

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

# How to Develop a High Impact Church Staff

## Episode 130

*What it really looks for a church staff to be strong in both performance AND health—and why it matters so much.*

Sometimes churches get stuck because of how they do team. They can be clear on mission, vision and how they believe God has called them to operate, and yet... something can still be broken. That brokenness often falls into one of two extremes: Either the team is **high-performing**, but there's interpersonal and leadership dysfunction. Or the team is **relationally healthy**, but there's a significant execution gap. Even in between those extremes, many churches would still say they don't feel like they're *winning* in both areas. In this episode, we unpack the foundational aspects of intentionally building a high impact team and why it matters so much.

### *Why Teams Get Dysfunctional & Warning Signs to Monitor*

- It can be a struggle for churches to have teams that are both healthy and high performing, and we usually find one of these three reasons why:
  - *Personal wiring*: some leaders are naturally more nurturing toward teammates while others are more driven.
  - *Busyness*: The ministry whirlwind rules the day.
  - *Lack of intentionality*: No team becomes a high-impact team by chance.
- **Tangible, obvious** signs your team is becoming dysfunctional:
  - Stress, tension, unhealthy conflict, and frustration
  - High turnover
  - Office politics
  - “Terminal niceness,” lack of accountability, and a culture of underperformance
- **Subtle, less obvious** signs of dysfunction:
  - Insecurity, made clear by displays of ego, defensiveness, or leading out of position
  - Lack of self-awareness by a leader
  - Lack of trust
- The stakes are high and the cost is enormous. Team dysfunction distracts us from our mission. We end up squandering opportunity, time, resources, and talent.

## *Dangers of an Out of Balance Team*

- There's an illusion that if you hyper-focus on team health, everyone will be happy. But the truth is, not giving appropriate focus to performance, along with health, leads to low morale and can create a toxic culture.
- Health is not an end in itself. The last thing we need in church teams are "gym rats" with strong but unproductive muscles—strong relationally but not making any kingdom impact.
- On the flip side, at a church that puts all the emphasis on performance at the expense of team health, the culture feels transactional and utilitarian.
- It creates a low sense of community and personal care when the leadership communicates that the team exists only for goals, strategies and metrics. Leaders unintentionally create a culture of fear.

## *Indicators of Healthy & High-Performing Team*

- Authentic care for one another.
- Spiritual vibrancy.
- Alignment: Clear vision. Clear priorities. Clear about the win.
- Accountability around performance: Real-time coaching, rather than a big annual review.

## *Next Steps*

- No church staff drifts into team health and high performance. Leaders must be intentional about creating a great team. How is your team doing today?
- The **Unstuck Teams** process guides pastors to lead staff teams that love working together and get stuff done—spiritually, emotionally, and relationally healthy, as well as productive and high-performing. Visit [theunstuckgroup.com/teams](https://theunstuckgroup.com/teams) to learn how it works and start a conversation with our team.

Listen to the episode on iTunes or at [theunstuckgroup.com/episode130](https://theunstuckgroup.com/episode130).