

Action Steps for Organizational Transformation

Sometimes an organization finds itself in a position where it is apparent that change needs to occur. This can be due to external dynamics, like a changing economy, or internal factors, like a growing staff. Regardless of the circumstances, leaders need to be proactive in adapting to these changes and guiding the organization through them.

Beulah Alliance Church had a long and healthy history, but they found themselves in a situation where they knew they needed to change in order to continue in a positive direction. Over the course of a couple of years they were able to dramatically transform their workplace from one where staff were dissatisfied to one that qualifies as a Best Christian Workplace. The following suggested action steps for transformation are steps Beulah took that led to their success in this area.

1. **Discover your strengths and weaknesses objectively.** Although every leader should take time to reflect on the state of their organization, it can be especially helpful to seek out the perspective of those outside of the situation. This can take the form of a consultant who is called in or a tool, such as the Best Christian Workplaces Employee Engagement Survey.
2. **Celebrate strengths.** Once you have received feedback, be sure to begin by focusing on the

strengths that are revealed about your organization. It will be important to emphasize these things in the midst of the coming change. Celebrating and consolidating your strengths (or positive core) is the best platform for future change.

3. **Admit areas of weakness.** Hiding problems only makes them worse. Be upfront with your staff and other stakeholders about the challenges that you face and your intentions to address them. In this way you are able to begin to foster trust even though mistakes may have been made previously.
4. **Involve staff in crafting solutions.** It can be very successful to create teams to work on various initiatives related to the improvement opportunities you have identified. This not only draws upon their special awareness of the internal workings of your organization, but also encourages the staff to be more supportive of any changes that will be made.
5. **Make communication a priority.** There is a direct link between communication and trust. During this time of transformation, be sure to be proactive in informing your staff not only of any changes, but also the reasons behind the changes. A high level of

communication also empowers staff members to better do their jobs.

6. **Develop community.** A community of people who care about each other will be much more excited about making necessary changes. Organizations that make fun and relationships a part of the work environment find that changes in procedure are more readily adopted because there is a sense of trust, camaraderie, and greater understanding.
7. **Glean from the wisdom of peer organizations.** Essentially, this is the justification for this article as these action steps are derived from what Beulah Alliance Church found helpful in their own endeavor to transform their workplace! There is no need to reinvent the wheel, so take time to learn from other organizations that have found success in similar situations. This may range from reading Best Practice Guides derived from the successes of other organizations to utilizing data gathered on compensation practices by organizations similar to your own.
8. **Continually train staff.** Investing in your staff through continued training is something sure to yield rewards. Not only will you continually have better

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qualified staff, but they will see that you do in fact value them. Training is also a time when staff can learn about different ways of doing things that can bring beneficial transformation to your organization.

- 9. Have a fair and competitive level compensation to retain quality staff.** Be mindful of what it takes to live in your area so that you pay enough to retain the quality of staff that you desire. What a shame it would be to lose out on hiring the best fit for a position at your organization simply because they don't feel they can make ends meet on what you pay.

We would like to recognize Lead Pastor Keith Taylor and Senior Associate Pastor Rob Chartrand at Beulah Alliance Church in Edmonton, Canada for sharing these worksteps. Through their leadership Beulah Alliance ranks as one of the most improved organizations among the 400 Christian organizations participating in our survey.