an individual.
- You’re not giving opportunities for others to develop.

You want to be out front leading and vision casting. This means you want to do the things ONLY you can do and hand off the rest.

What are the main things you need to focus on in your role that cannot be done by someone else?

What are the things you should eliminate as a part of what you do week-to-week?

6

Think bigger.

6. Think bigger.

Dream big and plan for growth both personally and as a ministry. One of the best ways to stifle a person or an organization is to think the way you have always thought.

You can't possess the same mindset through the growth process. Thinking bigger expands your horizon and helps you lead at a higher level.

If anything were possible, what would you love to see for your life and ministry?

What's holding you back from making that dream a reality?



7

Make changes when needed.

7. Make changes when needed.

One of the biggest moments when people stifle their growth takes place when change is needed. Most people prefer to avoid change, but like any growing organism, change must take place or decline sets in. This is true both for individuals and organizations.

We know change is hard; it's just plain hard. And change is not always fun. However, change is essential for growth. Whether a person wants to grow their character, their leadership, the leadership of others, or the ministry as a whole, it will only happen through change.

What is a change you need to make to continue growing?

What is your number one obstacle to making that change?

8

Network with others.

8. Network with others.

As the Proverb rightly articulates, iron sharpens iron. One of the best ways to be better comes by way of interaction with others. This is how you stay fresh. This is a way to learn. This gives you support. And it helps you develop further into the leader God wants you to be.

Ministry can be lonely, and sometimes you might wonder, “Am I the only one that feels like this?” You may feel like you’re on a deserted island at times. But you’re not.

Networking with others will provide support, strength, and encouragement to help you be better and lead more effectively.

Do you currently have a network of individuals with whom you periodically interact?

9

Never stop improving.

9. Never stop improving.

Growth should never stop. The moment you stop growing is the moment you begin the decline. Leaders who continually look for ways to be a better leader will in fact be better.

When people think they've "arrived" and no longer need something, they lose their edge. They don't realize it right away, but slowly over time their growth is stifled.

The key to growth is to not be satisfied. Having a continual desire to be better will keep growth at the forefront of your mind and will help you stay intentional.

At The Hardy Group, we simply want you to be better. That's what we're all about. We believe these nine solutions will help you grow both personally and professionally.



OUR PRAYER FOR YOU

Dear God,

May you grant to each man and woman who has read through this document the ability to see forward to what you have for their lives.

May their ministries advance as a result of you working in them to be better leaders.

May they sense their gifts as given by you to grow both personally and professionally.

May they help others in their spheres of influence do the same.

You are the one who enables and equips individuals, and we give thanks to you for doing just that in their lives today.

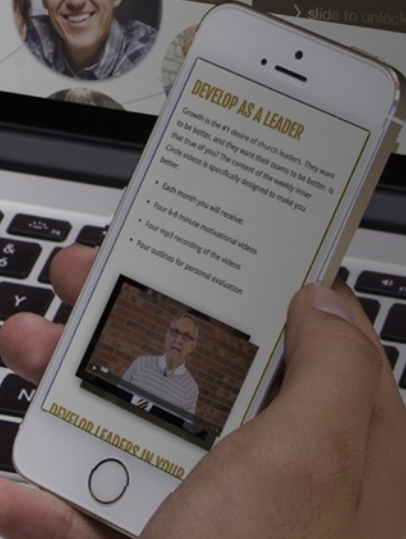
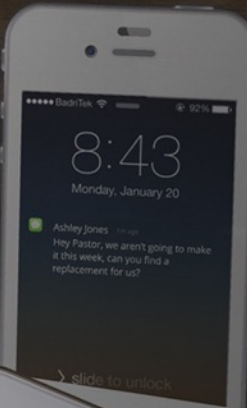
Amen.

Join a network of

EVERYDAY PASTORS AND LEADERS FOR ALL THINGS CHURCH

The Hardy Group is a network of pastors and leaders striving to lead better in order to expand their influence and make a difference. By being a part of The Hardy Group, you'll have access to our consulting, coaching, and other resources designed to make you better.

JOIN THE NETWORK



Join a network of

EVERYDAY PASTORS AND LEADERS FOR ALL THINGS CHURCH

The Hardy Group is a network of pastors and leaders striving to lead better in order to expand their influence and make a difference. By being a part of The Hardy Group, you'll have access to our consulting, coaching, and other resources designed to make you better.

TheHardyGroup.org