

Inside: Trust: The Boundaries
of Community

A Focus on
Leading with Care

Managers or Leaders?

Trust: The Boundaries of Community

Canadian Ministries



Trust is an essential aspect of all relationships. Establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries related to discretion and confidentiality are ways healthy pastoral relationships are forged and nurtured. How can we speak the deep and important truths of our lives if we cannot trust that the information won't be shared with others? Of course, there are exceptional, and sometimes urgent, circumstances that require leaders to disclose information to the appropriate authorities to ensure the safety of those in their community and circle of care. However, even in situations that warrant the appropriate sharing of information, great care, wisdom and discretion are required. Church leaders (elders, church school teachers, camp staff, youth leaders, ministers, parish nurses, and all others who are in positions of leadership and trust) may wish to consider the following:

- Leaders understand that inappropriately sharing confidential information trespasses pastoral boundaries and harms relationships.
- Leaders learn about and seek to understand, as much as possible, the policies and expectations of federal, provincial, denominational and third party agencies regarding confidentiality.
- The obligation to keep information confidential does not apply when the disclosure of information is required as provincial or federal law order. Special care should be taken to know what leaders are obliged to do in their jurisdiction related to information shared about abuse.



- Leaders consult with others in related professions or the appropriate authorities when they have questions regarding their ethical obligations and confidentiality.
- Leaders include those who make disclosures in the decision-making process when circumstances require that confidential information be disclosed.
- Some people decide to take notes in a pastoral situation. Great care ought to be taken to protect the identities and the details of circumstance in your notes. Notes are useful to aid memory and guide care; however, it may be beneficial to be sufficiently vague in case notes are lost, found, etc.
- Leaders are responsible for ensuring that students, clerical staff, volunteers, family members, etc. do not have access to confidential material and will maintain confidentiality should they have access to any information.
- Confidential information ought to be discussed only where privacy can be reasonably ensured. Conversations overheard in halls, coffee shops, restaurants, at street corners, etc. easily lead to breaches of confidentiality.
- On the rare occasion that it is required, leaders disclose information to insurance companies, spouses, parents, authorities, etc. only when necessary and with the permission of or after informing the people who made the disclosures.
- Leaders take great care not to coerce or force people to share confidential information unless the law requires action. In these cases, leaders may volunteer to accompany people to the proper authority.
- Leaders protect the confidentiality of the dead as well as the living.
- When dealing with minors or adults who lack the capacity to give informed consent, in compliance with laws and policies, etc., all care should be taken to protect confidentiality.
- Leaders ensure that records are kept in a secure location and format.
- Leaders are diligent to ensure the security of information transmitted through and stored on computers, email, telephones, voicemail, answering machines, texts, etc.
- Leaders take precautions to protect confidentiality in the event of their own incapacity or death. Our diaries, computers and files will someday be in the hands of others and we will have no capacity to protect those people and situations named in them.
- Leaders take great care to preserve the identity of any person when using an example or employing a sermon illustration. (Those who preach and teach also take time to consider how they use the events of their own lives, marriages and children's lives when speaking in public or posting information on Facebook, Twitter, church web pages, in texts, etc.)
- When consulting with colleagues, leaders do not disclose confidential information that reasonably could lead to the identification of a person unless the individual has given consent.
- We all have weaknesses. Good leaders reflect honestly upon their capacity to keep confidences and are alert to the signs of their lapses in judgment and the effects of physical, mental and emotional fatigue on their actions as well as how alcohol, stress or pride may impact their judgment. All precaution should be taken to ensure against any lapses.

Prayer:

God of all grace, foster care in our relationships and give us the restraint to act with integrity, the strength to act with courage, the prudence to act with wisdom, and the faith to see your redeeming work in all of life.

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In an emergency it is important that information is accessible, accurate and that anyone calling for help is able to give the appropriate information.



- Post signs that clearly indicate where phones are located.
- Ensure that phones are in working order.
- Post all information in large and easy to read print.
- Post special instructions at every phone (e.g. the need to dial 9 or select a special line in order to make calls).
- Post the details about the location of the building at every phone:
 - Name of the church / ministry
 - Street Address / emergency address
 - Phone number / other contact number
 - Explain where emergency response people will be met
- Large buildings will need more than one phone.
- Post emergency escape routes in each area.
- Ensure that fire extinguishers are easily accessible and property maintained.
- Appropriate evacuation procedures should be put in place and made known.
- Consider putting a brief announcement in the bulletin each Sunday or a card in each pew with clear instructions for what to do in the case of an emergency.
- Practice evacuation procedures at least twice a year (one congregation chose the Sunday closest to September 29th [the feast day of the patron saint of emergency response workers] to practice emergency procedures. This date worked well for the congregation because it was at the beginning of the Sunday school year).
- Ensure that there is an elder/usher in charge of all emergencies each Sunday. This role should not be the responsibility of the minister.
- Ensure that the leaders know and comply with all federal, provincial, municipal, and denominational policies and the expectations of insurance companies in all areas of emergency procedures.

Managers or Leaders?

Adapted from *Equipping Elders*, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2010

What's the difference between managers and leaders? Peter Coutts explores the difference between management and leadership, arguing that there is a critical difference between the two, even as they may sometimes overlap.

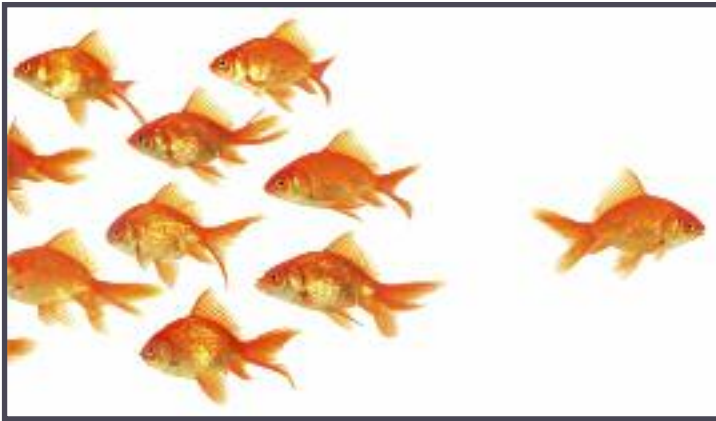
The following descriptions of managers and leaders are helpful in this discussion (taken from Warren Bennis, *Learning to Lead: A Workbook on Becoming a Leader*, Pergasus Books/Addison Wesley, 1997, p.9).

Manager

administers
maintains
accepts reality
focuses on systems and structures
relies on control
short-range view
asks how and when
has eye on bottom line
initiates
accepts status quo

Leader

innovates
develops
investigates reality
focuses on people
inspires trust
long-range perspective
asks what and why
has eye on horizon
originates
challenges status quo



The world is not static and the context of every organization is always changing and shifting. The way things are done need to change occasionally to ensure connection between what the church is doing and the lived experience of the people.

It is important that congregational leaders ask whether they are leaders or managers.

Questions leaders ask:

- What is changing in our neighbourhood? Are we being responsive?
- What is no longer working in our church the way it once did? Why?
- In the long run, what is really important for the future of this congregation? What do we have to do to ensure this? What does our faith call us to do?
- How do we become responsive to the call to be the Church?
- How are we faithful to this calling in new times?

Good management is essential for a congregation to function faithfully. Frederick R. Kapel, while he was CEO of AT&T, came up with six challenges to good leadership that he called “inbred management”. For him, inbred management occurred when people became so comfortable or entrenched in the practice of handling the organization that they were incapable of innovation, change, or even of maintaining organizational health. Their ability to see the larger picture was hampered.

Read Kappel’s summary of the six signs of inbred management through the lens of your session and congregation:

1. People cling to traditional ways of working even when they have been confronted with a new situation.

2. New and meaningful goals that challenge are not defined.
3. Action is taken without reflection. Behaviour is rooted in repetition rather than need.
4. Activity is secure and stable, not venturesome.
5. Old practices are passed on to new people.
6. Low tolerance for criticism can stifle independent thinking.

Every organization - including every congregation - has a tendency toward these characteristics.

Discussion

- As a session, think about the various ministries of the congregation.
- Ask the questions that leaders ask (above).
- Review the six signs of inbred management.
- In what areas are the session/congregation governed by inbred management styles?
- In what ways does your session provide leadership as described above?

Managers make use of resources and ensure that resources are used effectively.

Leadership is about vision. It involves evaluating the life and ministry of the congregation in light of God’s calling, asking,

- Where are we called to go?
- How do we nurture the Kingdom of God in our place and time?

To download *Equipping Elders*, visit
www.presbyterian.ca/elders