

Ministry Enterprise Strategy Session

Creating a MESS for your ministry

Key Reality Checks

- 10,000 Boomers are reaching retirement age *each day*.
- Gen X is much smaller than the Boomer Generation and can't bear the weight of giving and Social Security at the same time. Giving is heading for a drop.
- Ministries must look to create revenue streams that are not based just upon donations.
- Ministries must engage their donors in a way that uses the donor's strengths.

Opportunity

Engage your donors in a Ministry Enterprise Strategy Session ("MESS"). A MESS allows your donors to use their creative energies to help bring revenue to your ministry. What does it look like?

- A ½ day to ¾ day session focused upon revenue creation.
- The ministry must, in advance, present complete financials, current income and sources, future revenue opportunities, and obstacles it is facing.
- Invites to 12-15 key donors who care about the ministry who can review existing materials and develop a strategy for new revenue creation.

Who Should Participate?

- A few key strategy people from your ministry. Include one strong detail person.
- *Look for* business owners, C-level executives, technology leaders, serial entrepreneurs, connector-types.
- These are visionary, strategic leaders with the ability to develop a plan and execute it with appropriate metrics.

What Does Enterprise Creation Look Like?

- It may be as simple as looking at a *new way* to run your ministry to create additional revenue.
- It may be the creation of something "*inside*" the ministry to create revenue—i.e., a store, product, etc.
- It may be the creation of a *for profit enterprise* that flows profits back to the ministry.
- Look for: *leadership, investment capital, sustainability, scalability.*

Make an invite: not to a fundraising session, but to an *enterprise* session. You want your donors to understand that you want their ideas/strategy and not their checkbook.

What Does the Agenda Look Like?

- A short segment devoted to where the ministry is at currently. A 10 minute presentation by the ministry about current revenue sources, opportunities and obstacles. Let the MESS team ask questions and drill down on the current state.
- The majority of the time should be focused upon addressing opportunity and potential enterprise creation for the ministry.
- Address (a) potential opportunities (b) manpower to create and operate (c) capital required (d) revenue generated, and (e) metrics of success.
- Consider the use of an outside facilitator—recommended!

Consider Capital

- When contemplating capital, consider all forms of capital.
- Capital may come in the forms of donations to the ministry.
- It may also come in the form of capital investment in a for profit entity.
- Capital may come in the form of non-cash assets, even ownership interests in ongoing business that provide an ongoing annuity stream of cash.

Structures

- Structures to run the enterprise may be inside the non-profit ministry.
- Structure may include the non-profit owning all or part of the enterprise.
- Structure may include a stand alone for profit entity.
- Look for and include the possibility that “ownership” may be inside of entities like donor advised funds, supporting organizations or private foundations.

Outcomes

- 1-2 actionable ideas for enterprise creation.
- People assigned and willing to pursue the enterprise creation.

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