

Church Revitalization Pastor Roundtables

Mission: To strengthen one another through the open exchange of questions, ideas, best practices, mistakes, and successes.

Scriptural basis: “As Iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friends.”
Proverbs 27:17

Purpose: To create an environment where pastors of similar situations can come together to exchange ideas on topics related to ministry in the local church.

Ground Rules: Confidentiality is most important as we desire to establish honor and trust among the group. Also, this is not a place for theological debate. We will show respect for one another.

Format: Ideally this group will involve five to ten pastors representing churches of similar size, demographics, etc... These churches do not have to all *do church* the same way. Diversity is our friend in this format and is where we learn from each other. This is not a *Georgia Baptist Convention* roundtable. It belongs to the participants. The meeting will not be just another gathering. It must be a productive time of encouragement and discussion. The group will decide the date, location, and frequency of meetings.

Facilitator: A facilitator is vital to this group. The facilitator’s role is as follows:

- ❖ Gather topics to be discussed in the next meeting. It is important to ask the participants for topics they would like to cover. This can be done via e-mail a few weeks before the meeting.
- ❖ Remind the group of meeting location and time.
- ❖ Begin the meeting by putting a topic on the table. It is vital that the facilitator participate in the discussion but not dominate the discussion. This is not a time for lecture or preaching.
- ❖ The facilitator must be sensitive to the flow of the meeting. I have found the discussion of one topic often opens the door to other topics. That is a good thing. Remember this is for the benefit of the participants. When the facilitator senses a particular topic has been adequately discussed he moves the group to the next discussion area.
- ❖ The facilitator is responsible for keeping the experience moving. If he senses it is bogging down he can move to the next topic. Most often discussion of a particular subject lasts from 15 to 45 minutes.

- ❖ The facilitator is responsible for involving everyone. In every group there are those who will initiate conversations and those who will wait to be included. The facilitator must be sensitive to this and not allow the group to be dominated by one strong personality.
- ❖ The facilitator must be aware a topic may surface in the meeting that was not on the "to be discussed" list. That's okay as long as it's of interest to the group. If time runs out that's okay. The facilitator simply tells the group that in the next meeting the topic that didn't reach the table will be brought back.

Time: The roundtable typically begins at 10AM and concludes after lunch. Approximately two to four hours.

Location: Meeting locations can vary. It can be a central location, move around from church to church, associational office or even a coffee shop.

Topics: These are some examples of discussion topics: sermon preparation, vision casting, bringing productive change, Sunday school or small group ministry, budgeting, building staff, developing volunteers, becoming visitor friendly, technology, current reading practices, dealing with difficult people and so on.