Thriving in the Second Chair

Presented at …
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Leading from the Second Chair

Second Chair Leader: *a person in a subordinate role whose influence with others adds value throughout the organization.*

Three Paradoxes
- Subordinate–Leader
- Deep–Wide
- Contentment–Dreaming

*Leading from the Second Chair* by Mike Bonem and Roger Patterson
Ten Practices for Robust Ministry

- Grow Toward Partnership
- Live with (and Lift) the Lid
- Clarify Your Role
- Think (and Act) Strategically
- Develop for the Future
- Organize Selectively
- Navigate Governance Nuances
- Seek Lasting Rewards
- Overcome Loneliness
- Extend Your “Shelf Life”
Grow Toward Partnership

- A true partnership can take years to achieve, but thriving second chair leaders do their part to move in that direction.

Live with (and Lift) the Lid

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- Grow Toward Partnership
- **Live with (and Lift) the Lid**
  - *Thriving second chairs seek to be catalysts for their first chair’s growth while remaining patient with the weaknesses.*
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- **Clarify Your Role**
  - *Second chair leaders know that there will always be ambiguity in their roles, so they thrive by living in the balance between pursuing clarity and demonstrating flexibility.*
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- **Think (and Act) Strategically**
  - Second chairs who thrive add great value to their churches and ministries by seeing the big picture and making decisions in light of this.
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  - Second chairs who thrive view supervision as an opportunity to coach and develop staff members toward success, even when facing difficult situations.
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**Organize Selectively**

- A thriving second chair resists the temptation to organize everything and focuses on the places where structure is most needed and valuable.

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**Navigate Governance Nuances**

- Thriving second chair leaders don’t overstep their boundaries, but navigate the delicate dance with boards and committees in ways that advance the mission, support the first chair, and maintain unity.

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Seek Lasting Rewards

- Second chairs who thrive don’t depend on affirmation from their first chair, other leaders, or tangible accomplishments because their identity is anchored in Christ.

- Overcome Loneliness
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  - *Second chair leaders thrive by forming safe relationships with trusted peers that provide camaraderie and wise counsel.*
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**Extend Your “Shelf Life”**

- Reinventing their roles offers a way for second chair leaders to thrive and be reenergized.
Which practice would most help you thrive?
Grow Toward Partnership

Partnership: A commitment to sharing directional leadership decisions that is based on a common vision, an appreciation for each other's complementary gifts, and a high level of trust that develops over time.

Partnership Continuum

Moving Along the Continuum
- Earn trust
- Strive for excellence
- Own your mistakes
- Forgive their mistakes
- Clarify the vision
- Demonstrate that you care
Live with (and Lift) the Lid

**Common Lids**
- Insecurity
- Lack of vision
- Too much vision
- Too spontaneous
- Too demanding
- Not thriving
- People pleaser
- Not a leader

**Lifting a Lid**
- Start with yourself
- Discern
- Build trust
- Tiptoe first
- Demonstrate the impact
- Offer solutions
- Affirm
# Think (and Act) Strategically

**“Strategic Thinking” is…**

- Adding value throughout …
- Leader, not manager
- Above the weeds, below the clouds
- Giving feet to the vision

**Strategic Thinking Habits**

- Unpack the vision
- Evaluate honestly
- Plan the steps
- Move to the balcony
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