CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis is an inquiry into how a “consulting approach” can be used by a church helping organisation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church system to assist local church congregations. This inquiry will focus specifically on the service providers known as Conference Departments ¹ and how a consulting approach can improve the service they provide. The exploration of the methodology and relationship between department personnel and churches will inform this inquiry.

Background

Consultancy within the Australian Seventh-day Adventist church is in its infancy. For the majority of churches the concept of using an external consultant to assist them on an ongoing basis would be a radical thought. The Seventh-day Adventist church system has traditionally provided resources and training to church parishes via their Conference departments - youth, Bible school, outreach, health, welfare etc. However, few of these departments have offered a true consultative service where diagnostic assessment and long term problem-solving occurs.

This thesis aims to develop a methodology by which consultants can gain entrance into churches and offer ongoing assistance to them. The study attempts to establish a model and identifies the issues that relate to using such an approach.

The thesis does not seek to discuss the general virtues of consulting but explores the possible application of it in the Seventh-day Adventist church context. It is within this context that there arises in the research both new insights into the Church and the practice of consulting.

Statement Of Problem

In my work as a Conference department person, it has been my experience that very few pastors or churches see the department’s work as being all that significant for them. Many pastors never seek any assistance from the departments. Others make use of it in a nominal way. They have the department in once a year, ”to do whatever they want to do”, thinking that this will keep the department happy. There is a minority however who use the department on a regular basis.

¹ Conference is the term given to a particular state or region of churches. Each Conference has its own administration and resource personnel. The Conference is responsible for employing and appointing clergy to churches. It also provides special services for the area e.g. Schools.
Traditionally most of the work of Department personnel has centred around training local church leaders in the following areas - youth staff training, Bible teacher training, family, outreach and public programmes. Only a small percentage of pastors and churches use the Departments in a “process consulting” role - teaching skills and problem solving processes. Rarely is the Department invited to assist a church in making a general assessment of their activities. This is the area that pastors and churches could benefit most from.

An improvement in process and leadership skills is greatly needed. However, my observation has been that those ministers and leaders who are weak in these areas are less likely to call in the Conference Department.

Traditionally ministers, up until the last ten years, have had little formal training in how to be leaders. Their major training in Australia and elsewhere has been theological with a minor amount of pastoral leadership training. Some ministers consider that their role “...should be restricted to the spiritual area...” and that the leadership area is an unwanted “...nuisance that one just puts up with.”

Church growth research has found, however, that strong growing churches usually have a pastor who is a strong leader. Blew says, “There is little growth of any kind taking place in churches in which the pastor has not played the key role. He should equip the saints, but it is not likely they will be well equipped unless he shows them how. In nearly every instance of exciting church growth, the pastor is the major motivator. He informs of why and he shows them where and how.”

In the Seventh-day Adventist system the minister is seen as not only the spiritual leader but also the organisational leader. A large part of their time is spent in administrative work. A pioneer leader of the Seventh-day Adventist church Ellen White wrote last century, “God’s cause is in need of men and women who possess rare qualifications and good administrative powers; men and women who will make patient, thorough investigation of the needs of the work.” This sentiment continues to be the norm today. However, even though this expectation exists, the church system has provided minimal training for ministers in this area.

Where do Seventh-day Adventist ministers and lay leaders gain the necessary skills for leading? One of the main sources are seminars conducted by the Department of Church Ministries and/or their own personal study. This form of training however is inadequate because skills are not easily developed by just listening or reading. Skills are acquired as one attempts to use them; reflects on one’s success and/or failure and tries again. Skill development requires a high level of experiential

2 White, E. G. (1946) Evangelism Edited by Ellen White Estate, Review Herald Pub Co., USA
3 Department of Church Ministries (DCM) is the resource and training service provided by each Conference; often they are referred to as the “Departments”.
learning. This may be facilitated by supervisory and/or feedback from a skilled person. The essence of supervision is a relationship of trust and frankness between two or more people, one acting as a mirror for the other.

Ministers in most churches do not have such a person or service. They are mostly on their own. They do have a Conference President to whom they are answerable. However, he is often seen as the “boss”. Having an impartial non-administrative persons to bounce ideas off and to seek assistance from is very much needed. This study attempts to show that the Conference Departments working in a consulting way could provide a much stronger service to the church and pastors in this area.

For such a supporting service to occur there would need to be some changes in the way that some Conferences (administrators and Department personnel) relate to their ministers and local church leaders. There needs to be a more collaborative approach adopted, where the Conference makes serving the churches their priority.

Personal Agenda

Within this study my own personal agenda is found. I see my need for improvement in operating as a Department person. Particularly in gaining entry into the life of churches. The difficulty of entrance is one that causes much frustration. I see the “threat” that ministers and leaders experience towards the Department person as being one of the major hurdles to overcome. And then the difficulty, because of time and distance, of maintaining a consulting relationship.

The need to sell one’s services is an area that I have felt uncomfortable with. The reality seems to be that ministers and churches do appreciate what is offered from the Departments but they lack initiative in seeking it. Often I have felt that churches have had little understanding as to what Conference Departments offer. They don’t see the relevance of skills training or process assessment. They can not connect the importance of good process to getting the job done. The Departments need to communicate more effectively the significance of skill training to ministers and churches.

In this study I have attempted to make a major shift in my work programme from being a person who conducts programmes for churches, to one who works with them in developing their own unique programmes and activities.

A Broader View

In order to gain a preliminary understanding of the territory that this study is to explore, a survey (Seventh-day Adventist Ministers Perceived Administrative Skills Survey - SAMPASS) was carried out among ministers. There were three advantages in doing this:

First, to gather a broader view of the issues that ministers face in regard to their leadership and how they see the Conference Department assisting them.

Secondly, to provide a context by which to examine relevant literature. Because of the scant amount of material on church consulting, most was drawn from manage-
ment consulting and other related areas. The survey results were helpful in selecting appropriate material for review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIVE LEVELS OF ORGANISATION OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Conference</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Division</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conferences</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Churches</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 Seventh-day Adventist Organisation

Thirdly, a survey seemed to have benefits in gaining credibility within the Church organisation - my global concern. It would have greater impact on gaining acceptance of the existence of the problem.

Implications Of Results For The Project

The findings of the survey are found throughout the Literature Review. This is a summary of the key implications:

**There is an overall dissatisfaction by ministers of the value of Departments.**

This negative attitude seems to centre around three main concerns:

1. Negative relationships: Many ministers do not have positive relationships with Department personnel. Some seem to be threatened by any involvement of the Department in their church.
2. Practical Resources: This would be the most common request in the open question. Ministers want a greater diversity of useful resources from the Department.

3. Skills Sharing: Departments fail to assist local churches in process skills. A number of ministers actively seek an ongoing consulting service from the Departments. Others it would seem have little idea as to how a consultant would be of assistance.

**About a third of ministers view themselves as being unskilled in the area of leadership skills.**

There were two main administrative areas where ministers saw themselves as inadequate:

1) The systematic implementation of church plans.

2) The ability to deal immediately, where appropriate, with conflict in the church.

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**Conference**

- Administration of clergy, Combined church events & institutions e.g. Schools, Conventions, Camps.
- Providing Resources, Consulting and Training for churches.

**Representation**

- Major officers elected by representatives from churches
- Governed by elected administrators and elected church persons.

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**Churches**

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Other areas that ministers stated as needing improvement were: time management, motivation of members, interpersonal skills and problem solving.
These findings demonstrate the value that there could be in Conference Departments, or some other helping structure, providing process help where ministers are taught planning and interpersonal skills.

Church Structure

Even though the Seventh-day Adventist church possess many of those characteristics typical to large organisations, it also has certain structures which separate it from others. Figure 1 is a brief outline which shows the five organisation levels of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Each level is autonomous in its function acting as an advisor and resource to the one below. Each level governs through representation from the level below. See figure 2.

This study is focusing particularly on the organisational level referred to as the Conference.(see Figure 2). This is the level where the majority of consulting services, particularly process consulting, can be provided to churches. Other levels may provided a limited form of consulting, however their major service is in resourcing and training.
RESEARCH DESIGN

The project aimed to study the relationship between Department personnel/Consultants and local churches. It pays particular attention to the processes and skills required for effective change. This change being brought about through the process of consulting.

The research project was conducted with a number of local Seventh-day Adventist Church congregations in Australia. The project included whole congregations and specific Departments of congregations.

![Diagram](Figure 3 Proposed Consulting Model Phases)

The Critical Questions

In attempting to implement a consulting approach, (See Figure 3) certain questions or areas were explored. These questions were very much the basis for the gathering of data for this thesis.

*Consultant-Client relationship: How did the church pastor, leaders and members relate to the consultant? Do they have a positive relationship now? Did the consultant cause any threat at any time in the consultancy?*
Role Selection: In what role did the consultant operate mostly? When did he use other roles and for what reason?

Process Assisting: Was process assisting effective? How much time did it take? Was the client comfortable with this process? What have clients learned from this to better equip them for future problem solving.

Entry into System: How was entry gained into the church? Who were the key people who gave the consultation support?

Contracting: What method was used to arrive at a contract? How prepared was the client to formalise an agreement? Did the contract alter with time? If yes, how?

Diagnosis: How was this carried out? How much was the client involved in the gathering of information?

Planning for Action: How was the data used in the planning? What process occurred in planning for action? How much input did the consultant give?

Action: What actions were carried out? By whom? What part did the consultant play in the actions?

Evaluation: How were the actions evaluated? Where they successful? Was the situation improved?

Action Research Model of Consulting: How many action research cycles occurred?

The overall outcome of this project aims to show that a “collaborative - consulting” approach can be an effective way of having a positive effect on others.

The following are the key propositions (hypothesis) upon which this model is based:

- Collaboration is an effective way to assist church leaders to achieve their goals.
- Threat is lowered and relationship enhanced when the consultant works from a collaborative-co-assister position.
- Consultants bring about change more effectively when they facilitate a problem-solving process within the church group.
- Problem-solving is most effective when the consultant involves the church in diagnosing its own problem and generates its own remedy.
- Generally successful change will be related to successful consultant-client relationships.

Action Research

The research method used in this thesis is that known as “Action Research”. Action Research is defined by Bawden as, “a particular way of critically learning about events in this world in order to change them. It combines theory with practice into a critical process.”1 This learning consists of a spiral of cycles of action and research
with four major phases: plan, act, observe and reflect. (see figure 4). It is based on the assumption that:

"... people can learn and create knowledge (1) on the basis of their concrete experience, (2) through observing and reflecting on that experience, (3) by forming abstract concepts and generalisations, and (4) by testing the implications of these concepts in new situations, which will lead to new concrete experiences and hence, the beginning of a new cycle."1

The action-research of this project occurred as I attempted to use a consulting model in my practice of assisting churches. A key part of the research was in examining the relationship between myself as consultant and the church group (Client). This is what Elliot and Kemmis would call the "general idea" of the project.2

My plan for this study, as already described in the background section, arose out of the frustration experienced in my work situation. Through reflection of my own experience, talking with other associates and through the use of a survey (SAMPASS) the "facts of the situation" were mapped out.

With the current situation in mind a literature review was carried out that looked at both an understanding of why the current situation exists and what are the possibilities for change. This corresponds to what Kemmis calls setting out a "working description" of the "field of action".3

The action phase of this project occurred as I worked with churches using a model of consulting that has been proposed - "testing the hypothesis". To be able to test these actions it was important to plan ways of "monitoring-observing" them. The following methods were used.

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2 Zuber-Skerritt, O. (1990) Action Research for Change and Development Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching, Griffith University Brisbane QLD page 4
4 Ibid. page 20
1. The keeping of a detailed *diary* of anecdote, subjective impressions, of intriguing comments, of descriptive accounts, of meetings observed and interactions with clients.

2. The collecting of *documents* relating to the consultations.

3. *Taking Observation* notes of how the clients functioned.

4. Using *questionnaire surveys* of client attitudes, preferences and experiences.

5. *Interviewing* key leaders (pastor etc.), members, young people etc.

6. Conducting *shadow studies* with individuals in the client group over a lengthy period of time and a running commentary made.

It is obvious that a number of methods of observing are necessary. Each method can partly transcend its own limitations by functioning as a point of comparison with another. Winter recommends a minimum of three. Winter says, "...three-way comparisons are less likely to lead to simple polarised oppositions which merely move back and forth without allowing for resolution..."\(^1\) of interpretation.

**Reflections**

The propositions - hypotheses - was tested and observed in practice. It is in *reflection* of the observed actions that a critical theory of the consultation practice is developed. Unlike positivism the results are open ended. The reflection examines the collection of data, noting contradictions of interpretations, but at the same time revealing the common principle that holds it all together.

A number of principles of reflection were followed:\(^2\)

*Reflexivity:* Reflection is a process of negotiated interpretations and judgments. This involves the collection of accounts and observations with an examination of the assumptions that are the foundation of the participants actions. Interpretation includes the spread of alternative views and understandings.

*Dialectic:* In attempting to understand the consulting relationship there was a need to identify this phenomena as it relates to its overall context and how the diversity of its elements are united together. Then looking at those internal contradictions which cause it to be a changing phenomena.

*Collaboration of resources:* The gathering together of alternative viewpoints, including the researcher's, provide the preliminary structure and meaning to the research. Then together "we" set about deconstructing our interpretation of them and form new ones. As the researcher I had to risk putting my trust in the collaborative groups' investigation.

\(^1\) Ibid. page 22
\(^2\) Ibid. page 38-67
Plural Structure: The “report” ends not with conclusions intended to be convinc-
ing but with questions and possibilities that will be helpful and relevant to others. This will require a reporting of a variety of “independent” interpretations, with all the contradictions that are likely, and then showing what it is that holds them to-
gether.

Data Sets

There is no one phase in the research where all the data is collected. In estab-
lishing the “general idea” of the project there was a need to articulate my own views on the topic of research. These views were based on my experience of over ten years working as a Department director. This data not only was the starting place for establishing the conceptual framework, but is enmeshed throughout the research.

Through a survey and discussion with colleagues the “facts of the situation” were collected. The survey data identifies the issues that a Department model needs to consider and guides the literature review in constructing a proposal. The survey data is detailed in a separate appendix and reflected on throughout the thesis.

In testing the model through action research, a large amount of data was col-
lected. This material is found in the chapter research findings. This data is made up of a range of observations/reflections (see page 11) as the researcher attempted to implement the model in practice. The observations came from thirteen case studies (see Appendix ). From these observations, the survey and literature review interpre-
tations were made.

Survey

The survey was developed by the following steps:

1. Questionnaire Development: This was developed from the basis of general leadership function.

2. Pre-testing: A number of ministers completed the test and were interviewed as to their understanding of the questions etc. Interviews were mostly carried out by phone.

3. Evaluation: of problems in the questionnaire carried out with two associates.

4. Questionnaire Administered: The data collected came from three Conferences - South Australia, Victoria and Greater Sydney. The majority of ministers in Syd-
ney completed the questionnaire at a ministers meeting. In Victoria and South Australia questionnaires were distributed through the Conference mail and then returned by the respondent. Of the 82 minister given questionnaires 56 re-
sponses were obtained.

See Appendix: for SAMPASS Questionnaire

- The survey sought to look at five areas of leadership skills - goal setting, decision making, communication, evaluation and conflict management; and four areas of De-
partmental service - resource linking, ideas catalyzing, process assisting and solu-
tion giving.
The findings of the survey then became, as already stated a map of the situation to be investigated. The survey is used extensively throughout the literature review and the research findings. Without it the task of identifying the material from which to develop a model would have been difficult.

Case Studies

The case studies provide the most significant data for the examination of the proposed model. It is from them that the model is explored, challenged and validated. They are the base of which the research in action occurs.

Confidentiality was always an important part of our consulting work and also of our research. It was important to preserve the anonymity for each client. Therefore each case study is labeled with a letter e.g. “A” and title so that it can be identified by the reader each time it is used. A description of each case study is found in the appendix - Case Studies.
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review identifies the general and well-established principles of consulting theory and applies them to the unfamiliar context of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Material from the area of church consultancy is scant. Therefore the review draws on material from general management consultancy, church and business management, group skills and Counselling.

The review established a working description of consulting and the field of action that was to be researched. The review was guided by the SAMPASS survey. It provided current perceptions of issues that would need to be addressed by any new Department model.

The inquiry examines what can and cannot be applied to the field of study from general consulting theory. The difference between church consulting and secular consulting is to be found in the testing of the proposed model.

Defining & Describing Consultancy

Today many people are referred to as “consultants”. There often seems very little similarity in the ways various professions consult. In trying to define consultancy it is important to look at the difference between what someone would say is true or pure consultancy and other helping activity that often goes under the name of consultancy. Block defines a consultant as “...a person in a position to have some influence over an individual, a group, or an organisation, but who has no direct power to make changes or implement programmes.”¹ Steinberg sees the key difference “...is that the perspective taken (by the consultant) is primarily that of the other person (client).”² This includes also their assumptions and expertise concerning the problem being addressed. Steinberg suggests that this requires an act of faith by the consultant in the consultee.

Havelock’s model of consultancy is based on the consultants’ roles being a change agent who assists the client in their problem solving. The consultant identifies the process of change that occurs for clients as a problem solving event that is centred around the client, the client’s view of the problem, the client’s possible solu-

¹ Block, P. (1981) Flawless Consulting University Associates, Calf USA, page 1
tions and the client’s evaluation of their success. He proposed that, “The user’s need is the paramount consideration in any planned change activity.”

Margerison identifies one of the key needs of the client as having their identity enhanced. The client need is not only to gain a solution to the problem but also to gain personally from the intervention.

Dudley and Cummings recognise that within the Seventh-day Adventist (S.D.A.) church system there is a need to provide more professional support for the minister. A support which is ongoing and has a problem-solving orientation which is pastor oriented. The SAMPASS (Seventh-day Adventist Ministers Perceived Administrative Skills Survey) saw that currently most Conference Departmental activity was a once only situation. As one respondent put it, Departmental personnel should “…forget about moving all over the Conference - little achieves nothing.” Lippit says that the setting up of a “…support system for the successful continuity of change efforts is perhaps the most significant test of the competence and professional quality of the consultant.” The providing of ongoing support and interaction between churches and Conferences would seem to be fundamental to any model of consultancy.

The “act of faith” that Steinberg spoke of is vital in formulating any consulting model. How willing churches are, particularly ministers, to put their faith in the person from the office would seem to be critical if a helpful relationship is going to exist. The SAMPASS results suggested that currently there is not a high preparedness to do so. The survey showed that only a minority (21%) saw the Departments as being able to assist them discover their own solutions through “process helping”.

Bell, a Seventh-day Adventist consultant, defines the helping role of the Conference as being “…to develop people (church) in such a way as to free them for self-government.” He suggests that there are four factors within a Biblical theology of ministry that help the Conference define its role. They are:

1. Operational planning is the responsibility of the local church but not of a church-helping organisation such as the Conference.

---

2. Churches need to take responsibility for their own actions. They will respond positively to affirmation of their freedom and responsibility within a wider sisterhood of churches and negatively toward decisions or resources in which they have no participation. The Conference as a church-helping organisation must respect the initiative and authority of the local church.

3. The local church has priority. The Conference must be held accountable to the local needs of the church and not the reverse.

4. Each church is unique in its ministry and approach. The church-helping organisation moves to assist people in the local church to accomplish what they, the people in the local church, believe God has led them to do in their particular community.

The church consultant aims to assist the local church in tailor-making their own unique plans and strategies. He recognises that every church will be different.

Consulting is about working with individual leaders, leader teams and large groups for the purpose of change. Tharp and Wetzels "Triadic Model" highlights how the contact person often is the mediator who influences many others. For example, a consultant who works with a Church pastor will influence a larger group than just the pastor. In fact his work with the pastor is aiming to improve the situation of the church. The intervention of the consultant will be determined both by the client (pastor/leaders) and the target (Church) and the interaction of the two.

Consulting is about discovering the needs of the client and fulfilling them. On many occasions the client will be unaware of their needs and areas of necessary change. However, clients know they want to move from one place to another. West and Hughes propose that, "Any effort to introduce changes or to operate different ways must start from where people really are and not where those initiating the change would like to think they are." The consultant seeks to move with the client's agenda, and at the clients' pace.

Steinberg points out the similarities and differences in consultancy from other helping roles such as supervision, counselling and teaching:

"Supervision" in a hierarchical sense, is where the supervisor is senior to the people being supervised, more experienced in the work being done, and takes some responsibility for their performance, this ought to be clearly distinct from consulting.

---


“Counselling” (therapy) is about treating people’s personal problems and disorders, consulting is about people’s work.

In the area of “teaching” there is much similarity. In all effective consultations there is a high level of learning that occurs. In an in-service training situation where clients bring work related problems into the learning situation there is a form of consultancy occurring.

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church structure Departmental personnel by policy have no authority over ministers or churches. Their interventions are meant to be by invitation only. However, in practice some personnel try to assert a supervisory authority. This fluctuation between consulting and supervising causes much confu-
sion and annoyance. Lippit in his preface to his book "The Consulting Process in Action" isolates the core ingredients of consulting process as "collaborative problem-solving". He goes on to say it is "...a two-way interaction - process of seeking, giving, and receiving help." In any model of church consulting it is essential that the position and status of the pastor/leader is preserved. And that at all times the cli-

![Diagram of Technical Ability vs. Interpersonal Process Skills](image)

Figure 6 Two Aspects of Consulting

ent is not seen as failing but as one involved in a collaborative process of self-improvement.

## Types Of Consulting

### Content Versus Process

The action of consulting involves both technical knowledge and process skills. Marglines and Raia divide consulting into two roles: "task" and "process". (See Figure 5)

Margerson calls these orientations "content" and "process". Content is the technical "know how" or science of the job. Process is the interpersonal skills required to manage the relationships. It is not always necessary for the consultant to have the technical skills but when he does, he becomes a "specialist". Margerson says

1 Lippit, G & R op. cit., page 1
3 Margerison, C. op.cit., page 9,10
that "...most successful consulting involves the management of relationships. Over
and above your technical skills people assess you (consultant) and the way you be-
have". Margerison outlines these two aspects of consulting in the following way:
See Fig 6.1

In the SAMPASS, church pastors see the Departments as having more technical
than facilitation skills. One respondent said Departments can help him best, "...by
taking time to understand the dynamics in my church, by not trying to dump pre-
packaged plans on me..." Many respondents express their need to have a Depart-
ment leader who would be more communicative. Someone who could facilitate
more in the processes of the local church.

Schein first put forward the concept of process consultation. He writes, "The proc-
ess consultant seeks to give the client "insight" into what is going on around him
and between him, and other people."2

Schein bases his process on the following assumptions:

1. Managers often do not know what is wrong and need special help in diagnos-
ing what their problems actually are.

2. Managers often do not know what kinds of help consultants can give to them;
they need to be helped to know what kind of help to seek.

3. Most managers have a constructive intent to improve things but need help in
identifying what to improve and how to improve it.

4. Most organisations can be more effective if they learn to diagnose their own
strengths and weaknesses. No organisational form is perfect; hence every form
of organisation will have some weaknesses for which compensatory mechanisms
need to be found.

5. A consultant could probably not, without exhaustive and time-consuming
study, learn enough about the culture of the organisation to suggest reliable new
courses of action. Therefore, he must work jointly with members of the organisa-
tion who do know the culture intimately from having lived within it.

6. The client must learn to see the problem for himself, to share in the diagnosis,
and to be actively involved in generating a remedy. One of the process consult-
ant's roles is to provide new and challenging alternatives for the client to con-
sider. Decision-making about these alternatives must, however, remain in the
hands of the client.

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1. Ibid. page 10
Development Adalson Wesley, USA, Page 5-8
7. It is of prime importance that the process consultant be expert in how to diagnose and how to establish effective helping relationships with clients. Effective process consulting involves the passing on of both these skills.

From these assumptions Schein formulated the following definition of process consultancy:

"Process consulting is a set of activities on the part of the consultant which help the client to perceive, understand, and act upon process events which occur in the client's environment."\(^1\)

The better the understanding an organisation has of its people processes the greater the chance is of it finding solutions to technical problems which will be accepted and used by the members of the organisation. Good relationships between the workers will enable greater opportunity for problem solving on a technical level.

Management in recent years has come to recognise the priority of worker relationships. Hersey and Blanchard place "human skills" above all other skills of management. They quote a study by the American Management Association, "...an overwhelming majority of managers who participated in a survey agreed that the most important single skill of an executive is ability to get along with people."\(^2\) In this survey management rated this ability more vital than intelligence, decisiveness, knowledge, or job skill. The following figure 7 shows the dominance of this skill at all levels of management.

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\(^1\) ibid. page 8
Figure 8 Havelock Four Ways To Become A Change Agent

A survey by The Centre for Public Resources (1982) found that 90% of people fired from their jobs were fired for poor job attitudes, poor interpersonal relationships, inappropriate behaviour and inappropriate dress. Being fired for lack of basic and technical skill was infrequent.¹

One of the key roles for the consultant to play is that of analysing the interactions of the members, particularly key leaders, and to come up with a diagnosis that implies corrective action at the process level. Organisations that fail to address process find it difficult when problems occur to get beyond blame. Problems become a negative when they cannot be solved. The ability of an organisation to solve problems is dependent on whether they have in place a suitable process or method for problem solving. Broderick says that clients who continue repeating the same old stories are not facing process issues and are stuck on the content.²

Four Roles

Havelock's model of consultancy includes four roles or functions. The change agent can operate in the following ways: A Catalyst; Solution Giver; Process Helper; Resource linker.³ (See figure 8)

³ Havelock, R. & M. op. cit., page 60,61
The Change Agent as Catalyst: This is the role where a person challenges the current way of doing things. The consultant challenges the traditions and may or may not have the solutions. This is an important role within the church where things change slowly. The promotion of new ideas and challenging of the old can provide the energy to get the problem solving process off the ground. The outside church consultant can at times assist the local church leader greatly in breaking the ice.

The Change Agent as Solution Giver: Many people consider that they have the solution to the problems of others. However being an effective solution giver involves more than having the answers. You have to know when and how to give them. The consultant can offer possible solutions based on their experience and expertise.

The Change Agent as Process Helper: This is the least developed role within the church. Having consultants who are able and willing to help the client through the process of problem solving is vital. There is more likelihood that change will continue after the consultant has gone, if the client has been taught the process. When consultants act as Process Helpers they are giving more than just their knowledge, they are also imparting their skills.

The Change Agent as Resource Linker: An important role in assisting clients in change process is to link them to the necessary resources and personnel. These may be within his current situation or outside their system. This action of gathering resources can mean the client’s problem solving will be a much more effective and faster process.

Consulting Roles Of S.D.A. Departments

Havelock’s model was used in the SAMPASS survey as the basis for gaining a picture of how church pastors view the Conference Departments’ service. Pastors were invited to respond to four questions:

“...in-depth consultancies...”, “...demonstrating and training my members...” “...conducting practical training programmes...” “...being there when I need them...” “...working with me...”.

To explore this poor result in process consulting, a group of ministers were asked to interpret the results. The following reasons were given:

- The tyranny of distance - Department personnel are often based far away from the particular churches.
- Financial constraints restrict the number of visits.
· The Departments are spread too broadly - personnel have too many areas to care for.
· Frequent changes in Departmental leadership restricts the needed trust building.
· Do-it-yourself syndrome in the churches.
· Lack of specialisation because of the multiple portfolios.
· Interest conflict.
· False expectation - churches don’t understand the role of the Departments.

In the area of “Resource Linking” and “Catalyst” there was a fairly even split result. Although, in the “Catalyst” the majority scored in the middle 3-5 grid, suggesting that they weren’t all that impressed with the ideas that are presented.

It is in the area of “Solution Finding” that church pastors found most help from the Departments. Fifty percent agreed that Department leaders, when asked, have helped them in finding the solution to their problems. This may be part of the reason for the lower score in “process helping”. Department personnel see themselves as needing to have the answers rather than sharing the skills for pastors to develop their own solutions.

The overall assessment of church pastors of the Department leaders in these roles is low. Resources and long term assistance and support seem to be the priority that Departments need to provide. (For detailed answers to question 12-15 refer to the Appendix: Survey Results.)

Selecting Consulting Roles

Determining which role is most appropriate seems to be one of the very difficult parts of consulting. Lippit says, “We have found no way to measure with confidence which factors are key determinants in the consultant’s role choice.”¹ Margerison suggests that often consultants operate off personal preference. Also, more than one style may work for the situation. However, he suggests that consultancy roles will often be determined by the manner in which the consultant secures the job. He says there are three approaches: invitation, proposals and duties.² (See Figure 9)

Conference Department directors operate in all three ways. Mostly their involvement is by invitation of the pastor or local church leader. Once an invitation had

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¹ Lippitt, G. & R. op. cit. page 41
² Margerison, C.J. op. cit. page 107
been secured there is a negotiation of how the Department personnel will function with the church. This means, says Margerison, that the consultant must assess himself in terms of what he can contribute. He must listen carefully and listen for the appropriate cues which will tell him what is needed.

In making proposals the Department leader is trying to sell an idea or service to the church. This is essentially a solution/catalyst-centred consultant. The great danger is the solution may be imposed on a situation where no problem exists. This is a common complaint in the SAMPASS. The most common request of ministers surveyed was for “resources”. They want to have available for their choice practical and useful material that can meet their needs, not some imposed packaged programme.

There are times when Department leaders act as “inspectors” or “supervisors”. They enter a church on the basis of their Conference position. They apply or interpret “church policy” in settling disputes or giving direction for planning. This role is often contradictory to the Departments major function of adviser and trainer. This role is possibly better handled by Conference Administrators.

Margerison also looked at how consultants see themselves in relationship to the client.\(^1\) (See Figure 10) He says that, “there is a time and place for all three roles but it should be related to the task, not status of the people involved.”\(^2\) He gives the following examples:

**Superior Expert role:** I want the consultant adviser to be a superior expert when he or she:

- knows what the problem is,

- knows the solution,

- is technically competent, and

- has my agreement to act as a superior.

**Subordinate role:** Equally, there is a time for consultant advisers to be subordinate in their role when:

- the client knows the problem. - the adviser has a solution that does not require in-depth discussion, and - the solution can be implemented without further consultation.

\(^1\) Ibid. page 109

\(^2\) Ibid. page 110
Margerison's prefers the "co-equal professional" role. This is where the consultant seeks to identify and diagnose the problem or opportunity, then gathers and discusses data to effect improvement. The co-equal role develops a sense of mutual respect. The client sees the consultant as a partner in problem solving.

Operating as a "co-equal" would seem to be the most productive position for Departmental personnel. The SAMPASS indicated that many ministers are rather threatened or disillusioned by Departmental personnel. There seems to be a desire for closer working relationships between the pastors and Departments. One respondent said Departments can assist him best "by being extremely supportive even though I could have made mistakes, suggesting perspectives I may not have thought of in particular issues..." Another said by "working with me..." (See appendix: Open Question for more responses)

Securing Assignments

Promotion

The marketing of the Department's service is, as already stated, a neglected area. In an attempt to convey a non-imposing position to ministers and churches there is the danger of lack of communication. Obviously churches need to know what it is that the Department is offering.

Stryker suggests the following marketing method for the consultant.

"The first step to gaining a foot in the client's door is the brochure - a terse pamphlet that neatly and pointedly describes the who, what, why, how, and when of your consulting practice. At a glance, the client can glean a basic sense of your skills, experience, and background, This initial contact is then furthered by letters, telephone conversations, or visits."  

The object of this is to set up a full scale meeting to discuss the feasibility of the consultant providing a service.

In designing a brochure the following guidelines of Stryker are helpful:

1. Focus on a central message.
2. Keep the text short and simple.
3. List your credentials.
4. Describe your previous experience.

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2 Ibid. page 41
5. Convey your operating policy.

6. Use strong graphics.

7. Test the brochure.

Any promotion needs to portray the consultants' services concisely and in a way that the client can easily understand. This promotion will be an ongoing process as the consultant’s skills and experience change and as client’s needs develop.

Also of importance, Stryker suggests, is the need to target one’s clients. There is no point in offering services to people who don’t need them. It would seem important in the Departmental role to seek direction from one’s potential clients as to what is needed. This would easily be accomplished at a Conference ministers retreat etc.

Keeping potential clients informed by mail outs of news letters that report current consultancies and advertising specific services would also be important.

Entry

The next step from promotion of service is to secure entry when inquiries are made. An inquiry is only the first step in gaining entry. The question needs to be asked, “What is the basis for the consultant providing assistance to the potential client?”

Gildwell defines the problem of entry as that of attaching a “...new person (the consultant) to an existing social system.” ... “That some relationship to this new person has to be developed.”1 This development of relationship is dependent on the client’s perception of need, role expectation, valid resources, personal gain, and feelings of control. Gildwell outlines this in the following way:

1. Perception of need, in terms of the...
   · extent of consensus in the total system that an immediate need exists, and importance of the need as measured against the ultimate values of the total system.

2. Perception of appropriateness of role allocation by those empowered to allocate roles, in terms of the criteria that...
   · the needed resources are not available in appropriate persons within the system, and the needed resources are available in the prospective consultant.

3. Perception of the appropriateness of resources distribution by those empowered to distribute resources, in terms of the criteria that...
   · the consultant will be available to the different members on an equitable basis, and

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· any new object, ideas, skills, or feelings developed by the consultation process will be equally distributed.

4. Perception of the appropriateness of reward distribution by those empowered to distribute rewards, in terms of the criteria that...
   · the consultant's fee is appropriate to the need (relative to the other needs), and of the quality and quantity of service proposed, and
   · any rewards accruing from the prospective need reduction will be equitably distributed among the members.

5. Perception of the appropriateness of the probable emotional interchange between the consultant and the members of the system, in terms of the criteria that...
   · the members do not become so dependent that they will not be able to work without consultative support, and
   · the members do not become so hostile toward or frightened by the dependency involved in the consultation that the consultant cannot be constructively employed.

A number of the dimensions that Glidewell suggest should exist for a consulting relationship to develop are often not considered by Department personnel. The SAMPASS survey showed this in a number of areas. In the area of "perception of need" many ministers felt that Departments were imposing their priority on to the church - that often the church did not recognise a need for the Departments' service. It was also evident that little checking by Departments occurs as to whether they are offering already exists in the church. One also senses, that ministers (and other leaders) want to know what effect this consultation process is going to have on their status. Will it be of benefit to their leadership or will it call it into question? Will members now depend on the consultant for leadership? These questions are rarely addressed. There needs to be a greater commitment by Departments to convey to the clients where they are operating from. That they are there to assist the client achieve their goals. George states that one gains credibility when the help offered is perceived as help.¹

The consultant as he enters a system should assume, says Glidewell, that "...many members are committed - each to a different diagnosis, doctor, and treatment plan." The consultant needs to convey to those involved an open mind that is eager to hear their suggestions. To arrive with the solution already packaged will increase resistance. What is needed, says Schein, in gaining entry is for one or more persons in the organisation to be willing to have their problem and process scrutinised.² Most often these people have only a vague idea of the issues. This spirit of enquiry is an essential characteristic of a potentially successful client-consultant relationship.

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¹ George C.F. (1988) How to be a Church Consultant Presented at Australian Fellowship for Church Growth seminar, Melbourne Australia
² Ibid. page 81
Initial Contact

The first meeting with a client seeks to define the prospect’s interest, to discuss the consultant’s procedure and resources in dealing with this interest, and to establish a working relationship. Stryker suggests that an effective way to convey one’s service is to carry out a “Needs Analysis” for the client. (See Figure 11) This will help clients to discover whether the service will fit their situation.

This material needs to be gathered in a way that doesn’t appear judgmental. The object of this is to reach an understanding of whether you can work with the prospective client. This initial contact will be an important indicator of the openness, spirit of enquiry and authenticity of communication of the contact client.

Exploratory Meeting

Once contact has been established with a person or persons in a church it then becomes necessary to carry out an “exploratory” meeting. In this meeting Schein suggests to the contact person the certain types of people to be present:¹ (See Figure 12)

Schein also suggest that in the early meetings avoid having anyone who is hostile, skeptical or ignorant of what the consultant services are. It would seem important that this exploratory meeting is carried out in a way that does not cause it to be seen as a lobby group. Instead the pastor or church leader (contact person) introduces the consultancy as an idea that he thinks the church (or committee) may like to explore. If they are in agreement they will request the board to consider using the service.

¹ Schein, E. H. op. cit., page 82
Schein's Criteria

a) someone who is high enough in the organisation to be able to influence others if he himself is influenced.

b) someone who is generally in tune with the idea of bringing in a consultant to help on organisational problems which require working on;

c) someone who sees specific problems which requires working on;

d) someone who is familiar with behavioural-science consultants and the process-consultant idea.

Church Committee Example

a) Head elder

b) Pastor or Business person

c) Local Department leader

d) Aware church member e.g., school teacher.

Figure 12 Exploratory Committee Member Criteria

The aim of this meeting is to determine more precisely what the problem is and to assess whether the consultant is likely to be of any help. The discussion will test the client’s commitment to change. All this discussion will help, says Tonge, to remove the fears that the client may have of consultancy.

Some possible fears:

- The person who has never before used a consultant will have a fear of the unknown. How does a consultant operate? How much time will be involved in this? Am I committed if I don’t like the consultant?
- The client may have had a bad experience before with a consultant (Department director) and will therefore be suspicious and guarded. He needs your skills but is fearful of another debacle.
- The client may be inwardly questioning your competence. How do I know that this person can do the job effectively?
- The client may be fearful that after investing much time and energy they will not get the result they want.

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Tonge says there are two things the consultant should be aiming to do: “You must put the person at ease; You must give him confidence in your ability and in the fact that he will get value for money (effort).”

Glidewell proposes that the consultant may find it easier to allay the client’s fears by proposing a provisional or trial relationship. This will enable the consultant to study and observe the client system and the system to study the consultant. This creates a further step in deciding whether the match of consultant with the system is appropriate. It will also highlight to the client that the consultation is not imposed but a mutually agreed event. The trial period “...will reveal, first, whether the needed resources are available within the system. If they are found, the relationship can be curtailed and gradually terminated. If they are not found, the consultant’s skills can be tested for quality.” The consultant requirement is that those who are involved believe that they have nothing to fear personally.

Lippit also suggests that in gaining entry and setting contracts that there needs to be a preliminary stage - “pilot project”. This involves a preliminary diagnostic activity, assessment of readiness for change and a negotiating of relationship between client and consultant.

**Contract**

Once a relationship has been established and the problem (work) area has been agreed upon, it then becomes necessary to negotiate with the client the goals and procedure of the consultation. Schein says there are two aspects to the contract: One is the formal decision of how much time will be involved - what service will be performed, and cost; the other aspect concerns the “Psychological contract” - what the client expects to gain from the relationship. Schein believes that mutual freedom to terminate the contract should exist so as to produce a relationship that is based on “actual value obtained”. This “mutuality” as already noted, often does not exist between ministers and Departmental personnel. The product or result received by the church or minister is not what was desired. This is often allowed to occur because the church minister sees the Department person as superior instead as co-equal.

Also, in contrast to some other consultants, Schein views his client as the whole group or organisation, not just the contact person. Gaining trust of all key parties is important as it increases the consultant’s effectiveness.

Block outlines three needs of a consultant that should be part of a contract: to be viewed as a partner in the venture; access to people and information; and opportunity to be innovative. He believes that maximum leverage for the consultant occurs

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1 Ibid. page 63
2 Glidwell, J.C. op cit. page 105
3 Lippit, G. & R. op. cit., page 17-24
4 Block P. op. cit. page 41 ff
in the contracting phase. It is always easier to negotiate a modification of an old contract when differences occur than to start from the beginning.

Ulschak sees three advantages gained by contracting:\(^1\)

1. Contracting preserves the integrity and autonomy of the client. It encourages levelling between client and consultant.

2. Contracting helps clarify the “helpee-helper” syndrome. The charismatic helper may leave the client floating on a magic cloud with no understanding for self-help.

3. Contracting helps detect and/or eliminate latent conflict at an early stage. The process and cyclic nature of contracting assists in the managing of conflict.

Proposal

Often a necessary part of setting a contract is putting together a written proposal. The proposal is the possible content of the contract. It is the initial view that the consultant has of his work. Block doesn’t see written contracts as always essential. He says, “The reason for putting it in writing is for clarity, not enforcement. The agreement forces you to be more explicit about what you are going to do.”\(^2\) Enforcement of a contract would be a contradiction of the consulting process.

For the Department consultant the contract will help prevent the fuzziness that often exists with church requests. A contract would have no binding function legally but would force the church to clearly identify the purpose of its request of the Department. The contract that is negotiated needs to contain the following elements:\(^3\)

1. The boundaries of your analysis: What problems you are going to focus on. (And may be what you are not going to look at.)

2. Objectives of the project: These are the benefits you are working toward. This will include solutions to the immediate problems, teaching skills of problem solving and organisational development.

3. The kind of information you seek: Access to people and information are vital for the consultant. Often there will be a reluctance by the leadership to allow this.

4. Your role in the project: How do you want to work with the client. How will the responsibility for identifying problems, interpreting the findings, and developing recommendations and actions be shared?

\(^1\) Ulschak F. (1964) The 1978 Annual Handbook of Group Facilitators page 141

\(^2\) Block, P. op. cit., page 132,133

\(^3\) Ibid. page 138
5. The product that you will deliver: What will you give to the client at the end of the consultation. Oral report or written? How many pages? General or specific solutions? A list of steps to follow?

6. What support or involvement you need: Specify what you want from the client to make the project successful. Summarise what has already been discussed in earlier meetings. Make sure sensitive points are included and resolved.

7. Time Schedule: Include starting time, intermediate evaluation and finishing date.

8. Confidentiality: Allow client to decide who is involved in changes and what is reported. (Internal consultants sometimes are required to share report with superiors.)

9. Feedback to you later: It may be of advantage to your own learning to request feedback from the client six months after you leave.

These elements of the contract are negotiated. An initial proposal following the "exploratory" discussion will facilitate the negotiation.

Diagnostic Skills

Once the contract has been agreed upon, the consultant then begins the process of diagnosis. The diagnosis will become a guide to the consultant and client for the formalising of strategies that will meet their unique needs. Furr identifies six purposes for diagnosis:

- To precipitate change itself.
- To provide an assessment of the variables relevant to the changed goal.
- To create an expanded awareness and growth in the client.
- To create in the client a personal value out of the relationship separate from his objective organisational purpose.
- To energise momentum toward change.
- To focus the client's attention on the variables necessary to create the change and to achieve their goal.

The client needs to be involved in the process because they, says Gibbs, "...are intimately involved in the situation which they are endeavouring to analyse so they are well placed to assess the accuracy and relevance of the information and also interpret its significance." Part of the involvement, Schein suggests, is the client's collaborative involvement in what will be observed and when. This is usually

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1 Gibbs E. I believe in Church Growth (1981) Hodder & Stoughton UK page 161
2 Schein op. cit. page 89
discussed at the exploratory meeting and then agreed upon at the contracting stage.

In assisting the organisation to gather and then interpret information one should have a framework for diagnosis. These act as road maps for the trip. They assist in putting the results into some useful format. Margerison divides data into four main areas: technical, personal, quantitative, organisational.¹ (See Figure 13)

He says, "...it is important to consider what you need to know to help people improve. The tendency is to go for the technical and the quantitative financials, as these are seen to be the "hard" factual points...the real issues may be in the organisation structure and relationships or the personal motivations and abilities."² Problems in the people and organisational areas are often last to be presented by clients. The hard cold facts as to why the problem exists is often less threatening than addressing why the system can't solve its problem.

It was significant in the SAMPASS survey that many ministers acknowledged their need to improve in this area. This is seen in the following comments to the open question, "My greatest need for improvement in my administrative skills are..."

- "defining processes more distinctly, following through on discussions, training of leaders in local church."
- "delegating responsibility"

¹ Margerison, C. op. cit. page 32
² Ibid. page 32
- "maintaining the morale of the volunteers, skills when asking people to do particular tasks - so they are happy to do the task - and so they are happy to report the task if necessary."
- "ability for constant follow through"
- "conflict management mediation understanding direction and implementing needed action, leadership seminars - motivational input understanding what people and church as a whole want to do."
- "decision making, motivating volunteers"
- "solving problems"
- "how to gain maximum co-operation from the membership for the total programme of the church without them becoming upset or thinking I'm expecting too much from volunteers."

The diagnosis of a church involves looking at the gap between what a church wants to happen and what is actually happening. Bell says diagnosis includes assessing the gap between the "form" (structure) and the "substance" (the activity of the church). Forms include things like the system of planning for the church, purpose of its existence and various infrastructures. The form must match the changing substances. He says, "The task in assessing the client organisation is to determine where gaps or distortions occur." Bell gives a number of examples of disparity between form and substance. These would seem to exist in many church situations:

- Variance between language used and action employed. This would be evident in a church that affirms a particular slogan, for example - "We are a caring Church" motto - but when examined it fails to be caring.
- When an organisation's needs outpace the means to meet those needs. An example of this would be an over full church who cannot afford to extend its facilities. The greater the gap the more anxiety, frustration and discord is likely to exist within the church.
- When people in the organisation have one foot so planted in the outside world that they uncritically embrace the latest bell and whistle. There is a pressure on ministers to adopt all the new programme packages etc. in order to keep up with other churches, whether it fits what the church or not.

Gathering Data

The gathering of data has the potential of causing threat to leaders, particularly to ministers, who are already exposed to plenty of criticism. Some leaders can be very sensitive to criticism. This was expressed in the SAMPASS, "Stop listening to church members who complain of church ministry but try to relate openly these complaints to the field workers who have direct contact and better understanding of the problems." The gathering of data is threatening. Bell captures the apprehension well

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1 Bell, C.R. (1979) Clients & Consultants: Meeting and Exceeding Expectations Gulf Public., USA, page 155
when he says, “The client, despite initial recognition of a problem, is typically apprehensive about the potential skeletons which may be found. It’s an ”I don’t want to know but I need to know,” approach-avoidance apprehension in many cases.” An understanding of the purpose of the data collection and a guarantee of confidentiality is important in allaying some of the client’s anxiety.2

In the gathering of data there is a sense of intervention occurring, Schein points out that “…data gathering and intervention occur simultaneously throughout the entire consultative process.”3 Getting of relevant information is a continual part of the consultant’s work.

How one goes about collecting information of the church will be dependent on the situation and goal of the consultation. Gibbs recommends that the actual data collecting be carried out by a small team. “By this means the church is preserved from “analysis paralysis”, with the church curtailing its activities and returning its plans to cold storage while it contemplates its navel.”4 Lippit points out the tension between the level of expertise of the information gatherers and the need for ownership of the data and how the action research approach does have dangers of overload for the client who is involved in information gathering.5 There are many ways in which data may be collected - personal interviews, group meetings, questionnaires, observations, statistical records, church histories, assessments etc. Many church consultants base their analysis on extensive church congregational surveys. Two Adventist consultants, Dudley and Cummings’ use a twenty-six-question, fifty item instrument called the “Caring Church Survey”6 which has been selected on the basis of their significance for church growth. The survey has been completed by some twenty thousand North American Adventists and has been correlated with congregational growth rates so that growth factors have been clearly identified.

There are many ways in which data may be collected - personal interviews, group meetings, questionnaires, observation, statistical records, church histories, assessments etc. Many church consultants base their analysis on extensive church congregational surveys. Two Adventist consultants, Dudley and Cummings’ use a twenty-six-question, fifty item instrument called the “Caring Church Survey.”7 The items have been selected on the basis of their significance for church growth. The survey has been completed by some twenty thousand North American Adventists and has been correlated with congregational growth rates so that growth factors have been clearly identified.

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1 Ibid. page 152
2 Gibbs, E. op. cit. (I Believe In Church Growth) page 161
3 Schein, E.H. op. cit. page 97
4 Ibid. page 163
5 Lippit G. & R. op. cit., page 47
6 Cummings, D. & Dudley, R. op. cit. page 91
The Twelve Central Characteristics

Relational
1. Specific, Concrete Missional Objectives
2. Pastoral/Lay Visitation in Community
3. Corporate, Dynamic Worship
4. Significant Relational Groups
5. Strong Leadership Resources
6. Solid, Participatory Decision Making

Functional
7. Several Competent Programs and Activities
8. Open Accessibility
9. High Visibility
10. Adequate Parking, Land and Landscaping
11. Adequate Space and Facilities
12. Solid Financial Resources

Figure 14 Callahan's 12 Characteristics of Church

In the “Caring Church Survey” factors are divided into two categories, majors and minors. These are what they consider as the most important factors to have in place for a successful church. The following is a summary of the majors:

- Larger percentage of members who have been members less than twenty years.
- Members have confidence in their Christian lifestyle and beliefs.
- A significant number of members involved in giving community Bible studies.
- A large percentage of young people in the congregation.

The Church Growth consultants like Carl George use very extensive questionnaires to gather information. Typically they begin with a Church Background Questionnaire. The purpose being to gather a historical understanding of origin, tenure of pastors, past crises, growth trends, geographical locations of current members, attendance patterns, profile of congregation (ages, sex), financial history, current profile, relationship to community, and to check expectations of members and staff concerning the consultation. This information is collected by a few key persons. Following this a Congregational Questionnaire is conducted usually during a worship service. Its aim being to gain information concerning how the congregation per-

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1 George, C. op. cit.
ceives itself, the current programmes being run, what the church priorities should be and what it expects of its staff. Another key area that is often surveyed is the Pastoral Staff. In this the consultant looks to explore the adequacy of staffing, leadership quality, deployment, functioning style, blend, vision, philosophy of ministry, game plan, tensions, relationship of staff to members, and expectations regarding the consultation. Community Surveys attempt to discover the potential needs of the community that the church could serve. This is done by demographic studies and questionnaires.

Callahan developed a model based on the major characteristics of churches. The Twelve Central Characteristics (Figure 14) rating sheet to help a church gain perspective of itself. The Characteristics are of two types: relational and functional. He says, “Generally speaking, effective, successful churches have nine of these twelve central characteristics. Moreover, the majority of the nine are relational rather than functional.”

This assessment is then used as the basis for formulating a long range plan. “The art is to expand and add those specific central characteristics that not only build on the current strengths of your church but also match well with the strengths and competencies of the leadership of your church and the distinctive community your church seeks to serve.”

Other Techniques For Gaining Understanding

There are many ways to gain information from a group of people. Bell suggests four techniques for gathering information about the culture of the organisation - analogies, norms, life stages, and growth phases. Most of these would be used in a group discussion where members can freely discuss their views.

 Analogies: The use of sports, seasons, literary analogies can help spark new views and of an organisation. Analogies stimulate fresh perspectives for understanding the unique culture that is the organisation. For example - “If the organisation was a sport or game, what would it be? How is the game played? How does one win? If the organisation was a musical piece what type of tune would it be?”

 Howe suggests that, “...analogy or symbolism unleash disclosure of information concerning the organisation that normally would be hidden for longer periods.” The form in which such an exercise would be used would vary according to size and receptivity of the group.

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1 Callahan K.L. (Twelve Keys to an Effective Church) op. cit., page xii
2 Callahan K.L. (Twelve Keys To an Effective Church: Leaders Guide) op. cit., page 18
3 Bell, C. op. cit., page 161
**Norms:** Another useful technique for diagnosing the organisation's culture is to scrutinise norms. This can be done by listing four norms of behaviour - unwritten but accepted "rules" - that are in the organisation. Examples might be, how members address pastors, dress codes, discussion in controversial meetings. All these may give clues to the culture of the Church.

**Life Stages:** The model developed by Lippit aids in understanding the different concerns and key issues organisations face as they progress through three developmental stages - birth, youth, and maturity. (See Figure 15)

A majority of churches in Australia (unlike the third world) would be classified as in the Maturity stage. The benefit comes in assisting churches to see where they are at and what the issues will be. Resistance to change is high in the maturity stage.

**Growth Stages:** Greiner proposed a model that allows an organisation to under-

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*Figure 15 Stages of Organisational Development*

stand itself according to its stage of development.\(^1\) (See Figure 16) He proposed

\(^1\) Greiner, L. (1972) *Evolution and Revolution as Organisations Grow* Harvard
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>CRITICAL CONCERN</th>
<th>KEY ISSUE</th>
<th>CONSEQUENCES IF CONCERN IS NOT MET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIRTH</td>
<td>1. To create a new organization</td>
<td>What to risk</td>
<td>• Frustration and inaction</td>
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<td>2. To survive as a viable system</td>
<td>What to sacrifice</td>
<td>• Death of organization</td>
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<td>YOUTH</td>
<td>3. To gain stability</td>
<td>How to organize</td>
<td>• Reactive, crisis-dominated</td>
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<td>4. To gain reputation and develop pride</td>
<td>How to review and</td>
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<td>and distorted image-building</td>
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<td>MATURITY</td>
<td>5. To achieve uniqueness and adaptability</td>
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<td>6. To contribute to society</td>
<td>Whether and how to share</td>
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<td>• Bankruptcy or profit loss</td>
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Figure 16 Five Phases of Growth

that organisations move through five very distinguished phases of development, each containing relatively calm periods of growth - evolution which end with some type of management crisis - revolution. By identifying at which phase a church is at, the consultant can anticipate the next developmental crisis and help bridge the gap.

Problem Of Analysis

Within the church growth area of diagnostic studies, there has been a strong caution given by some as to the the value of data that is not used for decision making. Gibbs says, "The consistent failure to implement findings has given rise to cynicism regarding research." Data collecting must be part of the overall church strategy. Engles said, "...research must be undertaken for the right reason. It is especially essential that those who are responsible for implementation must have a thorough go-

Business Review July-August, USA, page 36
Gibbs, E. op. cit., page 184
ing commitment to change if research is to be anything other than counter-productive.\(^1\) Many churches operate from the premise that if they can get enough data then their direction will be simple. However, as Callahan suggests, "...the more data a local congregation collects, the more confused it becomes - precisely because it has not developed a perspective based on central considerations with which to interpret this massive array of data."\(^2\) They often make too much of correlation between statistics and church growth etc.

Feedback

Building into the contract an expectation that the group itself will make the interpretation of the data is important in maintaining the true co-equal-consulting relationship. There is a real temptation for consultants to want to jump in with their own observations immediately. Schein points out that "...the issue is not whether the observa-

\[\text{tions is valid or not, the issue is whether the group is able and ready to understand and learn from the observation. Such ability and readiness must be built up before feedback can be useful.}\]\(^3\) The consultant will need to formulate the data in a way that it can be easily interpreted by the client.

The central issue, according to Margerison, "in the success of any assignment is how you feed back reliable and valid information to clients in order to get action."\(^4\) The "report" needs to be seen as not a solution but as a vehicle to facilitate process of discussion amongst people in the group who must ultimately solve the problem. The information needs to be clear and concise. Complexity causes lethargy and inertia.\(^5\) Many church members will not be interested, or able to deal with, a whole lot of fine detail.

Montgomery strongly suggests that feedback sessions need to adopt an informal procedure rather than strict rules of debate. Debate may be useful in scoring points in parliamentary-style debate, but traditional rules for meetings seem to have been drawn up for use in antagonistic situations.\(^6\) Important goals in these meetings are co-operation and problem solving not point scoring. A relaxed atmosphere is more appropriate and conducive to developing good communication within the group.

Feed back sessions need to include the power people of the church. Without their commitment the likelihood of the church responding effectively to the findings with action will be reduced. The church board will be an obvious place where feedback

\(^1\) Engles, J. (1977) How Can I Get Them To Listen Zondervan, USA, page 176
\(^2\) Callahan, K.L. 12 Keys To An Effective Church op. cit. page xii
\(^3\) Schein, op. cit. page 111
\(^4\) Margerison, op. cit. page 182
is given. They will consider the overall results. Department leaders with their commit-
tees need to focus on the results that concern their areas of responsibility. Some
consultants give feedback to the complete church congregation. This may then be-
come the basis for developing an overall "statement of mission" or modification of
an existing one.

The feedback session may be part of, or preliminary to, the "Action Planning"
phase of consulting.

Planning

Having developed from the diagnostic work a sense of where the church is at and
what the operating problems are, the church is ready for the challenge of looking
ahead. Planning is primarily an ongoing activity where those who need to be com-
mited to the decision are involved. It requires skills in bringing people together to
create vision before the details of what is to be done is worked out. ¹

The consultant leads the church through a number of activities to bring about
planned change. Warrick outlines the options in the following way (adapted from
Warrick)²:

1. *Programme design Evaluation*: The diagnosis is used with other relevant infor-
mation to re-evaluate the current long term goal, objectives and strategies (if they
exist) and considers needed modification.

2. *Problem solving*: The results of the diagnosis are summarised for the whole
church, each Department, and leader to use in problem-solving meetings. The
leadership group considers the results that pertain to the whole church. Each De-
partment leader then meets with his or her team to consider the results for their
Department.

3. *Training*: Training is used to change the way people think and act. It could in-
clude such topics as understanding individual behaviour, group dynamics, organi-
sational change, church management practices, communications, problem
solving, decision-making, conflict management, and managing change.

4. *Intra-group team building*: Team building is a term used to describe meetings
designed to assist work teams to learn how to operate effectively. Team building
should begin at the top of the church organisation and move down until all teams
have been involved. If sensitive issues or confrontations are anticipated, the con-
sultant should conduct the meeting.

¹ Margerison C.J. op. cit., page 191
² Warrick, D. (1984) Managing Organisational Change and Development:
  Modules in Management Edited by Rosenzweig, J., Science Research
  Associates Inc., USA, page 14,15
5. **Inter-group team building:** Team building is now extended to include improving the working relationship between groups that work together - for example deacons and deaconesses. Inter-group meetings need not be as extensive as intra-group sessions. The basic methodology is to identify how each team can better work together.

6. **Strategic Planning:** The leadership team, usually the church board, meets to establish goals for the church.

7. **Other interventions:**
   - Individual interventions - such as coaching and counselling, resolving interpersonal differences, resolving conflicts, skills training.
   - Group interventions - such as team building, role analysis, conflict resolution.

**Mission Statement**

The initial step is for the consultant to lead the church into establishing, or reassessing its mission, goals and objectives. This will not be a once only event, but one that develops as the consultation proceeds. No matter what the consultant has been assigned to deal with, the consultation and its strategies must fit within the overall plans of the church. Plans must not be made in isolation. Often it will be necessary to check and re-develop what the churches mission is. Margerison points out how in many organisations “...change goes wrong because the fundamental purpose of the people and their efforts have not been clearly worked out.”

The mission statement is usually developed by the congregation as a whole. It is a brief but comprehensive formulation of what the church believes to be its unique purpose. Hubbard proposes that a mission statement must:

1. Clearly identify the overall purpose of the church: whom we will minister to, how we will minister to them, and the results of our ministry.

2. Clearly indicates the general direction the church endeavours to move.

3. Clearly furnishes a frame of reference for the relevancy of the church’s goals.

4. Clearly set forth the emphasis, scope, and character of the church’s programs.

**Goals, Objectives And Strategies**

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1. Margerison, C.J. op. cit. page 191
2. Dudley, R. & Cummins, D. op. cit. page 70
Goal setting comes after diagnostic research for only in this sequence can one tie the goals to reality. The goals are the future state of affairs that the church wants to arrive at. The Mission Statement provides the overall direction. The goals provide the specific desired outcomes. The objectives break the goal down into manageable and usually chronological sequence portions. The strategies are the "how-what-when".

It is in the implementation of strategies where churches often fail. Owen makes the following suggestions for making strategies work:

1. Allocate clear responsibility and accountability for the success of the overall strategy.

2. Limit the number of strategies pursued at any one time.

3. Identify action to be taken to achieve the strategic objectives, allocating detail responsibility for the actions - and getting agreement to them.

4. Identify a list of "milestones", or major intermediate progress points.

5. Identify key performance measures to be monitored throughout the life of the strategy project, and creating and information system to record progress.

Goal Setting Procedure

Guthrie & Millers’ method of planning is a good summary of what needs to happen. (See figure 17) Whether this is carried out by one group of people or different groups within the church will depend on the purpose of the consultation.

Callahan suggests five criteria that a long range plan needs to meet. These are based around his twelve characteristics of a church:

1. The plan includes only twenty percenters: Those activities (strengths) that yield the majority (80%) of the desired results. Whenever even one or two eighty percenters (objectives that take 80% of time producing only 20% of the result) creep in, that long range plan loses effectiveness.

2. The plan matches with current strengths: Too many churches develop long range plans based on improving their weaknesses rather than building on their strengths. The expansion of those current strengths helps set up the church to

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3 Guthrie, & Miller, Making Change
4 Callahan, K. (12 Keys To An Effective Church: Leaders Guide) op. cit. pages 67-70
succeed, not fail. Secondly, select one or two new areas (or currently weak) to add new strength - add areas that match current strengths.

3. The plan matches with the community and mission field the church seeks to serve.

4. The plan depends on the plays the players can run: A long range plan is effective when its key objectives are those the leadership team can accomplish. Too many churches try to fit their key objectives and their leadership team into the already existing organisational structure. The proper order is (1) select your key objectives (2) do so in relation to your key leaders, and (3) shape your organisational structure to match.

5. The plan does not set too many objectives: The fifth criteria is built on the principle: “Plan less to achieve more.” Do not focus on more central characteristics than can reasonably be accomplished within your specified time horizon. Focus on the few decisive objectives.

Where the consultant enters this planning process will depend on his assignment. If the church has no goals the consultant, will need to start at the beginning of the planning process. If a mission statement is already in place, the consultant may start with assessing the goals or he may enter further down the planning process.
seek to discover for the individual what it is they can best assist the church with, rather than looking upon them as someone who will fill the gap. Essential, but often missing is the need for key leaders to develop good job descriptions. Callahan suggests the following components:

- Two to four key objectives to be accomplished
- Major responsibilities
- Range of authority
- Lines of accountability
- One to two competencies to be developed
- Job description details
- Steps for evaluation and improvement

Change

It is a paradox of church life that situations and problems which cry out most strongly for change are often the very ones which resist change most stubbornly. And often when change occurs it is at the cost of conflict, resentment and reduced motivation - negatives which may outweigh the benefits of change. The consultant is primarily a change agent who constantly attempts to encourage their client to make change. The nature of the consulting process is that of encouraging change.

One of the key principles for achieving change in any organisation, including churches, is to involve people in the change process. Taylor says, "...change in an existing strategy can be facilitated by involving those people who are responsible for implementing the changes in the processes of fact-finding and problem-solving which lead to the choice of a new course of action."¹

Not only is the diagnosis important for discovering needs and planning strategies but is also a vital part of the change process. Warrick says, "...it begins the change process by bringing issues to the surface and "seeding" the organisation for change. The seeding occurs by arousing interest in what will be done with the results of the diagnosis and by enlightening managers (leaders) through questions asked in the diagnosis."²

It is helpful in monitoring any change to understand that there is a predictable process that occurs. Different groups move at different rates in accepting change.

"First there are the "Innovators" who conceive the idea. They are followed by the "Early Adopters" who support the idea. It is this second group who often make the best advocates as they are converts of the concept. They may be more credible

   Edited Myon-White , Harper Rowe UK page 90
2 Warrick, D. op. cit., page 14
that the innovators who are so committed to their brain-child that they are open to the charge of lacking objectivity. Next comes the “Early Majority” who have been convinced by the Early Adopters. It is when you reach this phase that you can be reasonably assured that the idea is going to roll. Following them come the more cautious “Late Majority”, who are only prepared to move with the crowd when they are satisfied that they will not be in a minority. Last of all the “Laggards” who, if they come at all, will only do so with reluctance. They await the first moment of faltering so that they can have the satisfaction of declaring, “I told you so!”

The consultant needs to monitor the stages of change and be aware of who the key people are in each group. The perceptive consultant then can, if necessary, facilitate ways to bring the next group on board.

It is important to diagnose the possible resistance to the proposed change. Kotter proposes that the four most common reasons why people resist change are:

1. *Parochial Self Interest:* People resist change is that they think they will lose something of value as a result.

2. *Misunderstanding and Lack of Trust:* People also resist change when they do not understand its implications and perceive that it might cost them much more than they will gain. Such situations often occur when trust is lacking between the person initiating the change and the recipients. Misunderstandings need to be addressed rapidly before resistance sets in.

3. *Different Assessments:* Another common reason people resist change is that they assess the situation differently from those initiating the change. This may be because opposing parties have different information.

4. *Low Tolerance for Change:* People also resist change because they fear they will not be able to develop the new skills and behaviour that will be required of them. People sometimes resist change to save face; to go along with the change would be, they think, an admission that some of their previous decisions or beliefs were wrong. Or they may resist because of peer group pressure - their friends’ attitudes.

Assessing which of the many possibilities might apply to those involved in the proposed change will help the consultant to select appropriate ways to overcome resistance.

Lewin identifies three phases in the change process - unfreezing, changing, and refreezing.

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Unfreezing: The aim of unfreezing is to motivate and make the individual or the group ready to change. It is a thawing out process in which the forces acting on the individuals are rearranged so that now they see the need for change. Unfreezing is the breaking down of the mores, customs, and traditions of individuals - the old ways of doing things - so that they are ready to accept new alternatives. In terms of force field analysis, unfreezing may occur when either the driving forces are increased or the restraining forces that are resisting change are reduced.

Changing: Once individuals become motivated to change, they are ready to be provided with new patterns of behaviour. This may occur as people view better ways of operating and choose to adopt those ways. Or it may occur as individuals are placed in new situations where new behaviour is demanded of them.

Refreezing: This occurs when newly acquired behaviour becomes integrated as a pattern in the individual's personality. For this new way of operating to become permanent there is a need for reinforcement.

Force Field Analysis

Lewin's technique of "force field analysis" (Figure 18) can be useful in implementing the client's chosen strategy. It examines the acceptance (Facilitating) forces that will help implement the strategy and the resistance (restraining) forces that may prevent it. There exists an equilibrium when the strengths equal the resistance forces.

Change can be implemented when the acceptance forces become greater in sum than the resistant forces. This is done by increasing the acceptance forces and re-

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1 Ibid., page 338
ducing the resistant forces. In some situations increasing the acceptance forces may result in a counter increase in resistance. It may be preferable to concentrate on reduction of resistance.

Kotter & Schlesinger suggest resistance can be dealt with in a number of ways:¹

*Education and Communication:* One of the most common ways to overcome resistance to change is to educate people about it before hand. Communication of ideas helps people see the need for and the logic of change. The education process can involve one-on-one discussions, presentations to groups or memos and reports. This is important particularly if resistance is based on wrong information.

*Participation and Involvement:* If the initiators of the change involve the potential resistors in some aspect of the design and implementation, they can often forestall resistance. In collaborative change efforts, the initiators listen to the people the change will affect and uses their advice.

*Facilitation and Support:* Another way that managers can deal with potential resistance to change is by being supportive. This process might include providing training in new skills or relieving work loads in other areas. This strategy is particularly helpful if fear and anxiety lie at the heart of the resistance.

*Negotiate and Agreement:* Another way to deal with resistance is to offer incentives - new position, additional power - to active or potential resistors. Negotiation is particularly appropriate when it is clear that someone is going to lose out as a result of a change.

*Manipulation and Co-optation:* In some situations leaders resort to covert attempts to influence others. Manipulation, in this context, normally involves the very selective use of information and the conscious structuring of events. A common form of manipulation is co-optation. Co-opting an individual usually involves giving him or her a desirable role in the design or implementation of the change. This method has a major drawback. People resent being tricked or used. However, in crisis situations it may be appropriate.

*Explicit and Implicit Coercion:* To force people to accept change by threatening them - loss of job, demotion. Force produces strong resentment. This may be appropriate in crisis situations where speed is essential.

Often change fails to occur because of overload. People cannot deal with too much too quickly. They may back off to consider the implications. Sometimes expectations have been raised beyond what is possible. This is followed by frustration, then apathy. It is easy for the consultant to work with the “wrong” people. If the consultant fails to connect with the centre of power action will be difficult to sustain. Other times change fails because the change is not needed.

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¹ Kotter, J. & Schlesinger, L. Op op. cit. page 165
Evaluation

An assessment of the how successful the strategies have been in achieving the goals of the action-planning is the final phase of the problem solving process. The evaluations needs to look at both the factual results - “content” and the subjective result - how people feel about the intervention.

Evaluation is not a thing that is done only at the end of the intervention. Egan says, “...that problem solving is not a magic linear process as researchers recycle their experimental process (with an occasional dramatic breakthrough) until they achieve their experimental goals, so people recycle problem-solving procedures until they are satisfied with the way they are meeting their needs and handling their problem situations.” Without ongoing evaluation there would be no new cycle. Egan goes on to say, “The need to recycle, then, is not a sign of failure; it is part of the human condition.

The consultant’s role is not to be the one who makes the assessment. His role is to assist the client in the process. The purpose of evaluation is not to pass hypercritical judgment on the client’s performance but rather to provide guidance and support for successful action. Evaluation lets the clients know whether they are on course. It provides information to get back on course if they have gone astray. It provides motivation when achievement occurs. Plenty of feedback information, says Gilbert, “...assists people trouble-shoot their own performance.”

In Action-Research evaluation - “reflection” is very much a collaborative event. The participants recall the action in which they have been involved. This primarily comes from the planned observations. Of course these need to be flexible. Through discussion the group reflection leads to a reconstructions of the meaning of the social situation and provides the basis for a revised plan.

Disengaging

One of the key goals in consulting is that of bringing about self-management in the client. The consultant must work towards this and plan his disengagement. Evaluation has the effect of helping the group to focus more sharply on its goals and action. Varney proposes a series of questions that helps the consultant assess the level of success in the intervention.

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• Does the client feel that the process consultant helped? Was the client satisfied that the problems were resolved?

• Does the process consultant feel the client organisation was helped? Did the consultant come away with useful information about his or her own skills and what was done to help the organisation?

• In the process of solving one problem, did the consultant create another? Clearly, such a result is hardly to be considered a successful intervention.

• Does the client feel that the consultant can help in other ways? Will the consultant be invited back, and will the consultant's skills be used in future problems the client may have?

• Does the client organisation have a new look or a new approach or a new feeling about how it can solve future problems? Does it seem to have a better grasp of different approaches to solving its own problems?

• Does the client organisation know something new about itself that was not known before? How did the client react to this information?

From his experience, Schein outlines three characteristics of disengagement - joint decision, reduced low involvement and re-investment.¹

Joint decision: Scheins suggests that the client needs to reduce involvement based on a mutual agreement by consultant and client. The consultant should initiate regular checks with the client as to whether the client feels the pattern should remain the same or be altered. Sometimes termination, at the client's initiative, is motivated not so much by a sense of completion but some other pressure that still hasn't been dealt with. When the client is able to continue on his own the consultant has achieved his goal.

Involvement not zero: If the client and consultant agree on a reduced involvement, it is important that this does not necessarily mean a complete termination. Periodic assessment of the client's situation is important.

Re-involvement is always possible: Scheins sees an obligation by the consultant to make it clear that the door is always open to further work. He says, "Once both the consultant and client have invested effort in building such a relationship it does not terminate psychologically even if there are periods of lack of contact."²

Consultants Personal Skills

Successful consulting will be dependent on the personal skills, education, life experience and personality of the consultant. To measure such components in a person is difficult.

¹ Schein, E.H. op. cit. page 129
² Ibid. page 131
Lippitt, was one of the first to attempt to classify what a good consultant should be. He surveyed 32 consultants as to what they believed to be the key areas of expertise required in a consultant. They categorised the response into three areas - Knowledge, Skill and Attitude.¹

**Knowledge Areas:** Grounding in behavioural sciences; understanding of organisational systems; understanding of training methodologies; developmental stages of individuals, groups, organisations and communities; skilled in process; knowledge of human personality; high self awareness; understanding of leading philosophical systems and values.

**Skill Areas:** Communication skills; teaching skills; counselling skills; ability to form relationships with a variety of persons; ability to work with groups in planning and implementation (group dynamics); utilise a variety of intervention methods; ability to design surveys, interviews and data collection; ability to diagnose; flexibility; use of problems solving.

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¹ Lippitt, G. & R. op. cit. 96,97
Attitude Areas: Attitude of a professional: competence, integrity, feeling of responsibility to client; Maturity: self-confidence, courage to express honestly, cope with hostility; Open-mindedness; Trust in people and the democratic process.

Such lists obviously go beyond what could be found within one person. However, check lists provide the consultant with a means of evaluation and direction for personal development. (See Appendix: Consultation-Skills Inventory.)

Apart from the education and life experience that may prepare a person for the role of consulting, some research suggests that there is a personality factor involved. Personality and vocational tests like: Myers and Briggs, 16 Personality Factor Test, Team Management System and Self Directed Search; all work on the premise that “People are born with fundamental tendencies and preferences of personalities... Their behaviour tends to have a distinct pattern and order to it.”¹ Because of that “order” and ways of functioning people will be suited to certain occupations above others.

![Learning - Problem-solving Process](image)

Margerison and McCann in their Team Management System (See Figure 19) identified that management consultants tend to be found on the “explorers” side of their wheel.² They usually scored highest in the “extrovert”, “creative”, and “analytical” and “structured” scales - ECAS. Other variations that were well represented were - IPAS, ECBF, EPAS & ECAF. (See Appendix:Role Preference.)³

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³ Davies R.V. The Margerison-McCann Team Management System: Research
Using role preference as part of a selection procedure for appointing personnel to consulting work seems to be valid. Davis from his research of the Team Management System says that, “Analysis of the role preference of managers working in various functional and professional areas has demonstrated considerable discriminatory validity for the role preferences.”

Also significant in selection and development of personnel for consulting is the area of learning styles. Kolb identified four aspects to learning: (See Figure 20)

Kolb’s inventory shows that people have varying preferences for how they learn. Each person’s learning preference is a combination of the four learning modes. (See figure 19) Kolb’s inventory indicates the extent to which a person emphasises abstractness over concreteness and the extent to which they emphasise active experimentation over reflection in their learning. From these combinations he classifies people’s learning into four combinations - Accommodators (feel/do); Diversers (Feel/Watch); Convergers (Think/Do); Assimilators (Think/Watch). In the Learning Styles theory Kolb places Management Consultants in the Diverger area. This learning style has a preference for:

Seeking background information; senses problems and opportunities; generating alternatives; new patterns; imaginative; holistic; broad interests; creative; multiple perspectives; emotional; people v things.

Carter confirms in his empirical study that a relationship between learning styles and role preference does exist.

The value in identifying people’s personalities, role preferences and learning styles is twofold. First, this may help the Conference to identify suitable persons to work in the area of consulting. And secondly, provide a direction for self development of Conference consulting personnel. All theorists agree that people change and modify their preferences over time. The consultants who are aware of their natural weaknesses can make suitable adjustments to cover these.

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1 Manual 1988/89 University of Queensland Brisbane page 57
2 Ibid. page 61
4 Ibid. page 8
Summary & Proposed Model

The literature review has explored the general theory of consulting as it may be applied within the context of a church helping situation. From the material certain foundational assumption were identified that form the basis of a consulting model. The following is a summary of these assumptions:

Consulting...
- is about influence not control.
- makes the user’s needs and agenda paramount.
- is usually ongoing.
- is problem solving oriented.
- makes use of collaboration.
- role styles are situational.
- is content and/or process oriented.
- as a service needs to be promoted.
- relationships (Consultant/Client) need to be negotiated.
- preferably involves the client in data gathering and interpretation.
- builds momentum for change by involving clients.
- action needs to arise from collective visioning.
- facilitates planning process.
- enables assessment/reflection and further planning.

![Figure 21 Phases of Proposed Model](image-url)
disengagement is reduced involvement rather than termination.

The literature review has provided a general overview for formulating a consulting model for church helping organisations. The SAMPASS survey helped to identify particular areas within the Conference Department and Client church relationship that should be explored. The overall result being that a model for consulting was est-

![Role Choice Diagram]

**Figure 22 Content-Specialist-Process Roles**

tablished and key areas of concern were reviewed.

Figure 21 illustrates the phases of the proposed consulting model. The model begins with a consultancy promotion phase which then leads into a contact phase. Following contact the consultant and contact person/s explore the possibility of working together. If there is mutual agreement to work together the client and consultant negotiate a contract. Information is gathered and diagnosis is carried out. Both the information and diagnosis are carried out by client under the guidance of the consultant. Following the diagnosis a strategic plan is formulated and action carried out. Both the client action and consultants service are evaluated and a decision is made as to whether further work is required.

A key component of the proposed model is that of appropriate role selection. The proposed model works from the following styles and positions. The choice of role and relationship position is based on where the client is on the problem solving cycle; and their perception of need. (See figure 22)
RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The central research question that this study examines is the validity of a “church helping” organisation using a consulting approach to assist local church congregations. My research is based on the day to day interactions that I have had as a member of such an organisation.

The case studies that this research is based on come from a variety of church helping situations. Some interactions were with large groups, others were with individual leaders or small groups. The length of interaction varied from brief engagements to long and involved ones. The variety of data adds to the understanding of the process and dynamics involved in a consulting approach.

Part of the complexity in reporting this research is that inherent in the consulting approach is the fact that many consultations are ongoing. Some of the cases that will be referred to are incomplete. This is due to the time limits of the research programme.

The research findings are presented in relationship to Havelock’s four roles of consulting and the nine phases of the proposed consulting model. (See figures 21&22) The data on which the findings are based are often enmeshed within the interpretation because of the nature of action research. The validation of the consulting model is more than a yes or no exercise. It is one where each aspect of the model is reflected on from a variety of situations - consultations and perspectives. The research findings confirm the model but at the same time challenge aspects of it and raise further questions to be explored.

Roles

Determining what is the appropriate role to adopt for each client and each situation was a key factor in our consulting practice. Over the course of the consultations the consultant moved frequently from one role to the next. The selection of roles fitted into two broad categories “content and process.” (See Figure 23)

The “content” roles typically involved advising the client in a technical way. The consultant adopts the superior-expert position in their relationship to the client. The “process” roles seek more to help the client learn how to solve their own problems. It involves the establishment of a co-equal relationship with the client. There are occasions where the client wants to be involved in the process of solving their problems but also request technical help. As Margerison says, the consultant who facilitates both process and technical answers is acting as a specialist.
The case studies outline (Figure 24) shows the predominate roles that were used in the consultations in this study. The outline lists the primary and secondary roles, intervention type and relationship style used. (See Appendix: Case Studies, for description of each consultation.)

The approach that was taken included a full range of consulting roles as illustrated above. Havelock's "Change Agent" model proved to me most helpful in determining what was an appropriate role to play. By identifying where the client was at in their problem solving cycle it became relatively simple to make a choice. Of course there is a time when it was appropriate and/or necessary to operate in the other roles or a combination of roles. Our contracting with Case Study B (Bible School Teacher Upgrading) demonstrated this.

The contact person requested that we come and work with the Adult Bible School teachers, particularly new teachers. There would be a strong training component (Catalyst) in the consultation. However, as the first meeting approached the leader became nervous because those she had thought would participate were not. Instead the experienced teachers where planning to attend. This she felt, would not work as most of them were very staid in their thinking. Our suggestion was that we run a session for the experienced teachers using more of a forum/assessing format where we discussed their issues. We had moved from a primarily catalyst role to a co-helper role.

One of the critical judgments that the consultant has to make when choosing the appropriate role is whether enough accurate information has been collected to make that decision. In the previous case our role choice was very much based on the leaders view. There was some risk as to whether the leader's assessment was accurate. The preferable process would have been for the leaders to consult with the group as to what they may have wanted.

Catalyst
The role of catalyst is the traditional role that the Conference Department/consultant has played. It is a role that can effectively challenge church communities to examine the way they operate. The consultant’s priority in this role is to challenge the current ways that things are being done. The consultant uses his or her expertise to create disturbance and to challenge the client to consider exploring new directions.

The appropriateness of the Catalyst role was determined by the willingness of the client, (particularly ministers), to allow the consultant to act the “expert”. Acting the expert seemed to be acceptable to the leader/client when the client was wanting assistance in challenging the status quo or in finding a new direction. The Department director can as one minister said, “... say things that I can’t...” The consultant’s challenge is not as threatening because he is perceived as being neutral and having no personal gain to make.

Gaining permission to act the expert, as Gildwell suggested in his perception check, is all about perception of need. Permission is vital for the consultant to obtain from those who are being evaluated. It is fine for the leader to invite the consultant in to cause disturbance but do those who are being assessed perceive they have need of evaluation and from an outsider? Gaining permission that is based upon perceived need is critical if defensiveness is to be reduced and for the disturbance to lead to some constructive planning.
Case D: Leadership Problem: In this consultation the church's perception was that they needed to use an outside person who could feedback to the leader their inappropriate leadership style. They wanted someone else to cause the disturbance not themselves. The minister negotiated a contract on the basis that "...she will take it from you." In order to achieve this it was important to outline clearly to the person what would occur. It was interesting to note that the leader complained, "People are beefing about my leadership but no one has the guts to tell me personally. If I knew the issues I might be able to do something about it." The leader was prepared to have her leadership style observed and evaluated. (See Appendix:Feedback) The end result of this consultation was ongoing work. This validated that the approach was appropriate.

The Catalyst consulting role typically was a brief one. The consultant would often be invited to present a short session (two hours) on a particular topic in the afternoon following the main morning service or even in the main service.

In choosing this role the consultant needs to have a clear idea of his client’s needs and personal agenda. The leader and/or contact person has a personal agenda which impacts on his relationship with the consultant. For example: A new leader who is establishing his credibility may believe that to involve a Conference consultant in his work may increase his influence and authority. For the Case study G youth leader, this was a major reason for inviting us in. (See the section Gaining Entry for elaboration of this point.)

On some occasions resistance to new ideas was based more on who was proposing the idea than on the validity of the idea. For some leaders they view any new idea that is promoted which they have not been involved in developing as a threat to their position. This view is based on the model that leaders are the idea producers not group members.

This seemed to be the bases of the resistance experienced by the Case study G (Youth Group Formation) youth leader. He was new to the church and did not, in one leaders’ view, "...have a good track record at following a job through." In discussion with the church lay leader it was clear that all of the church board members agreed that the idea of a youth group forming was a good idea. The resistance came from the “fact” that the youth leader had not been appointed and was new to the church. The other unstated possible threat was that the youth leaders automatically took a place on the church board. It is likely that some members of the board weren’t willing to share their authority with this newcomer.

The motivation as to why a church leader wants an outside person to come and promote new ideas must be explored. Is the leader using the consultant to enhance their own position and power or is the leader wanting the group to benefit? Of course a leader will often improve his own position of influence and power as the group improves its performance. This observation was not easy to verify as few persons were willing to admit to the incongruence that seemed evident. The catalyst role in some situations can be very threatening to leaders. Ministers in particular often resent the “expert” coming into their realm to tell them and their congregation what to do. The consultant needs to recognise when it is appropriate to act the expert and when it is not. The difficulty that sometimes exists is where the group wants the consultant to play the catalyst role but the pastor is threatened. In Case Study A (Small Group Ministry) we experienced this problem:
At the third meeting the associate pastor joined the group. A reflecting and sharing time was entered into in order to facilitate the inclusion of this new member. As the session proceeded the body language and over disclosure of the new member suggested he was struggling to know where he fitted. At a following private meeting the minister expressed his concern that the "...group thing happens right" and whether the "...right people were in the group". This person had their own strategy of how a small group programme should be introduced. After listening I shared my concerns - a) Is it realistic to dump the group at this stage? b) Commitment already existed - why lose it? Along with these concerns we discussed his role and authority in the small group programme along with my own. It was agreed that "He would be the leader of the ongoing group steering committee. This sharing and clarification seemed to alleviate, in the immediate, the threat that had existed.

Some churches had a high expectation for Department/consultants to operate in the "technical-solution-superior role". On one occasion a church was so put out that the Conference Department personnel had not been to their church for its annual visit to dispense its new programmes that they complained to the Conference executive committee. Even though from the Conference viewpoint this may seem to be a reasonable expectation there are a number of possible negative outcomes.

Mismatch: One key negative that was seen often in our diagnostic work was that many church plans were poorly matched with their resources. They had adopted the latest idea from the office without first checking out their personnel, resources and community needs. A significant amount of our consulting work was spent in trying to dissuade clients from leaping into the latest fashionable ideas and instead develop their own. There often is, as Bell says, a disparity between the form and substance in local churches. Local churches need to recognise that they know their own culture and situation better than anyone else and therefore are more able to decide what are good ideas for it.

Lack of Ownership: Traditionally the Conference Departments at each level\(^1\) have primarily focused on providing new programmes and training. The problem with this emphasis is that the catalyst role has often failed to produce results. This approach to change fails to elicit the needed ownership for implementing new strategies. With this lack of ownership there seems to be no strong commitment to make ideas work, to modify or develop an idea until it succeeds. Instead the new idea is cast aside as quickly as it came. The ability of churches to accept new ideas and work with them until they succeed is also frustrated by the high turn over of both clergy and lay leaders.

Reduction of Creativity: Where this expectation of the Conference supplying all the ideas for the church to implement existed, there was a lower level of creativity present in churches. Developing creative solutions in planning sessions was

\(^{1}\) The Seventh-day Adventist Church has five levels of organisation: local church, local Conference, Union Conference, Division Conference and General Conference (World Headquarters) See Figure 1.
more difficult. Of course this lack cannot be attributed only to reliance on the Conference. There would be a number of other reasons; people’s socio-economic position; interpersonal skill level; culture of their church etc.

Catalyst-type consulting on its own often fails to produce long term change. What it achieves is a new awareness as to possible alternatives for the client to consider. For this new awareness to produce change, the client must possess adequate “process” skills or involve a consultant who does. The catalyst consultant needs to lead the client to make a decision as to the most appropriate way to implement change.

Solution Giver

Giving church leaders answers to their problems was and always will be an important part of the church helping organisation. Fifty percent of ministers in the SAMPASS rated the Departments as helpful in providing solutions to their problems. Our contact diary indicated that less than a third of contacts with churches was a solution giving role. Church pastors and lay leaders see the office as a place that can at times give them a quick and concise answer to their problem. The demand for this role would vary between Departments and personnel.

On the occasions that we played the “Solution Giver” role we were usually addressing very specific and technical problems. By technical we mean those needs of the client that were related to the task at hand. Some examples were:

- Procedural clarification for Youth group (Pathfinder) operations: Here the client was wanting information that related to a policy that would enable them to deal with a particular problem. The expectation was that the Youth Department would have the needed information to resolve the issue.

- Advice for dealing with personnel problems: The client was willing to accept a solution from the Conference when they were having difficulties in solving an immediate pressing problem.

- Interpretations of church manual rules: The Conference was seen as the interpreter of procedures and policy. The Conference role was to make judgments on disputes.

- How to cater for multi-aged children classes in Sabbath School in small country churches: Here the client was under stress in their work and wanted immediate help to solve their crisis.

The difficulty with providing solutions is the risk that the consultant may not understand the problem correctly because of his or her limited involvement in the clients system. Without a clear, mutually agreed definition of the problems the consultant may be finding answers to the wrong problems. Or alternatively the person asking for a solution may not have identified the real problem. This advise giving in “isolation” in many situations is not adequate. It is often necessary to encourage the client to move back a step in the problem solving process to diagnose their situation before deciding on a solution. On some occasions this was a good lead into a more complete consultation.

Generally speaking, for the reasons already outlined, solution giving was not the primary role adopted. However, in most situations some solution giving occurred. It
was often a specific once only request for help or as part of an overall problem solving activity. Church leaders expect Department leaders to have some solutions, to be specialists in some areas.

The expectation or desire for the consultant to be a walking solutions dispenser varied from church to church. The more capable the leadership of a church the less demand there was for us to participate in this way. For those clients who wanted us to give them all the answers few resisted our proposal that our preferred role is one of working with them, assisting them to come up with their own solutions.

Solution giving in many ways is similar to what is called in counselling, “brief counselling”. The client is wanting a quick “no-fuss” answer to their problem. They are content for the helper to act the expert. All they want is an answer that will enable them to get on with what they are wanting to do.

A church pastor whom I had worked with on a number of consultations rang one morning wanting to know if I knew of a “...precedent for charging participants to attend a seminar at church on Sabbath”. (Adventists avoid where possible money transactions on their worship day.) There was some resistance by his committee to a programme he was planning to run. After some discussion we came up with a precedent that satisfied him.

Appropriate solution giving does have the effect of building the consultant’s credibility for more in depth work in the future..

Resource Linker

The linking of clients to personnel and resources that can assist them in their problem solving is a service that pastors and leaders readily accept from the Conference. The “Resource Linker” is one that is very much the subordinate role. The client knows what their problem is. The consultant knows who or where they can go for help. This is very much a specialist knowledge/advisory role where the client is making use of the consultant’s knowledge of resources and personnel.

The providing of information and connecting clients to networks was an important service to churches. The Conference Department has access to churches, ministers, Department associates and other Conference (Division, Union and local Conferences) personnel that can provide both a broad range of resources and specialist personnel.

Examples of this form of consulting:

- Suggestions for youth presenters for youth meetings.
- Instructors for first aid training in Pathfinders.
- Referrals for people problems.
- Youth meeting programme resource books.
- Outreach materials.
- Identifying personnel within the client system - possible leaders. etc.
- Programme resources.
- Video resources.
Resource linking occurs frequently within the church system. The ministers surveyed in the first phase of the study perceived this role as the most helpful to them personally. However, as I reviewed the case studies we see that in reality this was not a primary role in our work. Two possibilities may explain this apparent contradiction. Firstly, resource linking is usually brief in the time involved in carrying it out when compared to consulting roles such as process helping. Even though the frequency of occurrence is high, the quantity of time is small. Therefore it doesn’t appear to be a significant role from the consultants viewpoint. Secondly, it may be that churches and ministers even though they have the perception that the office is helpful in resource linking, in reality they make minimal use of this service, particularly as a stand alone service.

The most frequent answer to the the SAMPASS open question, ‘The Conference Departments can assist me be by...? Was, “...by providing user friendly resources that I can choose from.” This stands in stark contrast to the comments of one Union director, “They say they want resources but when we produce them they don’t buy them.” The most significant part of this role would seem to be not resource development but resource linking.

Process Helper

The need to be assisted in the area of “process” for the majority of clients was not a priority. Most leaders see the Conference as a resource and training organisation. One that has expertise that can assist them in dealing with technical problems. In the majority of our clients, as the SAMPASS indicated, process issues did not rate highly. Process issues were often confused and overlooked for more technical problems. A good example of this is seen in the following comments:

A committee was examining their churches lack of church growth. “The problem with our church is that we hand too much money over to the Conference and aren’t left enough to do anything worthwhile ourselves.

Even though there may be an element of truth in this comment churches in similar situations who have grown in membership participate financially in the same way. There are other issue, usually “process” issues, that the leaders were not addressing.

A large proportion of leaders in our study, (there were some exceptions) failed to pay attention to their churches problem solving capacity. Process issues like group cohesiveness, commitment, communication, conflict management, planning etc. were rarely the areas of initial concern. However, these areas when addressed by the consultant were usually acknowledged as important.

Even though we worked in the full range of styles or roles, the preferred role where possible was “process consulting”. The SAMPASS survey, our own personal experience and literature review indicated that this needed to be our priority. The reasons for this priority was that this role is the basis for establishing a co-equal helping relationship with the client. This co-equal relationship (is particularly important when working with ministers) reduces threat and builds the esteem of the client. Helping people to help themselves is a far less threatening experience than being told what to do. It is also a far more rewarding and effective role for the consultant.
Process consulting provides greater opportunities for trust to be established than other styles of consulting. Trust is the most important ingredient in creating an environment where leaders and members are willing to disclose their weaknesses and be open to receiving feedback. Without trust the consultant will find it difficult to address people and process issues. The importance of the client having trust in the consultant and the consultant being able to build trust within the client system was very evident in Case Study G (Youth Group Formation).

When the youth leader (unofficially) received criticism from the church board, his immediate need was to be supported and understood. The consultant was able to provide that for him. His trust of the consultant allowed the consultant to act as mediator between the leader and the board. The increase in understanding that the consultant was able to provide the board helped to build trust within the church system towards the youth leader.

The level of personal disclosure by clients seemed to be a reasonable indicator of whether trust was developing between the consultant and client. This seemed particularly so if that disclosure included personal negative statements about themselves.

Process consulting, because of its co-equal relationship position to the client, usually resulted in us being drawn into closer relationships with those leaders who used us in this way. During the four year period of this research it would be true to say that those ministers that I consulted with I became closer to. Effective process consulting should expect such a result.

Process consulting is far more inclusive as a process. It seeks broad involvement and has a preference to involve those who are effected in the diagnosis and planning. It has an openness that allows people to feel they have some control. The consultation with group “L” (Bible Teacher Upgrade) shows how a key leader can be included in the diagnosis of the consultation.

In this consultation the pastor was invited by us to design and carry out an evaluation of his Adult Bible School classes prior to a training and planning session. Before doing so we spent time talking with the pastor (very much at his request) as to the areas that could be evaluated. By inviting the pastor to design and carry our the evaluation the pastor “...had a sense of involvement and a real profile in what was happening.” He felt good about being a co-helper in this consultation.

Process consulting models the skills of process that are needed for any group to succeed. It is within the client/consultant relationship that the client has the opportunity to explore his own process skills. By necessity the client and consultant will need to develop these skills if a co-equal relationship is to be maintained. The relationship between client and consultant will be a good indicator of possible weaknesses in the client system.

Schien’s “Process Model” and the assumption it is based on were very significant to our consultations. The following principles have become a guiding force in our work:

- Threat is lowered and relationship enhanced when the consultant works from a collaborative-co-helper position.
- Consultants bring about change more effectively when they facilitate a problem-solving process within the church group.
- Problem-solving is most effective when the consultant involves the church in diagnosing its own problem and generates its own remedy.

Generally successful change will be related to successful consultant-client relationships.

Process consulting was certainly the most significant change in my approach to Department work. Many requests for training by churches were turned into “process” events. This not only produced more visible change but ongoing work with many clients. It also was evident with many clients that this was a welcomed, and for some, a surprising change in approach. This was evident in comments like the following:

“You would be prepared to come up here five weeks running?”

“I don’t expect you to come back and help us put it together, but it would be great if you could.”

“I have appreciated the fact that you haven’t told us what to do, instead you’ve created the situation where we can think creatively for ourselves.”

“The most valuable aspect of this for me has been the way that you have lead us to see our own potential.”

An Integrated Approach

In most situations the consultant does not operate in one role only but adopts roles in response to the change situation. The Role Selection Figure 24 shows that in most situations at least two roles were adopted. In some situations the consultant may operate in all four roles. (See Figure 25) Our consultation with client J: Small Group Ministry was an example of this See Appendix: Cell Group Ministry.

In this consultation, entrance was gained following a detailed promotion through a news letter to each church board throughout the Conference (Catalyst). The leader from the client church made contact and discussed the idea (Process Helping) with the consultant. He then met with his committee who decided that such a concept would be helpful to their church. The contact person then invited the consultant to explain the concept to the church board (Catalyst). The church pastor was appointed as the co-ordinator along with potential group leaders. The consultant then conducted a skills training programme for the leaders (Solution Giving). On completion of the training a planning session was conducted to select strategies for implementing a Cell Group ministry (Process Helping). The consultant provided the necessary study guides for each group and also conducted a promotion to the church congregation (Resource Link).

In this consultation each role was used successfully, the programme was established. However, it would have been more effective if I had operated less in the expert roles and more in the process role. I say this because after two years the programme failed. Even though the reasons for failure would be many, I think ultimately it failed because those responsible had not learnt the skill of problem solving.
the issues that hindered it. There was no question in my mind that the leaders were committed to the concept.

My conclusion is that in trying to achieve major change it is more important to have the right process in place rather than the correct strategy. The right process will ensure the needed momentum and commitment to change is developed. There is no one right or correct strategy to achieve an objective, instead there are a many. And if the right process is in place the group will arrive at on of those acceptable strategies with commitment and energy to make it happen.

**Gaining Entry**

The gaining of entrance into churches has been a critical part of this study. The success of the Department personnel in assisting local churches is very dependent on them being skilled in this area. The research demonstrated that there are many reasons why one group of people invite another in to assist them.

**Reason For Entry**
The following are a summary of reasons that we identified as to why people seek assistance:

Official Approval: Some groups, particularly their leaders, seek Department assistance for the purpose of legitimating their activity and/or their leadership. The leader of Case Study G (Youth Group Formation) stated that, “He was looking for support from an official place.” Although for the youth “officialness” was not an issue. The group had arisen quite spontaneously without any formal authority by which to operate in their local church. The leader saw the Department person as providing some “officialness” even though in reality this was not so. (The Department person has no official authority over local church congregations.)

Guidance: Some groups look for Department involvement because they are looking for “guidance”. Lack of expertise and experience causes them to look outside the group for help. They see the Department person as being able to guide them from where they are to where they want to be. It was important for us to find opportunities to share our past experiences and expertise.

The need for guidance was the key to gaining entrance in Case study A (Small Group Ministry). The initial interest occurred informally at a social occasion where I was sharing with an old acquaintance what I had been involved in since we had had contact last. The sharing of my experience led this old acquaintance to request assistance in their project.

Support: Often leaders of groups who are seeking to bring about change will invite outside help to strengthen their position and to gain moral support. They see the Department person as having expertise and experience which gives them credibility and courage.

Case study C, Cell Group Ministry consultation, primarily was aimed at gaining support for the minister’s idea. He believed that if the Conference personnel presented the concept there would be “...greater acceptance of it”.

Expertise: The providing of skills training was one of the most common reasons for involvement in groups. Clients recognised their need to develop skill to become more effective.

One of the risks of consulting is in that the contact person may use the consultant in inappropriate ways. Not all the motives that lead a client to seek help are valid for establishing a consulting relationship. Often the underlying personal agendas are more concerned with power struggles than with the needs of the church.

On one occasion I distinctly got the impression that the leader had invited us to his church for the purpose of putting everyone straight. He was involved in a power struggle with another leader. He thought that the Conference personnel would take his side. So he invited us in to present new ideas regarding the Adult Sabbath School programme. He thought that this would break the power of his opponent.

It is not always possible to ascertain what motivates people to seek help. Our subjective hunches are used as leads, not absolutes, that help build a picture of what is happening and whether we can help.
Ways To Enter

Gaining entry into churches occurred in a variety of ways. Some contacts were made informally over the meal table or at some church social occasion. Social occasions provided opportunity to establish relationships with potential clients. Other entrances were more as a response to a formal request from a church. The formal contacts occurred as committees had met to address particular problems and decided to use the Departments to assist them. On other occasions it was a church leader or pastor who initiated the consultation.

Even though there was a variety of ways in which entrance was gained there was often a factor of relationship present. It seemed that an existing relationship was a prerequisite to gaining entrance. This relationship building often took many months before the client had the confidence to request assistance. One particular consultation took a number of informal discussion over a period of twelve months before entrance was gained. Building and maintaining healthy relationships with church leaders is therefore an important prerequisite for gaining entrance with some clients.

Consultations where there was a relationship factor present tended to move from an informal chat about a particular problem that a leader was having to an offer being made by the consultant for a formal intervention. It seems that most church leaders tend to see the Department person as only an advise giver. On a number of occasions where a contract to assist had been agreed on, the client was most apologetic that they were using so much of the consultant’s time. The perception that Conference personnel are extremely busy people caused some potential clients to hesitate from seeking assistance. This perception of the consultant’s priorities needs to be addressed. Consultants must take the initiative in following up requests no matter how tentative they may be.

As the relationship is developed between the consultant and the potential client the consultant is able to find opportunities to build his credibility. In providing some informal problem solving help or, as Lippitt and Glidwell suggest, conducting a pilot project, the consultant begins to sell his competence for more formal consultation. It needs to be remembered that most consultations involve a contact person(s) who sells and negotiates the consultant’s service to the client group. The contact person has his own credibility at stake in recommending the consultant. Hence the ability of the consultant to convince the contact person of his credentials for helping is often critical in gaining entrance.

Another critical factor in gaining clients was the need for the consultant to be alert to the often indirect appeals for assistance that are made. Some examples of such appeals:

“What do you see as the future of Sabbath School for the church?”

“I enjoyed the recent article in the Record concerning ...”

“Who has the final say in replacing committee members who resign?”

“Do you have the book...”
“What’s happening in the youth scene these days...?”

People in difficulty rarely, in seeking help, state their full problem initially unless they have a well established relationship with the consultant. Often they express only part of their problem or they may even convey a problem that is unrelated to their real concern as a test of the consultant. They do this to see if they are able to work with and trust the consultant. To identify and draw out of people their real issues the consultant needs to use effective listening skills.

This need to follow up possible calls for help may seem obvious but I am certain from my own experience and observation of other Department persons that this is often overlooked. People’s inquiries and indirect calls for help need to be address immediately. Delay will often result in missed opportunity.

There were a number of strategies that were used to promote the service of our Department. Personalised letters were sent to the various leaders in the churches. The aim of the letters was to try and indicate particular common problem areas that existed and the services that we offered that might assist them. On two separate occasions presentation of our services were given to the ministers of the Conference. Another variation of the letter was a news letter that outlined training packages and consulting services (See Appendix: Sabbath School Update). Probably one of the most significant entry gaining exercises was a Leaders Training weekend. The significant leaders, excluding ministers, were invited to attend a leadership skills workshop. This provided many opportunities both formally and informally to “sell” our services.

The following summary outlines some of the advantages and disadvantages experienced in using these strategies:

**Personalised Leader Letter**

*Advantages:* Can address specific issues of the client. There is a sense of personal interest conveyed from the consultant to the client. A letter invites a response.

*Disadvantages:* Is not an effective way to outline in detail one’s services. Is often read once only and then discarded.

**Selling of Service Meeting**

*Advantages:* Opportunity to meet personally with potential clients and respond to specific queries. Gives clients opportunity to see consultant in “action”.

*Disadvantages:* Individual client issues may not be addressed in a meeting. Easy for a consultant to be perceived as the “expert” know-it-all.

**News Letter**

*Advantages:* Detailed description may be given of services. Tend to be kept as a permanent reference. Can convey a level of professionalism. Visually can be more inviting.

*Disadvantages:* Is non-personal not eliciting a response. May not be read because of the amount of detail. (See Appendix: News Letter)
Training Workshop

Advantages: Training events possess some degree of consulting. They may lead to further intensive consulting. They are also opportunities for the consultant to gain credibility.

Disadvantages: Training events may not address the issues that the client really wants to deal with. On one occasion when conducting a workshop, the minister who requested the training interrupted my presentation asking for me to go down quite a different track. There had been a change in his thinking or I hadn’t understood what he was wanting. Training events also may set up a “expert-superior” mentality. This may lead to an over dependency on the expert for direction (see Appendix: Training Weekend.).

Problem Solving

Advantages: Entrance is gained in response to a perceived need of the client. This enables the consultant to address the real issues and offer his skill in helping.

Disadvantage: The presented problem may not necessarily be the real problem. The process of defining the real problem may need to be done with a wider group at a latter time.

Gaining entrance into a church in most cases involved working with an individual or a small group of persons. The contact persons in our study were mainly lay leaders. The initial promotion of our service was aimed at the clergy. However, our experience was that entrance in the majority (70%) of cases was gained through working with lay leaders. This result was not expected. Understanding why this was so may effect how and to whom consultants promote themselves. Possible reasons for this result are:

- Threat: Lay leaders tend not to be as easily threatened by Department personnel as ministers are. They have little to lose in asking for help whereas some ministers feel they should be able to manage alone. There are much stronger peer issues between ministers and Department personnel. On the other hand lay leaders are non-professionals who may benefit by making use of professional expertise.

- Attention: Lay leaders are more focused in specific leadership areas. They have immediate needs that consultants can assist with. Ministers, however, are more generalists in their interest. They have the responsibility of overseeing the whole church programme. They may perceive the same needs that other leaders do but not with the same priority.

- Expertise: Most lay leaders have received little training in their area of responsibility. They perceive in the Department personnel skills that can assist them in carrying out their responsibilities. Many pastors may have comparable skill levels in some areas to that of the Department personnel. So they choose to ignore the help offered preferring to care for the situation themselves. However, it has been our repeated experience that such pastors often are so busy that they never get around to addressing those issues that a consultant could care for.
Exploring

The importance of the exploratory phase in consulting with local churches became more evident as the study proceeded. There were three areas where this phase showed to be so important. First, as mentioned in the literature review many churches are tired of having *pre-packaged programmes* imposed on them. The exploring process helped to avoid this type of situation. When real exploration occurred then there was commitment because the right agenda was on the table.

Secondly, the exploring process helped to connect the consultant to the “right” people. If the consultation was to have any real chance of success then it was important to involve those persons who could make it happen. This usually involved the minister, head elder, Department leaders and other Church Board members. Schien’s concept of an *exploratory committee* was not always easy to achieve. Many church leaders tend to work on their own not concerning themselves with those who oversee the church. In some situations, particularly country churches, the time constraints reduce the number of opportunities to visit.

Thirdly, the exploring time is important as it gives the client time to decide what their priorities are in inviting a consultant in. On one occasion in this study a client altered his focus of consultation three times leading up to our visit. He moved from a “family life” agenda to one of “leadership” to finally the establishing of “small group ministry”. The three months period before the consultation began gave him time to clarify his priority. On going discussion initiated by the consultant helped in this process.

The following examples show how “exploring” may occur.

**Examples of Exploration:**

In Case study B (Bible School Teacher Upgrading) the leader requested that the Conference provide a training session for new teachers. It was as we began “exploring” with the leader what she particularly was hoping to achieve, that our relationship moved from a training event to a consulting event. During the discussion it became clear what her needs were - increase group dynamics in classes and training of new teachers. Not only was the problem more clearly defined following the exploration, but also a strategy was agreed upon as how to go about solving it. It was decided that “...the afternoon would be a sharing of ideas of how to improve the adult study classes”. The exploration demonstrated to the client that there was a genuine willingness to assist them, not just to fulfill the consultant’s agenda.

Exploration with a potential client is done so on the basis that either parties may terminate the relationship. On one occasion a youth leader was in conflict with a number of parents. The church ignored the situation until things got so out of hand that many parents wanted to dismiss the leader. The minister was apprehensive about confronting the leader. He shared with us at length the issues and his concerns. I offered to assist the leader by finding a substitute leader and provide training. However, after much “exploration” he decided, and I agreed, that it would not be worth pursuing.
The exploration phase of our consulting was not just a matter of clarifying what the client’s problem was but also checking out the possibility of the consultant and client being able to have an effective working relationship. This exploration process demonstrates to the potential client the genuine desire the consultant has to be helpful. Whether a working relationship is entered into or not, the process of exploration builds credibility with the client.

The exploration phase we found to be particularly important in helping us to make objective decisions as to whether we should enter a contract with a church. Some Department directors feel under pressure to always respond to the requests of churches. This need is probably motivated by a desire to be seen as helpful. The exploration process allows time for appropriate decisions to be made. Honest Levelling between consultant and client is an important foundation upon which to build a consultation. This Levelling requires effective dialogue to be present between the client and consultant. Right from the beginning of the consultation, the exploration phase facilitates an open style relationship.

**Contracting**

Contracting on most occasions occurred somewhat informally. It usually occurred verbally via the contact person. Our practice was to send a letter of proposal to the client outlining what the consultation would involve. This would included a statement of our understanding of their problem, a time frame for the consultation, an outline of procedure and sometimes a request for further information (see Appendix: Contracting Letter).

The proposal didn’t seem all that effective in eliciting any further clarification between client and consultant. The majority of clients preferred to make a contract in an informal way. The contact person would usually take the proposal to a committee for approval and then themselves negotiate an arrangement of what would happen.

This resistance to formalise a contract may simply have been because Churches have had no past experience in formally contracting for services. They do not see the need for such a process.

For some leaders their resistance is based on their past experience where they have been accustomed to a hierarchical Department style, where the men from the “Conference” were given a free run in their church. There was no expectation by the church that they should have a major part to play as to the details of what the consultant would do.

Another reason for this informality may be that Department personnel are seen as closely connected to the local church and therefore it is not necessary to have a formal contract as to their work. This familiarity may reduce in the thinking of some the need for formal agreements.

Related to the previous reason is the perception that some churches have of their own identity. Many local churches fail to see that even though they are part of the
sisterhood of churches\(^1\) (Conference) they still are a separate entity. An entity that is primarily responsible for its own operation. Hence they see the Conference personnel more as their superiors than as their hired help. "Who are they to tell the Conference how to do their work?", was one client's reaction.

The concept of an ongoing involvement was a new concept for most leaders. Contracts had not been necessary in the past where Department leaders had spent only short one-off visits with churches in a training session. The thought of someone from the office being involved in their church on an ongoing basis was very new. This was reflected in the silence or non-response that occurred on a number of occasions when we attempted to negotiate a contract with a church.

The number of persons involved in contracting also varied greatly. On some occasions only the church Department leader or contact person was involved in the contracting. On other occasions the leader and church pastor or head elder, and less frequently a committee.\(^2\)

Distance and availability of time were key factors as to the number of person involved in the contracting. This was particularly noticeable with country clients where there were fewer opportunities for contact. Most of the discussion in these situations occurred by phone. The difficulty in finding time to meet was always present. The heavy work load that personnel carry, particularly in smaller Conferences, make it difficult to devote the appropriate time to clients.

The low level of face-to-face discussion with the client, particularly the key persons, would seem to be a major hurdle for Conference consultants. This necessitates that other methods be used that can compensate. The phone is an important substitution for this. An extension of the phone is teleconferencing. The sharing of written proposal and minutes between client and consultant were also important. The consultant who is limited in time will rely heavily on communicating to the client through the contact person.

The influence and ability of the contact person to communicate effectively is very important in the selling and negotiating of a contract. Difficulties occurred when the contact person, often the leader, failed to include or inform the Church Board of their proposed activity. An example of this was Case study G (Youth Group Formation) consultation:

\(^1\) Sisterhood of church is the term used to describe the relationships of churches to each other and the Conference. Each church operates its own programme. The Conference supplies and employs the minister but has little involvement in the day by day operation of the local church. It does have significant influence through its administrators to act as ex officio advisors to church boards. This right is usually exercised in situations of conflicts.

\(^2\) Each local church is organised in Departments - e.g. Youth, Outreach, Bible School, Children Ministries etc. The Head Elder is the Lay Leader in the church.
After our second meeting with the new youth group I received a very concerned phone call from the leader. He was most discouraged at receiving criticism from the elders and parents. They complained that he had no authority (which was true) to organise a youth group. He claimed that the youth had come to him because nothing was happening in their church. There was a certain amount of threat occurring among the leadership. The youth leader asked me to speak with the head elder which I did. However, I insisted that he also needed to speak at length with the elder. Part of the original contract had been that the church pastor would need to be invited to the first meeting. Unfortunately, he was away on extended study leave. Hence we started the consultation without having a significant person involved.

The area of contracting needs further development. It is quite likely that the more formal the contract the more serious and long term view might be taken by the client.

The short term view that many leaders have of their role also hinders long term contracting. This was reflected in the comments of one Sabbath School leader following a working session, “I’ve only got three months to go, so why should I bother?” The twelve month office term within the Seventh-day Adventist Church seems to work against a long term approach to problem solving. The twelve month term allows many leaders who are struggling to sit on their problems rather than face up to them and work through them.

This problem highlights the importance of contracting with the power base, usually the Church Board, for long term change. Even though there is a high changeover each year of personnel, the make up of the church Board remains fairly static. Contracting for long term change needs to involve the Board at some stage.

**Diagnosis**

A key shift in the consulting approach that this study has taken from the past Departmental approach, is that it is preferable for clients to be involved in both gathering information about their problems and highly involved in interpreting the results. This concept attempts to increase the accuracy of diagnosis, prepare those affected for change and to energise momentum for change. The following are some examples of how this type of diagnosis was carried out:

*Formation of a youth group:* At the first session we spent time with the youth group reviewing the history of youth groups in their particular church. We discussed how the church had operated in the past and what their expectations were for the future. We then examined, by placing names on the board, the potential members of the group. Through this process the group made certain conclusions and interpretations, the most important being that the groups activities needed to be localised and easily assessable. The history and current situation then became the basis for the planning of the group.

*Church planning session:* A small declining church decided at the suggestion of the consultant that they needed to take time out to do some planning. The diagnosis occurred as part of the planning session. It took about 70% of the three
hour session. A modified version of the Callahan 12 Characteristics of a Church survey was used (see Literature Review). The participants were asked to rate each characteristic for their church. Then the results were recorded on the board and an explanation was given as to the rating. This form of rating seemed to be a very non-threatening process. The comment was made by a significant leader that "...this was the first time they as a church had sat and taken a honest look at themselves." In the ensuing discussion, the participants invited the consultant to share his view as to the future direction they should take. This approach did not in any way weaken the influence of the consultant. In fact, it reduced defensiveness and increased willingness for change.

_Sabbath School Consultation:_ This client was located in a geographically distant area. Face-to-face work with the interest group would be limited to two or three visits. This necessitated greater contact with the contact person and involvement through other means. In regard to the diagnosis of their situation they were invited to devise their own way of assessing their current Sabbath School. The official interpretation of their results occurred at our first meeting with the group. Through a survey they had clearly identified a clear agenda for us to work on - "How to develop a more discussion type adult class".

One of the most significant benefits of this approach was the positive emotional response that occurred for people. In the majority of consultations their was a very positive group climate at the end of these diagnostic sessions. The two primary sources for that outcome was the enjoyment of participating in such a task and the greater understanding of their situation. The diagnosis often, as one participant said, "...removed a great burden from me, I now see where our Department fits in the overall church programme."

The level of diagnosis in this study varied according to a number of factors:

1. _The difficulty of the problem:_ Making a judgment as to the difficulty of the consultation was not easy. However, it would be true to say that certain problems require longer process to diagnose. Consultations, typically general Church consultations that require major change and which affective large numbers of people, require greater diagnosis. This is not necessarily because the issues are more difficult to diagnose, but because there is greater need for momentum building and selling new directions.

Other consultations that involved a smaller number of persons and that were more specific usually did not required such an in-depth diagnosis. Examples were the Adult Bible Class consultations. Here the majority of group members, who would be effected by the change, were involved in assessing their situation. This simply involved an initial evaluation sheet and a group discussion which interpreted the results and any other issues.

The level and time needed for diagnosis seemed related to the difficulty of the problem, the number of persons affected and the ability of the client to understand the issues.

2. _The time available and cost to consultant:_ Part of any work is that of making decision on one's priorities. Some consultations even though deserving of more diagnosis can only been given the available time.
Allowing sufficient time for extensive information gathering and interpretation to occur facilitates a greater acceptance of the need for change by those who may have some resistance. Deciding between what is the minimum time needed and what is the optimum time is difficult.

A real issue for Department consultants is knowing when to say “no” and how to live with the criticism or misunderstanding that could occur.

3. The time available to the client: On some occasions the client did not feel able because of time to proceed with an in depth gathering of information.

Knowing, as a consultant, what one’s minimum requirement is for accepting a contract is important. Is the client prepared to put the effort in?

4. Resistance to the consultation: Where resistance existed to the consultation, it was evident in a lack of commitment to carrying out diagnostic activity.

Diagnostic work can be threatening particularly, to those who have most responsibility and most to lose if the diagnosis implicates them as being responsible for the problem situation. The strategy of involving these people in the designing and carrying out of the diagnosis goes some way to reduce this threat.

Generally speaking, diagnosis seems to be an area that many leaders wish to skip over. They just want to get on with the programme. However, action without proper planning and diagnosis often results in failure. If there isn’t a proper gathering of information and interpretation of what the problem is then there is a high chance the wrong questions are being solved. This was particular illustrated in Case study A (Small Group Programme):

After an in depth skills training programme that was organised as a lead into the establishing of a small group ministry. The group failed to carry out information gathering before planning. People nominated what groups they wished to run and that was the end of the planning. Unfortunately, the groups that started, and that was only a few, were poorly supported. The leaders became demoralised and gave up.

This failure to diagnose certainly contributed to the groups failure. Groups were being established without any research as to what the congregation needs were. Our planning was based on our own hunches as to what the needs were. No matter how strongly the group was advised by the consultant to diagnose the situation the group refused. In reflection a clearer contract and agreement as to procedure may have given the consultant more influence to direct diagnosis.

The interpretation of the diagnosis and feedback is very much the lead into action planning. Feedback and interpretation in this research tended to be part of the planning session. It was usually introductory to a planning session or as a transition between self assessment and planning.

Once the consultant or team has carried out their diagnosis of the situation they then feedback their results. Feedback whether it was to groups or individuals needs to be a complete process, covering the strengths and needed growth areas. (See appendix: Feedback) Where possible we found it preferable for feedback to be self discovered as it is far more acceptable to the client than feedback that comes
across as a judgment from a consultant. People tend to follow through on what they have been involved in deciding. The fact that Department personnel are part of a bigger system (Conference) makes feedback even more sensitive. The possibility that the client will have contact after the consultation is finished is most likely. There is an awareness, particularly by ministers, that the consultant is easily accessed by the administration who the minister is accountable to. There is the possibility that the negative feedback could go outside the consultant/client arena.

Planning

Planning for action is the point where often the Department person fades out of the picture. The Department/consultant has assisted the church to diagnose their problem and then throws a few ideas at them as to some possible directions they might like to consider going. The group then sees the rest as being up to them. This may be a suitable result in some situations. However, for many clients this new awareness will lead to nothing. The reason often being that many churches don’t possess the necessary skills for effective planning. On a number of occasions in this study we were engaged by clients for the purpose of skills training or diagnosis work but saw no ongoing action. The successful implementation of plans is very much dependent on choosing the right process of planning.

Before the consultant can become involved in the process of planning it is necessary for the consultant to decide where to enter the planning process. Does the consultant start from the beginning or at the strategy level etc.? Failure to answer this question can lead to much time wasting and frustration for the consultant and client. The need to dialogue with clients was well articulated in the SAMPASS open question - “visiting my church, calling me to talk to me about my programme”.

In the majority of cases in this study clients did not have a clearly detailed plan. Most leaders and committees were just maintaining a programme.

Our interview of leaders identified a number of factors for this lack of planning:

1. Lack of skill: Many leaders do not possess the necessary skills for planning. Often leaders are appointed because of their willingness rather than ability. On numerous occasions leaders admitted they only took the job because “no-one else would.” The SAMPASS result showed that 44% of ministers did not feel positive about their ability to implement systematic action.

2. Inadequate skill training: Most leadership training in the Seventh-day Adventist church is done once or twice a year at a Conference (combined churches) training weekend. The attendance at these events is voluntary and therefore impacts on only a limited number. This type of training is brief and often very general in its subject area. There is no real opportunity for skill development.

3. Individualistic Leadership: Often leaders fail to adopt a team approach to their task. Instead they take the major responsibility themselves. They fail to share the leadership and ownership with the committee or group. Many leaders operate at a pace close to “burn-out”. They don’t have the time or energy to spend planning.
4. **No expectation:** Many pastors and Church Boards fail to create an expectation of their team leaders that planning is required. In many Conferences there is no requirement for a pastor to have in place their own plans. This lack of accountability seems to permeate the Seventh-day Adventist system.

In some other situations the reverse has occurred. Churches have done so much planning that there is little energy left for action. In one particular church, planning had been done to the point (questionable as to whether correctly) that one could not even use the word. People were "...sick of it!"

There was noticed in a number of planning sessions that participants were very eager to suggest programmes rather than deal with the goals and objectives of the strategies. Using a goal setting procedure, with a problem solving model, helped participants to plan strategies that were linked to needs. The formation of a Mission Statement had a unifying effect on the group.

**Implementation**

It is in the area of implementation that there appears to be a breakdown in church management. Often plans never come to fruition because those responsible never get around to doing the job. A typical example of this was seen in Case study E.

In the Case study E (Planning for Church Growth) we saw that after two months only one strategy of the four planned was close to happening. The church had gone through a diagnostic assessment and identified it strengths. From that they had agreed on four objectives to work on for the next year - To build the "families of the church; To increase their visible presence in the community; To offer a community health programme; and sponsor new families in the area. Soon after the planning was complete conflict occurred between the leader of the health programme strategy and some other church members. She became depressed and withdrawn. She was married to the lay leader who was responsible for implementing community presence strategy. He was busy coping with that crisis and didn't find time to carry out his task. At this point the "Familiness" objective was also under threat.

Some of the reasons that our research found for this lack of implementation were:

1. **Lack of know how:** Persons selected to implement the strategy did not have the "know how" for getting the job done. They accepted the job out of loyalty because no one else would do it. This lack of know how may be deeper that just not knowing particular procedures etc. It often comes down to people being mismatched personality wise to a job. They, by personality, are not suited to the task. And even if they can manage the task it is not their preferred work. Therefore little job satisfaction is received. The end result is lowered enthusiasm and reduced commitment to the job.

2. **Over-committed:** Many members are over committed in their church, work and other commitments. They don't find the time to carry out their responsibilities. One leader expressed this sentiment when asked how a certain task was coming along, "It's still down the bottom of the pile".


3. *Low accountability:* Because of the voluntary status of members, as opposed to the paid clergy, there is a tendency for less accountability. People don’t usually get fired for not performing in church office. They just aren’t reappointed next time around.

4. *Inadequate supervision:* There are certain restraints that prevent adequate supervision and accountability from occurring. A significant number of persons do need reminders and encouragement to fulfill their commitments. The fact that most members work and often can not be contacted during work time prevents this from occurring. Hence things are constantly put off or forgotten. The evening when more members would be available pastors are usually busy with visitation and committees.

5. *Lack of Evaluation:* Along with lack of supervision there was often an inadequate or no regular evaluation of what was occurring.

6. *Too many strategies:* When too much is planned people can become overloaded trying to achieve to many things. Callahan guidelines on long range planning we found to be very helpful in convincing churches to do less and do it more excellently. The majority of churches we consulted with were trying too much and failing.

7. *Theological - “Sabbath Overload”:* A frequently heard comment from lay leaders (Volunteer) is that, “The Sabbath (Adventist’s worship day) is so busy that they hardly have time to enjoy it”. For some leaders the weekend is one of overload. It starts Friday night with youth meetings, Saturday morning worship service, afternoon outreach or visitation, finished by a church social activity. It is possible that for some this intensity in one day prevents them psychologically from being enthused about more church involvement during the week. They restrict their “church mind” to the weekend.

8. *Lack of motivation:* Many of the above factors constrain the development and maintenance of motivation of some leaders. They are pessimistic about the likelihood of success. They are not enjoying their work and don’t have time to receive the support of the church community that they need.

In helping clients to carry out their plans it was important on many occasions to address personal issues. Poor interpersonal relationships inside the group and out weakened motivation. One client experienced dramatic contrast from one year to the next when staff changes were made. The increase in motivation was directly linked to the improved staff relationships. “Achieving a task with a group of people that you enjoy working with provided a lot more satisfaction. This helped us achieve a much better club standard.”

The consultant has no power to make staff changes. Rather the consultant must address those areas that are causing poor relationships. Until there is some reasonable level of relationship developed motivation will be low and difficult to maintain. Good interpersonal relationships are the foundational if teams are going to succeed in achieving their plans.
Evaluation

The evaluation phase of the consulting cycle was not an easy task as most churches operate on a “programme” basis rather than a “problem solving” basis. Even though the involving of Conference personnel was usually on the basis of assisting them in solving a problem there was still an attitude of “...well we have made a lot of changes, we must have things right now”. Evaluation needs to be an ongoing routine if action is to be successful.

Consultations that failed were often ones where there was no adequate and/or ongoing evaluation. Without evaluation there is no ongoing new cycles of action. In Case study A (Small Group Ministry) we saw how the failure to diagnose and evaluation meant failure for further action.

In the planning time there was resistance to ongoing evaluation. Group members just wanted to go and run their groups. The failure to plan an evaluation in the future results in no new cycle of problem solving. The group leaders were asked what they thought was the main reason for the failure of the group. They believed that “... the pastor had failed in his responsibility to act as the co-ordinator. That the group looked to him for co-ordinating ongoing evaluation and planning.” “There seemed to be resistance on the part of the pastor to want to work with us”, was their comment. The leaders did not feel they had the “power” to force the pastor into evaluative action. The leaders were relatively new to the parish and felt they had no real authority.

Evaluation assists groups to focus their attention on the priority of their goals. Following an evaluation session, Case study E (Church Growth) made a number of changes that narrowed the focus of their activity.

In the first planning cycle seven strategies were agreed upon in order to meet their objectives. However, as time passed, it was realised that not all that was planned was viable. Factors like loss of personnel or cost prevented certain strategies from being implemented. “Our evaluation led us to focus on three particular strategies, new family relocation package, fellowship lunches and literature distribution to the community”. The result of this cycle of planning was greater productivity than the first.

Evaluation also had the effect of challenging those who had failed to carry out their agreed responsibilities to fulfill them in the future. In using evaluation in this way it is important not to embarrass people but rather to help them and the group to discover why it happened the way it did and what could have been done differently. This may mean the group needs to clarify how else the strategy could be implemented or responsibilities be redistributed.

The process of evaluation has the benefit of providing further motivation for group members. When those who have toiled hard to implement change actually see an objective measurement of their success, this is motivating for further action.

At the Case Study L (Bible School Teacher Upgrading) consultation, one leader who had undergone much criticism in bringing about the change of seating format for adult classes was “thrilled” to see that class participants in their evalu-
ation had rated this aspect of their school as excellent. This was an unexpected result for her.

Evaluation assists the client to see the reality of their situation. Resistance to change can often be seen as greater than it is in reality.

Evaluation can occur in many ways. It may be formal, informal or somewhere in between. The major issue for evaluation seems to be the planning for it and the acceptance by those being evaluated by the method. In many situations, it seems preferable for the consultant to invite the consultation group to design their own evaluation and method of interpretation. However, not all clients have the skill to do this. There is a tension between the technical needs of evaluation and having a process that involves those who are being evaluated.

**Disengaging**

Disengagement in a sense never totally occurs for the Conference consultant. This is due to the fact that the consultant’s work is very much within a system of churches in a particular location. The Department director is an internal consultant who has ongoing contact with churches in a particular Conference. The Department/consultant is seen by many parish leaders as being part of their organisation. This view of the consultant/Department person means that disengagement, as Schein say, is more aptly described as a “reduced involvement”.

The tendency has been, particularly when the pastor has been the contact, that one’s involvement level with that church never returns back to zero. The relationship has been established and an ongoing involvement often follows.

In a two year period one church requested our service on three separate occasions. The first occasion was at the instigation of a lay leader and the subsequent times the instigation of the pastor. Each occasion was for a different reason.

The relationship that is developed in a consultation, enables the consultant to gain entry at subsequent times more easily. The client’s trust of the consultant and awareness of the consultant’s capabilities are increased.

In this research we have, as previously mentioned in the section on contracting, found it difficult to formalise the relationship between client and consultant. The attitude of informality that exists makes it difficult to formally disengage. The method that we found most effective was to, at appropriate times, discuss with the client how they were feeling about the programme and what was their current thoughts. This usually elicited a reasonable level of self assessment from which a decision was made as to whether they had additional needs.

As opportunities arise, it has been our practice to ask previous clients how things are going. This ongoing contact helps to build for future engagements and to solidify previous efforts.
Conclusion

Evaluation of Model

In determining the validity of the proposed model of this research, it's usual to ask the question: "did it work?" In answering this we need to state that this study at no time attempted to argue whether the concept of "management consulting" is valid or not. Rather, we have attempted to explore how it may be used within the Seventh-day Adventist Church and in what way it may improve the service that is provided by Conference Departments. This question, to our knowledge, has not been asked in a formal research way before. (Certainly not in Australia.)

The method of research that has been chosen does not seek in a "positivist" way to say "yes" or "no" in an absolute manner. The validity of the model is informed by the inquiry of the methodology of the model. The conclusions drawn from this study are not final but rather points of thematic summary that raise other questions and possibilities.

I believe the consulting model that has been proposed in this thesis has been demonstrated to be a workable model by which Seventh-day Adventist Conference Department personnel can operate. The overall poor standing that Department personnel have in the eyes of many ministers and church leaders would be improved by using such a model. Unlike traditional Department practices, the relationship between helper and helpee is the priority of this model.

A consulting approach to Department helping services has seen a significant improvement in my own Department practice. This has been noticeable particularly in the area of relationships. The level of personal relationship between us as consultants and those we have worked with has deepened. The relationships are no longer based around "one-off events" but are ongoing. These cycles of service suggest that the client is not only receiving a valuable service but relates well to us. The shift to a consulting approach has meant that we are now involved in "change events" where as previously we could only hope that change would happen after our visit. Our ability to understand what role is appropriate for the various helping situations has been sharpened. Havelock's model has been of real value in providing greater insight into what we are doing in our work.

This study has shown that the success of a helping organisation is very dependent on it being seen as a helper. It's relationship to the local church needs to be matched to the needs of that organisation and not vice versa. The helper's role will vary between being the expert, co-helper and subordinate, according to the needs of that organisation. The Conference consultant's role is that of responding to the agenda of the local church not imposing his own.
A key issue in the implementation of this approach is the need for churches to change their view of what the role of the Conference Department is. The idea that the Conference personnel "...are too busy to be interested in our programme", needs to change. The Conference has much work to do in changing the Department’s image as being the person from the office who visits the church once a year, takes a sermon, maybe an afternoon seminar and then is off. The Conference Departments need to be seen as a helper who has an ongoing interest and involvement, where needed, in fulfilling the agenda of the local church.

The area that has most potential for undermining the success of this model and also the life of the church is the struggle that many churches face in implementing strategies. The organisational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has some serious weaknesses which work against its ability to implement. Probably the most serious organisational problem that needs addressing is the short tenure of its ministers and its twelve month appointment of lay officers. This practice handicaps the church from entering into effective problem solving. The cycles of problem solving that are necessary for any successful organisation to advance are constantly impeded. A consultant will find it difficult to lead a church into major changes if the leadership is being constantly changed.

Along with the lack of continuity in leadership there is also a failure to match church positions to staff’s abilities. The tendency to match available, but not necessarily able, persons to positions further reduces successful action by churches. There needs to be a rationalisation of church positions. Many positions are unnecessary and counter-productive to the action of the church. The consultant needs to identify both the power brokers and the “true” leaders if change is to occur.

This study identified the difficulty that exists in formalising contracts with clients. A number of reasons were explored as to why this is; expectations from past experience; short tenure of leaders; and the internal position of the consultant. The rationale for formalising the Conference Department’s involvement with churches is to move churches to a longer term view of their church planning.

This study also discovered that the majority of contact persons for consultations came not from ministers, as expected, but from lay leaders. This observation highlights the importance there is for Conference Department personnel to maintain ongoing relationships and communication with church leaders. It also suggests that advertising from the Conference Departments need to be aimed at specific need areas.

The problem of a high turnover of church leaders suggests that the Conference needs to find ways to provide more support for its’ leaders. The Conference needs to find ways to encourage churches to use staff more effectively. Churches need to resist the practice of over burdening the capable people to the point that their efforts are so wide spread that they do nothing well. Long term lay leadership is fundamental to churches entering ongoing change. Without a change in this area, the consulting efforts of the Conference Departments will be seriously handicapped.

The Conference Department, consultant has great potential for providing a service to churches that can assist them in their problem solving. The consultant is in a unique position for accessing the ideas, resources and persons of the church sys-
tem that could be of assistance to their clients. The consultants, because of their expertise, are also able to provide specialist technical assistance to churches who seek help. However, the primary role of any successful consulting service will be that of assisting clients (Church), as a co-helper, to acquire the necessary process skills for their own problem solving. This requires an act of faith by the consultant in the clients’ collaborative ability to diagnose its own problems and carry out the necessary action for improvement. The opportunity of being able to provide a consulting service comes down to the consultants ability to establish an authentic relationship with the client that is not only helpful but seen to be helpful.


George, C.F. (1988) How To Be A Church Consultant, Presented At The Australian Fellowship For Church Growth, Australia.


APPENDIX SAMPASS QUESTIONNAIRE

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MINISTERS PERCEIVED ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS SURVEY

Dear Pastor,

I am pursuing a study of Church Consultancy. My thesis seeks to bring about, through the process of "consultancy", an improvement of the administrative action of local Seventh-day Adventist Churches. The study will firstly examine current skill levels and administration procedures. And secondly, assess current attitudes of clergy to the use of Conference Departmental leaders as consultants. From this assessment a model of "Consultancy" will be developed that can be used as a guide for Departmental leaders in working for administrative improvements.

Your assistance in completing the attached survey will help me greatly in assessing the current situation. Any additional comments concerning this area will be gladly received.

Thanking you for your help in this matter.

Yours in Christ

Rob Steed

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MINISTERS' PERCEIVED ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS SURVEY

Most of our actions, decisions and reactions in life follow a consistent pattern. We are creatures of habit. The following statements ask you to assess and measure what degree you behave in a particular way. The question should be answered as to how you generally (normally) act in your pastoral role.

Please circle a number on the grid which represents your agreement or disagreement with the statement.

Goals

1. I am able to develop in my church members (most) a sense of direction that they share.

Disagree    1  2  3  4  5  6  7 Agree

2. I find it difficult to initiate positive systematic action in my church to reach our goals.
Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

**Decision Making**

3. I know when to make decision on my own, or with other leaders and when to involve the whole church.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

4. I try to seek as much agreement as possible on important issues, for example - Building programmes, Out-reach activities, Church officer appointments.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

**Communication**

5. I effectively communicate information and issues to my church leaders.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

6. I am a good sounding board for other leaders.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

**Evaluation**

7. I regularly assess my own programme - at least every 6 months.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

8. I rarely encourage my church to assess its programmes and to make the necessary changes.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

**Conflict**

9. I usually deal with conflict immediately as it occurs - regardless of whether it involves me personally or other leaders in my church.

   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

10. I seek to gain understanding of both sides of conflicts (the different sides of the argument) before I begin to work out with the parties a solution.

    Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

**Overall Style**

Most ministers receive no formal administrative training.

11. I would rate my overall administrative skill as poor.

    Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

My greatest need for improvement in my administrative skills are...
The following questions relate to Conference Department services (Church Ministries, Health etc.).

12. I find the Conference Departments help link me to needed resources - books, videos, personnel, community services etc.
   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

13. I appreciate the new and challenging ideas that Departmental leaders offer.
   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

14. I have found the Department personnel of real assistance in helping our church through the process of solving problems.
   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

15. I have found that Department leaders when asked usually assist me in finding the solution to my problem.
   Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Agree

The Conference Departments can assist me best by...

PLEASE RETURN YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE IMMEDIATELY

Rob Steed PO Box 51 Aitkenvale Qld 4814
APPENDIX SURVEY RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

The results of the Questionnaire are shown below.

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* Score obtained by negative question
Interpretation

The data collected came from three Conferences - South Australia, Victoria and Greater Sydney. The surveys were administered in April and May 1990. The majority of ministers in Sydney completed the questionnaire at a ministers meeting. In Victoria and South Australia questionnaires were distributed through the Conference mail and then returned by the respondent. Of the 82 ministers given questionnaires, 56 responses were obtained. The survey sought to look at five areas of leadership skills - goal setting, decision making, communication, evaluation and conflict management; and four areas of Departmental service - resource linking, idea catalysing, process helping and solution giving. The respondent was asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement on a grid of seven. Most questions were stated in a positive manner - “I know when to make decisions...” Three questions were asked in a negative manner - 2,8,11 and therefore the results appear opposite to the normal trend. Only in the comparison charts have these results been reversed. Two open ended questions were asked at the end of each section. These results are found at the end of the graphs. The results of each question have been presented in a frequency bar graph. Pie diagrams have also been used for the “Departmental” questions and also on some “Administration” questions. The pie diagram groups together grid responses 1,2,3, - unskilled; 4 - undecided; and 5,6,7, - skilled. The negative questions (2,8,11) have been reversed. For the purpose of checking the accuracy of the responses, question eleven was compared with a total summation of all questions 1-10.

OVERAL STYLE
RESPONDENT CONSISTENCY

Respondents rated themselves less skilled in question eleven as compared to all other questions (1-10). In the skilled category there was a 8% difference, undecided 1% and unskilled 7%. The difference suggests most respondents were honest and had a good level of self awareness.

Question 1 & 2: I am able to develop in my church members (most) a sense of direction that they share. I find it difficult to initiate positive systematic action in my church to reach our goals.
Pastors found it easier to set the direction than to follow it through to action.

The survey showed that more ministers (67%) see themselves as able to set direction in their church than implementing action (56%). Almost half (44%) did not feel positive about their ability to implement systematic action.

This result would suggest that consultants can benefit pastors by paying attention to issues of action planning.

Question 3 & 4: I know when to make decision on my own, or with other leaders and when to involve the whole church. I try to seek as much agreement as possible on important issues, for example - Building programmes, Out-reach activities, Church officer appointments.

The respondents are confident in their ability to decide when to go alone or when to involve the church. The majority would seek agreement on important issues.
Question 5 & 6: I effectively communicate information and issues to my church leaders. I am a good sounding board for other leaders.

Ministers tend to express themselves better than they listen. How ministers compare to the average population is unknown. This result would seem to fit the “preacher” profile.

A significant part of a ministers role is that of giving information. Because of this there is a tendency for minister to feel they should have the answers and that means doing most of the taking rather than listening.

Many ministers, like the rest of the population, have not be trained to be good listeners.

Question 7 & 8: I regularly assess my own programme - at least every 6 months. I rarely encourage my church to assess its programmes and to make the necessary changes.
The minister regularly assesses his own programme and the church also; however a fair percentage of the ministers who are not so committed to self-assessment.

Many do not see evaluation as a role of the minister. There has been little training given in self-assessment.

Question 9 & 10: I usually deal with conflict immediately as it occurs - regardless of whether it involves me personally or other leaders in my church. I seek to gain understanding of both sides of conflicts (the different sides of the argument) before I begin to work out with the parties a solution.
Ministers feel positive about dealing with conflict, although there is uncertainty as whether immediate is always appropriate. Minister generally seek to understand both sides of the conflict.

Question 11: I would rate my overall administrative skill as poor.

Question 12: I find the Conference Departments help link me to needed resources - books, videos, personnel, community services etc.

Some pastors (35%) found the Departments helpful to very helpful, while 20% found Departments of no help to little help. Large group in the middle (45%) who are not all that sure.
Departments need to improve the quantity and quality of resources made available to Churches. Possibly the current resources offered aren't the needed resource.

Question 13: I appreciate the new and challenging ideas that Departmental leaders offer.

Just over half could say positively that they appreciated Department ideas. However, they were not very definite about this. 50% scored in the 4-5 grid positions suggesting that there is a lack of enthusiasm for Department ideas.

Many pastors may not be aware of the ideas that Departments offer. And there also may be a mental block to accepting ideas coming down the pipe-line from above.

Questions 14: I have found the Department personnel of real assistance in helping our church through the process of solving problems.

There is very little confidence in the Departmental services in the process helping area. 78% were either undecided or disagreed to varying degrees.
Some possible reasons for this poor result:

The geographical spread of churches prevents Departments from having ongoing involvement. Financial constraints limits to travel. The Departments are spread too broadly. Frequent changes in Departmental leadership. Do-it-yourself syndrome in the churches. Lack of specialisation - to widely spread.

Question 15: I have found that Department leaders when asked usually assist me in finding the solution to my problem.

This area of the Departments work is perceived as being their strongest. 50% of respondents see the Conference as providing solutions effectively. The solution sought tend to be more technical and not requiring high involvement of Conference personnel in the church.
APPENDIX SURVEY OPEN QUESTIONS
ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS SURVEY

RESULTS OF OPEN QUESTIONS

The following comments are recorded as written. Each response begins a new line.

"My greatest need for improvement in my administrative skills are..."

- reporting to office.
- experience.
- defining processes more distinctly, following through on discussions, training of leaders in the local church.
- working out the treasurer's report.
- delegating responsibility.
- more training.
- training in financial understanding.
- to be myself without being locked into "polishing" the system, to be open and honest in all of my dealings without "political" type action and reactions, to be a Christian in a religious system.
- improving knowledge of parliamentary procedure or law to deal with points of order, and follow correct procedure as chairman, motivating the entire membership to be involved in the church programme and use their gifts effectively.
- maintaining the morale of the volunteers, skills when asking people to do particular tasks - so they are happy to do the task - and so they are happy to report the task if necessary.
- the necessary time to administer effectively.
- conflict resolution, time management.
- more time to study more.
- competent credible person that is pastoring now and therefore credible to bounce ideas off.
- ability for constant follow through.
- conflict management mediation.
- more training programmes.
- handling church finances.
- understanding direction and implementing needed action, leadership seminars - motivational input understanding what people and church as a whole want to do.
- time.
- to be able to create an effective climate for people to accept change.
- counselling and motivating members to serve.
sensing how to delegate in a small church where the skills are limited.
- to be exposed to seminar in administrative skills.
- time management, task orientation, accounting systems.
- greater understanding of developing concepts and broader applications of these concepts.
- time, we have to many structures.
- decision making, motivating volunteers.
- to set the church of its traditional mould of just coming to church and reflecting their central task of reaching out to others and organise them into a more effective body of witnesses.
- to train key personnel, to delegate better, to allow others who can do it better to do it for me.
- motivational plans are made and people would like me to follow them through to success.
- solving problems
- more reliable laymen to take delegated responsibility
- how to gain maximum co-operation from the membership for the total programme of the church without them becoming upset or thinking I'm expecting to much from volunteers.
- to inspire others to work on a job that is perceived as unrewarding.
- sound planning and evaluation on a regular basis, greater skill in conflict management.
- time management, proper efficient use of secretarial services.
- clarify my own goals, effectively communicate with the church.
- personal motivation under criticism pressure.
- personal charisma, because of time limitations and a multiplicity of tasks it is very difficult to spend sufficient time with individual members.
- delegate tasks and find how to motivate people to do something in the church rather than fill the role of spectator and consumer.
- to be able to spell and use a computer.

"The Conference Departments can assist me best by ..."

- all quitting leaving more money in the local church.
- by having a good range of up-to-date resources available e.g. Bible study courses - we don't have any up-to-date ones based on the NIV Bible, move out of their offices and model their specialty in a local church that I can send my leaders to visit and observe, do-in-depth consultancies over months to assist key churches in developing, studying, making changes, forget about moving all over the Conference - little achieves nothing.
- being resource and information centres (current developments, video, new sheets, "these are the things available for you to use in your church")
- providing more resources.
· to use books, videos, community services etc.
· visiting my church and personally demonstrating and training my members and myself as in the hands on Colportour Institute role playing etc.
· there are some Departmental leaders who choose to be themselves rather than "systems" people - it is these leaders that turn out to be helpful.
· providing relevant up-to-date resource material conducting practical training programmes and seminars, giving counsel and information in specialised areas, organising and conducting a limited number of Conference-wide programmes e.g. youth congress laymen’s congress, note - the duplication of Departments at local Conference Union and Division should be examined with a view to managing duplication and cost-cutting.
· offering more services, acquainting me with services already available.
· endeavouring to break down the hierarchical system in ministry e.g. them & us.
· reducing expectations, cutting down mail, using fewer words when writing letters.
· being more practical.
· leaving me alone, they are irrelevant, worse inhibit change in my church because old members say this is the way to do it.
· resources.
· being there when I need them as consultants.
· being more communicative.
· short to the point material, how to...hands on stuff - not theoretical verbiage.
· being a resources centre, a sounding board for my ideas or church ideas, providing professional lists of people who could help.
· being available to listen.
· providing - resources, ideas, education, by not imposing programmes on the churches.
· helping provide resources, helping conduct training programmes and outreach.
· assessing the needs of my church and providing professional help through seminars and workshops to meet the needs.
· seminars to improve and develop the skills of laymen
· providing material ready to implement
· rarely assistance at all, wish list - resource materials training and implementation, on call, reliability.
· assisting in Departmental queries and back up know how.
· happy with way Departments function now.
· resources.
· being a resource.
· paying more visits to my church during meetings while the members are being true.
stop listening to church members who complain of church ministry but try to relate openly these complaints to the field workers who have direct contact and better understanding of the problems.

- becoming informed on contemporary issues, by taking time to understand the dynamics in my church, by not trying to dump pre-packaged plans on me, by being creative and flexible.

- working with me and they do often.

- visiting and assessing my programmes.

- visiting my church, calling me to talk to them about my programme.

- I feel at last some of the Departments are redundant, I would like to see regional seminars conducted by Departmental leaders at which ministers and lay leaders both attend and open questions are encouraged.

- by being extremely supportive even though I could have made mistakes, suggesting perspectives I may not thought of in particular issues, providing specialised ministries we cannot provide, Administration: (including Ministerial Department) sharing information, discussing issues that effect my calling and ministry in a particular area, work through with me any problems.

- provide resource materials.

- providing most current ideas and information.

- resources, friendship - listening, challenging, empathising, moral support.

- get theology straight, develop intelligent material, send back programmes that come down from the top - they're useless, provide finances for me to have a typewriter filing cabinet etc. on the same basis they have them, I can't afford the 50% to buy books, paper etc.
**APPENDIX CONSULTATION-SKILLS INVENTORY**

This check list is designed to help you think about various aspects of the behaviors involved in consultation. It gives you an opportunity to assess your skills and to set your own goals for growth and development. To use it best:

1. Read through the list of activities and decide which ones you are doing the right amount of, which ones you need to do more of, and which ones you need to do less of. Make a check for each item in the appropriate place.

2. Some activities that are important to you may not be listed here. Write these activities on the blank lines.

3. Go back over the whole list and circle the numbers of the three or four activities at which you want most to improve at the present time.

### General Skills

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### Sensing and Diagnosing

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<td>22. Talking about money and fees without embarrassment</td>
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<td>26. Setting realistic goals for myself and the client</td>
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<td>30. Working with people I do not particularly like</td>
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<td>31. Giving in to client restrictions and limitations</td>
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<td><strong>Problem Solving</strong></td>
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<td>35. Selling my own ideas effectively</td>
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<td>37. Challenging ineffective solutions</td>
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<td>38. Describing how other clients solved a similar problem</td>
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<td>Implementing</td>
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<td>42. Attending to details</td>
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<td>43. Helping clients make use of their strengths and resources</td>
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<td>44. Taking responsibility</td>
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<td>45. Changing plans when emergencies come up</td>
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<td>46. Building and maintaining morale</td>
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<td>47. Requesting feedback about the impact of my presentations</td>
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<td>48. Controlling my anxiety while I am performing my task</td>
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<td>49. Intervening without threatening my clients</td>
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<td>50. Intervening at the appropriate time</td>
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<td>51. Admitting errors and mistakes</td>
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<td>52. Admitting my own defensiveness</td>
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<td>53. Assessing my own contributions realistically</td>
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<td>54. Acknowledging failure</td>
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<td>55. Feeling comfortable with clients reviewing my work</td>
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<td>56. Dealing with unpredicted changes</td>
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<td>57. Devising forms, inventories, etc., to aid evaluation</td>
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<td>58. Relying on informal feedback</td>
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<td>59. Taking notes, writing up what has been done</td>
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<td>62. Attributing failure to client’s “resistance”</td>
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APPENDIX CASE STUDIES

A. Small Group Ministry Establishment: This consultation occurred over a three month period. The contract was to assist a group of leaders in establishing a Small Group ministry in their church. A key part of the consultation was to help group members to develop their own group skills.

B. Bible School Teacher Upgrading: The aim of this consultation was to develop a more discussion based learning experience for adult Bible students. Both experienced teachers and potential teachers were involved in assessing their programme and developing more effective ways of teacher facilitation.

C. Cell Group Ministry: This consultation was initiated by the minister. The aimed was to invite the church congregation to look at the idea of forming “home study” cell groups.

D. Leader Problem: The issue of an inappropriate leadership style was the problem area to solve in this consultation. The work done was primarily with the leader and those who had supervision. The consultation involved interviews with the church pastor and leader. And observation of staff meetings was used as a basis for giving feedback to the leader.

E. Action Planning for Growth: The aim of this consultation was to find ways to gain numerical growth in a small struggling country church. Issues of lack of cohesion and absence of church goals were key areas addressed.

F. Bible School Teacher Upgrading: Skills training and cohesiveness were particularly addressed in this consultation. The consultant work both with teachers in the skill area and leaders in the process for change.

G. Youth Group Formation: The formalising of an organisation for young people was the major task in this consultation. With this task their arose a number of process problems - power struggles and commitment.

H. Staff Problem: This was a brief consultation with a youth group leader. The consultant aided the leader in diagnosis the staff problem and the development of strategies.

I. Bible School Evaluation: In this consultation our main task was that of assessing for change the operation of an Adult Bible School. There were a number of hidden agendas that surfaced during our work. Of particular significance was the lack of openness in meetings to express opinions, particularly from women.

J. Reorganisation of Leadership: This group was an arts performing group who had never formalised their organisation. There were conflict difficulties in the leadership team. Our task was to assist them in the appointment of leaders and their job description and the development of organisation procedures.
K. Video Resourcing: The client was wanting assistance in the setting up of a Family Ministries Library for his church and community. The contract had very clear direction of what would be spent and the type of audience that the videos were for.

L. Teacher Training: This was more than a training exercise although that was a large component of it. The consultation centred around gaining acceptance by teachers of a more discussion teaching style. The diagnostic/evaluation process was a key part of achieving this.

J. Cell Group Establishment: The focus of this assignment was to establish a cell group (Bible study support group) ministry for a church of around 140 members. The pastor was highly involved in the team and acted as the co-ordinator. The Consultation established three groups within the first three months of the six month contract. The consultant provide training, materials and ongoing supervision.
APPENDIX CELL GROUP MINISTRY

RENEWAL AND GROWTH THROUGH CELL GROUP MINISTRY

The cell group experience is one that will enrich your life...

"Cell groups have brought scripture alive for me."

"I've found a new family in this group."

"I need to be challenged in my spiritual life, Cell groups have done this for me."

HOW CELL GROUPS WORK

Cell groups are centred around the concept of cell division. As a group of people meet together to enjoy the study of the Word and the support of each other, God adds others to the group. As the numbers grow to approximately

Continues next page

Cell Group Ministry Provides Opportunities For:

- A practical way to study God's Word.
- A simple way of introducing friends to Christianity.
- A place to gain support and encouragement.
- A convenient way to extend one's spirituality beyond the weekend.
- An opportunity to be involved in growing the Kingdom of God.
fifteen the group then divides into two new groups. On this principle "grow to divide" the ministry expands.

The study of the Word occurs in a practical and sharing way that builds the group experience. The study is a time where members share their understanding of the particular passage of study and try to apply the principles found to their daily life.

This sharing of perspectives and applications adds to understanding of the Word. Usually, the study is facilitated by a designated leader who guides the group through a study guide.

Cell groups are designed to be an experience based form of church growth. The primary focus of the group is to share their group experience with others. This is done by inviting, friends, family, work mates, neighbours, anyone God puts in our path to participate. The cell group is a very simple and relatively non-threatening environment to invite the non-christian to.

Care is one of the most important factors in establishing and maintaining the spiritual commitment of members. The cell group ministry provides support and encouragement to participants. As participants meet over a period of time trust builds. This trust enables members to feel free to ask for support from each other.

Being a Christian is a total life experience. However, for some the pressures of work and life push their spiritual activity into a very narrow part of their week (Sabbath). Cell groups extend your spirituality beyond the weekend. This added fellowship is very beneficial.

The first training workshop will be held Monday nights August 2, 9, 16, 23, 1993. Booking is required.

Country churches are invited to negotiate other arrangements with us.

A critical ingredient for the success of cell group ministry is the leadership. Cell groups have leaders who are not necessarily preachers, teachers, or theologians but people who have facilitation skills. Cell group leaders are facilitators of discussion. They are people who have a deep commitment to the Lord and an understanding of people. The role of the cell group leader is to ensure the group is functioning with the right process. The actual operation of the group is the responsibility of all group members. The group leaders only additional responsibility is to liaison with the Cell Ministry co-ordinator.

To enrol in the next Cell Group Leaders Training workshop participants need to have church board approval for training and establishment of group.

Phone or Write to:
Pastor Rob Steed
P.O. Box 120 Prospect S.A.
5032 or Phone (08) 269 2177

The Conference Department of Church Ministries will provide the training, materials, advertising and initial (12 months) supervision of leaders.

RENEWAL AND CHURCH GROWTH THROUGH CELL MINISTRIES is an initiative of the Department of Church Ministries of the South Australian Conference.
The DCM (Department of Church Ministries) is committed to the building up of the local church. Its role is one of assisting church leaders and members in accomplishing what they believe God has led them to do in their particular community.

This assistance may occur in any of the following ways:

LEADING CHURCHES THROUGH THE PROCESS OF PROBLEM SOLVING

PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO PARTICULAR PROBLEMS

LINKING CHURCHES TO RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL WHO CAN HELP

CHALLENGING CHURCHES TO A GREATER VISION

PROVIDING TRAINING TO CHURCH LEADERS

DCM & SABBATH SCHOOL

The DCM may assist your Sabbath School programme in a number of ways:

- If you are looking for a particular resource or aid we may be able to help you from our materials or draw on Union or Division resources. You may want to contact personnel from other Churches to assist you with mission reports or special items etc. We can make some suggestions. There may be a problem that you have that another Sabbath School has already found the solution to. We would be happy to share this with you.

- That with you. You might just feel things need improving but don't know where to start. We believe we have some challenging ideas that you might like to consider. Or you may know where you want to go with Sabbath School but don't know how to get there. We would be more than happy to come and work with you through the change process to achieve your vision.

THE DCM IS IN THE WORK OF ASSISTING LOCAL CHURCHES IN ACHIEVING THEIR VISIONS.

TEACHER TRAINING

- Adult Class Teacher Training: This workshop aims to teach teachers to become facilitators of productive class discussion. Participants not only learn group skills but also experience them. This workshop involves 8 hours, it may be conducted over a series of weeks or as an intensive weekend.

- Children Teacher Training: This workshop is suitable for all children divisions teachers up to Primary. Teachers are taught presentation skills, story telling and use of visual aids. This workshop may be conducted on a Sabbath afternoon or week night.

JUNIOR/TEEN TEACHING

- Participants learn of the unique characteristics of this age group. They examine the different learning styles that children have and effective ways to reach them. This workshop may be conducted on a Sabbath afternoon or week night.

CONSULTATIONS

- Sometimes it is beneficial to have another person come and assist you in reviewing the current programme. Our personnel are available to work with you in conducting assessment and development of new strategies for your Sabbath School. This may involve all, one or a number of divisions.

- The length of a consultation varies. Our personnel will work with you until you have achieved your desired outcomes. They are there to assist you.

PERSONNEL

- The following people make up our Conference team:
  - Rob Steed: Rob is the Conference Sabbath School director. His particular area of interest is Adult and Teen Sabbath School. He has done post graduate study in small group skills training. He very much enjoys a lively Sabbath School class discussion.
  - Raeene Hennig: Raeene is a very experienced early childhood teacher. She is able...
APPENDIX NEWS LETTER

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE
DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH MINISTRIES
1994 SERVICES AND TRAINING EVENTS

INTRODUCTION
The church exists for the purpose of saving souls for the kingdom of God. This is achieved as the church reaches out to its world and as it attracts the world to its community.

The Department of Church Ministries seeks to assist the church in both its focus on its mission and the healthy functioning of its congregation. This balance between the task of the church and the maintenance of its members is vital for its success.

Rob Steed
Associate Church Ministries
Director South Australian Conference

1994 TRAINING & CONSULTATIVE SERVICES

CONSULTATIVE SERVICE
Mission Audit - Making available diagnostic assessment of the local church's current outreach activities.

Church Consultation - General Assessment of church operation: identification of strengths; and facilitating strategic planning.

Cell Group Ministry - Making available training and supervision for cell group leaders in the local church.

TRAINING EVENTS:
Church Leaders Training Weekend March 4-6 - For pastors elders.

ALL CALLED TO A PERSONAL MINISTRY
"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

The discovery and development of a personal ministry in the church by each member is critical to their spiritual well being and the success of the church in fulfilling its mission.

The Department of Church Ministries seeks to increase the level of participation of members in the function of the church and to facilitate in the personal identification and development of ministries.

CONFERENCE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH MINISTRY ROLE
The Department of Church Ministries sees its role as one of being an assistant to the local church. The Conference moves to help the local church accomplish what they believe God has led them to do in their particular community.

Aim In 1994
In 1994 our goal will be to assist the Churches of our Conference to become more effective in achieving success for the Lord.

Objectives:
- We will seek to encourage and enable churches to continue focusing their attention on the mission of their church.
- Seek to increase the level of participation and ministry development of members in the life of their churches.
- Provide assistance to churches in building the relationship of its members.
- Assist churches in identifying and developing their unique corporate strengths for ministry.

The above objectives will be achieved by offering consulting and training services to the churches.

Bible studies to non-members.
Neil Watts

Conflict and Mediation Skills Workshop July 9 - Skill training for pastors and elders in dealing with the inevitable conflicts which occur in their church. Rob Steed

Spiritual Gifts Workshop August 27 - To help identify and develop members gifts for ministry. Mark Borreson
BIBLE STUDY GUIDES

COME ALIVE: Seven encouraging lessons in dynamic Christian living. You'll want the entire series for your own personal Christian growth and for future reference, study, and sharing with others. 7 Study Guides

STAY ALIVE: Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about the future? Or what heaven might be like? Or what happens to people when they die? And what about living in the here and now; does the Bible have any guidelines on how to manage your time, money and health? 15 Study Guides

TO KNOW GOD: A most comprehensive coverage of Bible topics. Uses the New International Version Bible. 52 Study Guides

DOCTRINAL TRACS

ADVENTIST MEDIA TRACs: These tracs outline the fundemental teachings of the church. They are not Bible studies but rather outlines of our belief. 10 Tracs

VIDEOS FOR LOAN

Out Of The Salt Shaker (each part 40m):
Part 1 - Evangelism as a Way of Life
Part 2 - Getting the Story Straight
Part 3 - Learning to Love
Part 4 - Sharing the Message

Church Growth Series (Each part approx 30mins):
The Ministers
A Matter of Urgency
Gift of Love
In His Steps
Maximum Christianity

FOR INFORMATION OF SERVICE OR ORDERING OF MATERIALS

CONTACT
Pr Rob Steed Or Mrs Elaine O'Brien On: (08) 269 2177. Or Write To The Department Of Church Ministries. PO Box 120 Prospect SA 5082

RESOURCES FOR LOAN AND SALE

For the Love of Pete
See You Sunday
Who Cares About Love
Discover Your Gifts
But I'm Just a Layman

A Man Without Equal - How history's most remarkable person changes the way we live and think today. Excellent witnessing tool for establishing a faith in Jesus.

Your Spiritual Gifts and the Ministries of the Holy Spirit - Presented by Roy Naden
Part 1 God's Greatest Assurance
Part 2 You are Special
Part 3 The Spirit's Fruit
Part 4 Gifts for Service
Part 5 Looking at the Gifts 1
Part 6 Looking at the Gifts 2

Kenneth Cox "Dimensions of Prophecy" - 30 videos 30 mins each
Kenneth Cox "Revelation" - 30 videos 30 mins each
Geoff Youden Programmes - 24 videos 30 mins each
George Vandeman "Truth for the End Time" - 30 programmes on 10 tapes
David Down "Digging Up the Past" - 27 Programmes on 7 tapes
Roy Naden "In Touch" - 20 programmes 20 min each tape
George Vandeman "Showdown at Armageddon" 7 programmes 30 min each
George Vandeman "Empires in Collision" 8 programmes 30 min each
Welcome

This leaders weekend will provide you with inspiration, ideas and support. Being a leader, whether you are involved in Sabbath School, Youth, Eldership, Personal Ministries etc, has many challenges to it. This weekend you will be exposed to some of the skills that go towards effective church management. You will hear many new concepts some of which will be catalysts for developing your own vision for your church. You will have the opportunity in the speciality groups to exchange ideas and problem solve issues. We trust that this weekend may challenge you to a renewed commitment to work for the Lord and his church.

Church Ministries Team

FEbruary 26-28
Anchor Youth Camp
### Special Guests

Pastor Brian Craig: Brian heads the department of church ministries at the South Pacific Division. He spent a number of years in youth ministry and currently cares also for the portfolio of Family Ministries. Brian has particular interest in the area of relationships, in his presentations he will look at ways to build the "community" relationships within a church; the importance of understanding the differences within a congregation; ways to lead that empowers ones team; and how to deal with the difficult people in our churches.

Pastor Eric Winter: Eric has a broad experience in the area of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. He is currently an associate Director for Church Ministries at the South Pacific Division. Eric will challenge you with the mission of the church and ways in which to develop within your self and your church a vision of that mission. He also will address the area of spiritual gifts looking particularly at how a church implements the "giftedness" of its members in its organisation.

Pastor Allan Waishe: Allan comes from our Trans Australian Union. He is the associate Church Ministries director caring for Youth and Family Ministries. Allan will look at the areas of motivating the leadership team and church members; the importance of maintaining good communication with other leaders; and ways to care for ones own spirituality as a leader.

### PROGRAMME

#### Friday Night

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<tr>
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<tr>
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#### Sabbath

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<td>7.15am</td>
<td>Devotional by Andrew Kingston</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00am</td>
<td>&quot;Organising for Mission&quot; by Eric Winter</td>
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<td>10.00am</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.15am</td>
<td>&quot;Communicating for Or. Understanding Successful Leadership&quot; by Allan Waishe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Members by Brian Craig</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15am</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>2.00pm</td>
<td>&quot;Motivating the Saints&quot; by Allan Waishe</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.30pm</td>
<td>&quot;A Gifted Church&quot; Or &quot;Empowering Leadership&quot; by Eric Winter</td>
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#### Sunday

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<td>BREAKFAST</td>
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<td>9.00am</td>
<td>Putting First Things First by Allan Waishe</td>
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<td>10.00am</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.15am</td>
<td>&quot;Dealing with The Difficult Or &quot;Visionary Leadership&quot; by Brian Craig</td>
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<td>BREAK</td>
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<td>Speciality Groups</td>
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<td>12.00am</td>
<td>Termination Exercise</td>
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<td>LUNCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30pm</td>
<td>Depart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19th May, 1993

Mrs L
17 Short Street
MILLICENT SA 5280

Dear L,

I write in regard to our telephone conversation before Easter concerning "how to maximise the special characteristics of a small church". I wish to outline to you some details as to how this may occur.

I would see that the major aim of this type of consultation would be to assist the church in assessing its current "style" of being a church, both its strengths and weaknesses; to look at how it may maximise the strengths that it has or potentially has.

The process of bringing this about could occur in the following way:

a. Exploration of idea of consultation: Yourself, church pastor, and one other significant open-minded person, to discuss the idea, and if in agreement, to present it to the Church Board.

b. Contract what is to happen: Have myself meet with the Church Board to negotiate the expectations that they would have of the consultations; and to gain agreement as to my expectations of them.

c. Data Gathering: With a sub-committee (made up of the pastor and two or three others), devise an appropriate way to gather information that relates to the consultation.

d. Feedback and Planning Meeting: Conduct a feedback meeting to the church in general of the results, followed by a goal-setting session. The aim of this session is to set a "Mission Statement for the Church", plus some specific objectives and exploration of possible strategies.

e. Assignment of Responsibilities: A session when strategies are fully planned for. This would include time-lines, and selection of personnel.

f. Implementation.

g. Evaluation: Evaluation of the success of the strategies, would need to occur on a regular basis. This would lead to modifications of some strategies.
The end result of such a process would be to have a clear and realistic direction set for the church, which is based on the church's unique strengths.

The benefit of myself being involved is that as an "outsider" I can provide feedback in a way that will reduce the resistance that is usually present when change occurs. My role is not that of "replacing" the pastor, but working with him as a co-helper.

I would see my involvement as being somewhere between 6 to 8 months. It would be necessary for me to meet with the congregation on three or four occasions, and subgroup, etc., as needed.

I have spoken to [Name], and believe that he is interested in the concept. I will send him a copy of this letter.

Looking forward to your reply,

Robert Steed,
ASSOC. DIRECTOR of CHURCH MINISTRIES.
RHJS/09/0
APPENDIX FEEDBACK

LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

This feedback is based primarily on observations made at a recent Pathfinder executive meeting.

STRENGTHS: ACTION PLANNING, COHESIVENESS, DELEGATION.

GROWTH AREAS: DECISION MAKING, SUPERVISION

STRENGTHS

ACTION PLANNING

Your programme seemed highly organised and well accepted by the team. Your programme and plans provide your staff with a good overall idea of how things fit together and what they are aiming at. There seemed to be a good level of involvement in the planning.

The delegation of work seems well received by the group. A sense of achievement of individual responsibilities is present. The recognition of this provides good motivation.

The detail of what needs to be done by whom and when is well in place.

The practice of evaluating each event is good. One would need to be careful not to allow too much of the meeting time to be taken up in post-mortems.

COHESIVENESS

Your team seems to be a happy one. They showed a genuine commitment to the club. You have successfully developed a sense of team. We at Pathfinder are serious about what we do.

You are involved in a number of good activities that build a good culture for the club - fun raising, representative field uniform, Pathfinder days etc.

DELEGATION

You appear to have a good level of delegation occurring. This is important for good team spirit and self preservation of you as leader. Your support as leader of each individual's area of responsibility is good.
GROWTH AREAS

DECISION MAKING

Your involvement of all the team in making decisions was good.

I think you could benefit by adopting a total consensus decision making style when it comes to important issues. The issue regarding the length of pathfinder meetings was an example of this. Their seemed to be a resistance from you to accept a position that was supported by the majority but not by yourself. Even if the others are wrong (and that is quite possible) I tend to think its wiser for the sake of team ownership to explore and even adopt their view even when its different from yours. In doing so their is a message to them that this club is lead by you but belongs just as much to them. If you want equal commitment and ownership you need to allow equal say.

Equally as important as achieving the task of pathfinders is maintaining a happy and healthy relationship with the team. This means that some times we put aside the task for the sake of the team.

SUPERVISION

Your supervision of the teachers class programme is very good. The role of the leader is to know where they are up to and what way you can assist.

I do wonder whether you might get more mileage out of this system if you could find the time to supervise their work individually. I think I noted a little embarrassment from the lady from (I could be wrong) The update could be perceived as a checking up on whether they are doing their work. (I know that is not your reason for it) It may be less threatening to approach it more from a, “How is your programme going? What are the priority areas that you are currently working on? Can I or any of the other staff assist you in any way?

CONCLUSION

Overall I think you can be very proud of your efforts. The club success I believe is proof that you are doing a good job. All leaders have strengths and weaknesses. By becoming aware of those we can compensate for the weaknesses by involving other in the leadership.
Masters of Science (Hon)
Social Ecology

Western Sydney University

A Consulting Approach To Assisting Seventh-day Adventist Church Parishes.

Robert Steed
1997
PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

and the best possible result has been obtained.
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