

## LUKE 14 – MINISTRY CHECKLIST

*Planning and Executing with Excellence*

*For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Luke 14: 28-30, NASB*

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Running a small ministry is hard – no question. It takes courage to compete in the world today. That means we had better get it right. This Checklist is designed specifically for that purpose.

Begin by asking yourself these questions:

*What if . . . Lack of funding is more about not doing Luke 14 well?*

*What if . . . Being a ministry that lives out this passage with excellence is what Jesus was saying (and expects from us)?*

*How would . . . That change the way your ministry thinks about the role Christ has for you in His Kingdom?*

*Would you do anything differently?*

This Checklist will help you begin answering these questions.

## **HOW TO USE IT:**

Completing this tool is simple. For each of the twelve areas, check all the boxes that represent true statements about your ministry (only check the boxes that are indisputably true). Then review your responses to identify areas of relative strength and weakness, using the table that you will find at the end.

## **SCORING YOUR MINISTRY**

After completing the checklist, determine the number of “Completed” checkmarks that are in each section and compare it to the table at the end. Any sections that do not have all three boxes checked would be areas where you might need to focus some attention.

## **WHAT TO DO NEXT**

If you would like to have a free conversation about your results, please don’t hesitate to call. We don’t do “Sales” here – we provide “Solutions.”

## **Mission**

- We have a mission statement
- We have a succinct mission statement that has clearly translated God's call into a few actionable ministry goals
- Everyone working in our ministry can recite our mission statement verbatim

## **Organizational Design**

- Our staff and volunteers feel that the ministry's leaders provide needed resources, knowledge, and freedom to maximize their contributions
- We have consciously considered how to harmonize our strategy, structure, and systems to create a mission-oriented and performance-oriented culture
- We have accurate, up-to-date measures of our culture that we use to diagnose our ministry's internal health

## **Human Resources**

- We have recognition and reward systems that motivate our people to top performance
- Our recruitment system for employees and volunteers yields an abundance of talented, long-term ministry partners
- Our ministry has identified its most strategic jobs and has invested significantly in the people who occupy those jobs

## **Executive Decision Making**

- We understand that it's easy to make bad decisions, and we use advisors and internal debates before making major decisions
- We regularly use checklists, frameworks, decision trees, and/or other decision aids to ensure we don't miss things
- We have clear objectives for our programs, products, and services, and we have an accountability system that ensures we reconcile actual results with the assumptions and forecasts that drove the decision-making process

## **Marketing**

- We have identified clear people segments that we want to target (e.g., families, singles, youth, seekers, etc.) and we understand their habits and practices well
- For each target-people segment, we have a decision-making model that describes the steps that precede involvement with our ministry
- We have measures that pinpoint what we do well and what we can do better with respect to moving our target segments from uninvolved to highly involved

## **Innovation**

- We are always testing new ideas to improve how we do things
- To remain highly relevant, we stay in touch with trends and we pay close attention to the life cycle of our products, programs, and services
- Over the past two years, we have successfully introduced new products, programs, and/or services that have significantly increased our ministry's impact

## **Operations**

- Continuous improvement is a way of life in our ministry
- We routinely look outside of our ministry to benchmark how we're doing and to learn from those organizations that are exceeding fruitful
- We've identified the specific activities that are key to producing mission-consistent outcomes for each of the target segments we serve

## **Accounting and Finance**

- Our leaders can read financial statements and pinpoint troubling trends
- In budgeting, we don't just tweak last year's numbers, but instead, we base our forecasts on detailed scenarios, thereby avoiding budgeting gamesmanship and sloppy projections
- Before investing resources into new products, programs, and services, we formally examine how well the mission fits our ministry, the cost versus benefits, and the risks involved in those activities. We then rank the opportunities in order of attractiveness

## **The Strategy Map**

- We have a clear strategy that is well understood by everyone in the ministry
- We have developed a detailed cause-and-effect model of the key success factors that drive mission-consistent outcomes
- Everyone in the ministry can articulate our cause-and-effect model, as well as their role in the process of delivering maximum ministry success

## **The Balanced Scorecard**

- We have clear outcome measurement linked to clear plans to achieve them
- Everyone in the organization is aligned to clear measurable goals that directly or indirectly link to our most strategic outcomes
- We understand and track leading indicators; we always have a clear sense of our progress towards goals and can adjust things up or down as needed

## Implementation

- For ministry initiatives, we create action plans that specify time-tables, budgets, and who is responsible for the initiative
- We have a system that collects information to track progress toward or goals, that detects bottlenecks, and that provides employees the information they need when they need it
- Our ministry is a learning organization, and organization that actively seeks to monitor its progress, learn from its results, adapt, and improve

## Transformation

- Our ministry has developed a successful process for introducing and adopting useful new technology, training, and management programs
- Over the past three years, we've gone through major change that has significantly increased our mission-consistent outcomes
- We have a performance measurement system in place to help like desirable new organizational practices to individual employee goals

## Score the Assessment

To Score your Ministry, add up the number of check marks for each of the 12 sections and compare the results as follows:

- 0 A Blind Spot
- 1 A major opportunity area
- 2 A minor opportunity area
- 3 An area of excellence

Source: George S. Babbes and Michael Zigarelli, *The Minister's MBA - Essential Business Tools for Maximum Ministry Success* (Nashville, TN, B&N, 2006)