What the Lead or Solo Pastor Must Lead!

These we must not assign to anyone else—at least we think so, and we mean in any size church.

Under 100 or over 10,000!

We think these four or five areas are the priorities we must carry on our own backs. And while the three of us will not have the same lists, we hope, like everything we share, you will think through your own priorities and benefit from our perspectives.

We also talked about what we hope will happen or be strong in each of the areas, so the goals get more specific.
Plus the third section will suggest key staff and volunteers who can help. We must not try any of this alone!

Hoping to help!

The 4-5 Areas I Must Lead as Pastor

Jeff Bogue

1. Myself... My family, my marriage, my walk with God, my health, my edge—only you can motivate you. As a leader, I must instill in myself a passion for Christ, integrity, grace, selflessness, and a work ethic. As these characteristics mature and become evident in my life, I earn the Right of Leadership. A leader that cannot be trusted or respected is not a leader—he is an office holder. A leader that is no longer a learner is not leading—he is managing. These passions are internal and fueled by the Holy Spirit, but cannot be given to a leader. They must be from within.

2. The Vision... Where there is no vision...there is no leadership. This is a huge element of self-leadership. Your vision for the church will come through, even if your vision equals a lack of vision. One of the first callings of a leader is to connect himself to Christ and receive His vision for the local body. Discover what needs burden you in our community. Seek the unique role your congregation can play. The vision doesn’t have to be massive—just yours.

3. The Culture... The organization you lead will take on your personality, so decide what you want to have reflected. Do you set a culture of excellence, doing your very best with whatever resources God’s given you? Do you set a culture of joy and grace? Build a culture of service, flexibility, humility, etc. You should
create the church that you would like to attend and only you can do this. It takes time and patience, and only the leader can turn the ship.

4. The Mission... The mission has to do with outcomes. A leader might set a vision to “reach the unchurched,” but how and who defines the win? Does reaching the unchurched mean a preschool or does it mean an evangelistic crusade? The leader puts the feet to the mission. A leader should never ask the people following him to do something he is unwilling to do or has not already done himself. The leader is always the “first over the wall,” and in doing so, we teach our people the right heart motivation and method of accomplishing the mission.

5. The Influencers... Whether I admit it or not there are men and women who lead the church (especially if I inherited the congregation). Through relationship, time, and competence, I need to win leadership in their lives, so they are following me. Some of these leaders can simply be power-brokers, and sometimes need to be squared off with; however, most of the time their leadership has emerged from a leadership vacuum. Previous leaders who cast vision, then jumped ship before seeing it fulfilled, are not bad pastors, or incompetent leaders. In those circumstances, these leaders have simply filled in a necessary vacuum. In this case, the influencers should be respected, honored, and listened to. (If you don’t let leaders lead, they leave.) Win the right to lead them.

Jim Brown

1. My Family... If I fail as a husband or father, then I cannot ever lead anyone else. I must tend to the needs of my home and generously love, care, support and pave the way for them.

2. Me... How will I ever lead anyone else if I can’t lead myself? I must develop the godly disciplines that help me to grow physically, spiritually, intellectually and relationally.
3. The Vision and DNA... God has always used a man in the Word to lead His people. I must regularly have my ear towards heaven and my heart open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. I am the only one who never stops thinking and praying about our church and its future.

4. Men and Leaders... Without godly men the church will spin in its tracks. There must be a system in place that develops leaders to do the work well.

5. Truth... I am the voice that is heard the most often because I preach regularly. I must guide our people into truth from God’s Word and pave the way for doctrine and theology that lines up with The Bible.

Knute Larson

1. Vision... No one else will eat and sleep this ministry, or pray and dream about it, as much as I. I must lead the way about which way to go, and who we want to be.

2. Pulpit... Team teaching can work in many places, but pulpit time is the main way you lead, shepherd, and teach the church. I must carry that responsibility and standards for excellence and faithfulness.

3. Leaders and Policies... This may take a little time, but a strong system for grooming and selecting leaders, and adopting simple and Scriptural policies can often move us into the twentieth century. Sometimes even into the 21st! ☺

4. Care/Care System... I don’t mean we do it all, but we must lead the way by our love mood, and by a system of Sunday and home groups that pushes care down to them.
5. Standards/Excellence... Okay, this may seem vague, but I must lead the way with work that is hard and smart, modeling the careful planning and ways of ministry that should characterize the church.

3-5 goals in each of these areas

Jeff Bogue

1. Myself... Goal: Become and remain a leader.
Read at least one “visionary” or “skill” book a month....Master the schedule—make the time for family, God time, exercise....Find accountability elders, friends, etc....Work! Keep a schedule and create self-imposed deadlines (publicize them).....Schedule time for relationships—have a list of people to connect with, a list of families to have over for dinner, and write encouragement notes....Play to your strengths, but address your weaknesses.

2. The Vision... Goal: Always have a stream of fresh vision and ideas.
Schedule vision trips to see what other ministries are doing—steal their ideas....Spend time alone seeking your vision—what had God called you to?...Plan. “The difference between a dreamer and a visionary is that dreamers dream and visionaries do.”...Schedule the plan. Lay out the details in 3, 6, 12, 18, 24 month intervals....Shack it up. When I am running dry on vision I need to shack it up. Take a break—go out of the country on a mission trip, or attend a conference.

3. The Culture... Goal: be the catalyst for a healthy church culture.
Be positive—bring joy and optimism into the office, the pulpit and meetings.... “If servanthood is beneath you, leadership is above you.” Serve. Take the worst parking space, help clean up, and pitch in with menial tasks.... Serve with people. Helm them in their projects.... Love your enemies.... Be teachable.... Do your
best-never just “throw something together.”… Steer negative conversations into grace-filled conversations.

4. The Mission... Goal: lead the charge as you define the win. Share Christ with your neighbors…. Participate in service projects.... Lead the way. Be the first to risk, the first to sacrifice.... Correct wrong definition of wins. It’s not how many kids came to Bible Camp, but how many accepted Christ?

5. The Influencers... Goal: Influence the influencers. Time, time, time.... Relationship, relationship, relationship.... Go to their workplace.... Understand their fears.... Learn the history of the church from them. “Seek to understand more than to be understood.”

Jim Brown

1. My Family... Love, cherish, build up my wife so she can flourish and be at her best to serve alongside of me. I am only as strong as my marriage is in leading my church.... Raise children who long to run after God when I am out of the picture.... Develop goals for our family to chase after and achieve each year to be more like Jesus.... Protect my family from the glasshouse syndrome.

2. Me... Make sure I have accountability in my life so I don’t run off the tracks.... Develop disciplines that allow me to have a voice to my people instead of them doing it because I said so.... Live out my life in a godly, positive, hope-filled, faith-filled way that encourages my people to do so also.... Read prolifically and be a life-long learner.

3. The Vision and DNA... Always have a list of goals for each year as to where I believe God wants the church to head.... Develop a godly DNA that pushes people to live out their redemptive potential.... Keep the doom and gloom people away. Make sure the ministries all carry an
attractive Gospel that requires faith and complete trust and makes Jesus the hero and not me or anyone else.... Celebrate regularly the wins of God.

4. Men and Leaders... Make sure a system and discipleship tool is in place that develops tender warriors who lead their homes, workplaces and communities.... Stop the man-flight in churches by creating environments where men can grab hold of an eternal-purpose-led mission.... You are only as strong as the leaders around you, so be very selective when you build your team.

5. Truth... We carry great responsibility in making sure Biblical truth is the core of our churches. Plus you set the pace with your preaching.... Make sure you have teachers that are in place that carry on good doctrine.... Be shameless in telling the truth. I often say this, “You might not like me for saying this, but I love you too much not to tell you the truth!”

Knute Larson

1. Vision... A growth plan for this year and the next five and more.... A plan for worship services, staff, outreach or missional ministries that will help to produce and support that growth.... And positive emphases that make God smile and people serve!

2. Pulpit... True exposition of Scripture that applies to where we live after answering the question, “What did God mean here?”.... Excellence and passion and constant improvement with punctuality.... Grace and truth at once.

3. Leaders and Policies... One policy and “big picture” board, with other teams being ministry volunteers that are appointed.... Unity based on an understanding of vision and Scripture, with people who do not buy into both of those going to the sidelines.... A constitution made for today’s ministries, with only the senior pastor and one board being called by the
membership; and many working procedures placed into "working policies" that can be changed much more easily.

4. Care/Care System... A mood from me and staff and leaders that shows gracious love and care for individuals.... A Sunday and home group plan that has a team of leaders, not just a teacher, with pastoral care for each other organized as in The ABF Book.... A clear plan for support ministries for various special needs common to singles and families and our area.

5. Standards/Excellence... An effective “Master Schedule” that has me attacking each week with time for all these priorities and God and family clearly scheduled.... A clear system of reporting-accountability for everyone on staff, with a lighter one for volunteers.... Private goals for my own godliness and family life that I share with an accountability partner and group.

What key staff or volunteers can do to help in these areas

Jeff Bogue

1. Myself... A trusted leader and friend can surround you with accountability and partnership. Key leaders can share resources with you, like the latest book they read or the best training they had trough work. An older mentor can help walk you through the tension of ministry, marriage and children. The multitude of counselors is a great thing!

2. The Vision... Dream together. Once you share the vision, ask them to do more than execute it. Ask them to dream with you, refine the ideas, and expand the vision. This is very different than surrendering the vision. It builds a team and makes you a better leader.
3. The Culture... Lean into people who are better at portraying certain desired elements of the culture than you. For instance, someone might be better than you at celebrating. Let them plan and voice the celebration time (e.g. Bible Camp after party). Another may be better at compassion than you. Let them connect with people and help you know when you should. Perhaps a lay person does some of these things professionally. Let them take the lead on it (e.g. a high school soccer coach leads soccer camp, thus achieving a culture of excellence).

4. The Mission... Ask people with specific passions to take the lead in specific areas. For instance, our main mission’s outlet, Tchad Africa, is led by a lady within our congregation. She is highly skilled, deeply passionate, and a better organizer and facilitator than anyone else involved. Assign “Mission Leaders.” Their job is to be stubborn about the outcomes. They keep the mission on mission.

5. The Influencers... Influencers influence influencers. Let leaders lead. Whether staff people or lay people, as long as they are pulling for the same goals with right motives, turn them loose!

Jim Brown

1. My Family... Get someone to ask you the hard questions, if you are loving and leading your family.... Be an open book to your people.... Get people to pray for your marriage and family.

2. Me... Give your wife full access to graciously critiquing and encouraging you.... Find another colleague or man that you meet with regularly who has been through what you have been through and let him speak into your life.... Make sure a teammate is checking in to see if you have built proper times of refreshment and renewal into your routine to guard against burnout.
3. **The Vision DNA...** Make your vision visible by posting it on the walls of your buildings and in all social media forums. Get volunteers to use talents to make that happen.... Brand your DNA on everything you hand out by getting people much more gifted then you to do so. Get your volunteers to share the vision, too.

4. **Men and Leaders...** Share the load by getting other men to join you in the journey by leading other men.... Develop men to carry out the mission you desire to be carried out.... Roll up your sleeves and join your men in the trenches by doing life with them so that they will do the same for you.

5. **Truth...** It’s always good to hear another voice in the pulpit to speak the truth too, so develop a teaching team.... Put men and women that you trust in positions of authority to speak the truths of God’s Word.... Freely replicate your messages and share them in all the social media forums by tech-savvy people.

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**Knute Larson**

1. **Vision...** the key staff member or two or five who understand and share the vision and mood of the church .... A board chair whom I meet with one-on-one regularly and who shares the goals.... A staff or volunteer assistant who keeps me on schedule with plans and goals and cares for many details with events and people.

2. **Pulpit...** A staff partner or team who shares the burden of the pulpit and gives candid and helpful critiques.... An intern or serious Bible student who helps with research and tech issues.

3. **Leaders and Policies...** Strong volunteer ministry managers who care for details in various areas where I am the point person, so I can major on getting to know people and looking for potential leaders.... A discipleship group of 4-6 men I lead with the idea of reproducing every
two years and that several of them will move into church leadership ministries.... A key staff person or volunteer in each of the main areas of ministry (programs, worship, outreach, administration) who help think through and expedite needed ministry-friendly policies.

4. Care/Care System... A point person on staff or a key appointed volunteer who helps all Sunday and home groups set up and maintain a care system.... A point person or key appointed volunteer who manages the hospital/shut-ins/tragedy care issues and assignments.

5. Standards/Excellence... An assistant on staff or key appointed volunteer who helps with many details so I can major on what I do best and stay with goals; and who helps others who report to me stay on time and target .... A wife who knows my goals and desires but also how they include her and family and how they are part of my priorities and schedule.

_Pastorpedia is produced monthly by three experienced pastors:_ Jeff Bogue, of _Grace Church_, in several locations in the Bath-Norton-Medina areas of Ohio; Jim Brown, of _Grace Community Church_ in Goshen, Indiana, a church known for its strong growth, family and men's ministries, and community response teams; and Knute Larson, a coach of pastors, who previously led The Chapel in Akron for 26 years. _Pastorpedia is brought to you by CE National_. Visit _cenational.org/pastorpedia_ for more issues and to read the bios of our contributors.