



Swift Transitions: Anticipating, Welcoming, and Celebrating the Moves of God

Succession Planning: Transition of Power Session #7 – October 31, 2024

Thoughtful, purposeful, and intentional planning for the end is one of the healthiest ways to approach the period and process of transition. Churches, businesses, organizations, and even families are at their best when they face the truth of change and learn to welcome its possibilities instead of worrying about its problems. It is not often considered until the end is in sight, but let's consider how succession planning can have positive impacts.

What is succession planning?

“The process of identifying and developing future leaders for an organization.”¹ Succession planning is integral to the long-term existence and success of an organization. It deals with the reality that the people and ways of being today will move on in some way. It also recognizes that the future does not belong to and should not be restricted by the past.

Question: How is this reflected in our way of attending to the mission and ministries of our church?

How are succession plans developed?

Succession plans work well when current stakeholders are willing and able to honestly assess past performance, present position, and future possibilities. Stakeholders share organizational insight with leaders who are tasked with securing the person who will lead them next. Succession plans include consideration of persons who are currently in the organization as well as people who may have a different line of sight from outside the organization. No matter the process, it works better when roles and expectations are determined at the outset and regular updates are provided (*see Numbers 27:5-11*).

Question: How is this reflected in our way of attending to the mission and ministries of our church?

What are some benefits of succession planning?

¹ Eben Harrell. “Succession Planning: What the Research Says,” in *Harvard Business Review* (December 2016). <https://hbr.org/2016/12/succession-planning-what-the-research-says> (accessed 10/31/24).



1 Kings 19:11-21 (cf. 19-21); 2 Kings 2:1-12 (cf. 8-11)

Planning for the end of your season

As we read, note the aspects of changed thinking that can help us anticipate, welcome, and celebrate the idea that transition means planning for the fulfillment of our purpose, or the end of our season.

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Strategies for preparing for the end of our season

The ministry at the end of the prophet Elijah's life offers several ways to think about the practice of succession planning.

1. **Trust God to work.** As we fulfill our assignment, God prepares another for the work.

2. **Don't be discouraged.** If you've been faithful, it's probably better than you think.

3. **Let someone in.** It may not be necessary for you to take this portion of the journey alone.

4. **Leave something behind.** The gifts you developed may benefit your successor.

NOTES: _____

God-honoring ways to view succession planning

The prophet Elijah offers an example of how one might approach the end of their season, having fulfilled their purpose and ready to be received by God. Here are a few other examples whose lives teach us to anticipate, welcome, and celebrate that God can be glorified when succession planning is an important part of the end of one's season.

- Nbrs 27:12-23; Deut. 34:9 _____
- 1 Chronicles 17:11-15; 28:1-29:5. _____
- John 20:19-23: _____
- 1 and 2 Timothy. _____