

WORSHIP LEADER MENTORSHIPS: HOW TO GUIDE, EMPOWER AND EQUIP
WORSHIP LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

By Joel French

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Summary:

This lengthy paper gives a strong defense for the value of mentoring worship leaders. Included is an eight part appendix with tools to develop and implement mentoring in the local community of faith.

Length: 73 pages

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Introduction

Nature of the Problem

In recent years the corporate worship environment has changed significantly. Unfortunately, many worship leaders have not been appropriately trained to handle this new environment. This has resulted in discouraged young worship leaders, frustrated congregations, and other stumbling blocks to wholehearted congregational worship.

I believe that by encouraging the mentoring of beginning worship leaders, we can work toward resolving this problem. However, before we take a look at this topic, it is important that we have a proper understanding of the term “worship”.

Defining “Worship”

John Frame defines worship as “the work of acknowledging the greatness of our covenant Lord”. He bases this definition on the analysis of the “two groups of Hebrew and Greek terms that are translated ‘worship’”. The first group of terms have to do with labor or service, while the second group of terms refer to bowing or bending the knee.¹ If we hold to Frame’s definition, then “When we leave worship, we should first ask, not what did I get out of it?, but how did I do in my work of honoring the Lord?”²

Some additional worship insight comes from John Garmo, who explains that the word worship “came from the Anglo-Saxon ‘weorthscipe’, which later became worthship. It means ‘to

¹ John M. Frame, *Worship in Spirit and Truth* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishers, 1996), 1.

² *Ibid.*, 5.

attribute worth' to an object".³ Along these lines, Don Saliers tells us that "the fullest praise in human life is reserved for the most worthy objects."⁴ Meanwhile, C.S. Lewis said that "just as men spontaneously praise whatever they value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it."⁵ According to these understandings, we can begin to understand worship as being a contagious, natural, active expression of adoration and committed devotion to our most worthy God!

In a corporate sense, worship is only as meaningful as individuals' continuous offering of worship. As Dale Dirksen says, "when personal worship is vibrant, corporate ritual becomes meaningful for the worshipper as it reflects a whole life acceptable to God."⁶ It is within this meaningful expression of worship that we can also begin to appreciate Torrance's concept of "Trinitarian worship": "the gift of participating through the Spirit in the incarnate Son's communion with the Father."⁷ As Dirksen adds, this sense of worship evokes "a sense of celebration of the relationship within the Godhead, relationship within the body of Christ and the integrity of the individual believer."⁸ Imagine how much different our services of corporate worship would be if everyone was consciously aware of these truths and seeking to worship God in the fullest sense possible!

Finally, Dirksen adds to our understanding of worship by identifying four essential worship tensions. These are: 1) "God as immanent and transcendent", 2) the "evangelical priority

³ John Garmo, *Lifestyle Worship: How To Bring Worship Into Your Daily Life* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1993), 18.

⁴ Don E. Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 101.

⁵ C.S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958), 93-95; quoted in John Piper, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1986), 37.

⁶ Dale Dirksen, *The Profile of a Worship Pastor in a Canadian Evangelical Context* (DWS Thesis: First Draft, The Institute for Worship Studies: Florida Campus, 2003), 17.

⁷ James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 21-22; quoted in Dale Dirksen, *The Profile of a Worship Pastor in a Canadian Evangelical Context* (DWS Thesis: First Draft, The Institute for Worship Studies: Florida Campus, 2003), 17-18.

⁸ Dirksen, 17-18.

of outreach and the necessary inward focus on edification and discipleship”, 3) “form and freedom”, and 4) “presentation and participation”.⁹ As Dirksen says, “many profound truths do have seemingly contradictory poles... Emphasizing one to the exclusion of the other is error.”¹⁰ As worship leaders and worshippers, it is important for us to keep these tensions in mind so that we do not embrace an incomplete theology of worship!

Defining “Worship Leader” and “Worship Leader Mentorship”

Now that we have a greater understanding of what is meant by “worship”, we should also have a better understanding of what is meant by the terms “worship leader” and “worship leader mentorship”. For the purposes of this study, I have defined these terms as follows:

Worship Leader: An individual responsible for leading people in corporate worship of God through such means as music, prayer, the Lord’s Supper, Scripture reading, etc.

Worship Leader Mentorship: The process by which an experienced worship leader guides empowers and enables a less experienced worship leader for the purpose of strengthening Christ’s body, the church, for the glory and praise of God.

Purpose of the Study

I undertook this study with the purpose of learning how to nurture effective mentoring relationships with beginning worship leaders. I have pursued this end through conducting two focus groups (consisting of worship leader participants), through interviewing three pastors of worship and music, through examining relevant Biblical passages, and through a thorough examination of relevant literature.

⁹ Dirksen, 18-21.

¹⁰ Ibid., 18.

Significance of The Study

The results of this study are very significant to my life and ministry. I say this because I sense God is preparing me to be a worship pastor, and because I believe that assisting other worship leaders is a critical part of the worship pastor's role.

I believe this study could also prove useful for other worship leaders, whether experienced or inexperienced. My hope is that through my example, experienced worship leaders will gain insight into how to help nurture inexperienced worship leaders, and that inexperienced worship leaders will benefit from realizing the importance of being mentored.

We should also view this study as being significant in that ignoring the need for mentoring worship leaders is to offer God less than our best! It is also to risk church conflict, knowing that congregational worship can easily become a focal point for scrutiny and debate.

To address this problem is to strengthen the worship ministry of the church by enabling the gifts of promising worship leaders. This, in turn, helps move the body of Christ forward as we seek to praise God with one heart and one voice!

Assumptions and Limitations

I assumed that mentoring is profitable, and that useful mentorship techniques for the general population are transferable to beginning worship leaders. I also assumed that mentorship is feasible within the context of church relationships; in particular, relationships between worship pastors and beginning lay worship leaders, and relationships between experienced lay worship leaders and beginning lay worship leaders.

A limitation of this study is that the focus groups consisted only of students from Briercrest College and Seminary. As a result, insight gained from these focus groups may not be representative of worship leaders in the greater population (i.e. due to the influence of worship

courses taught at Briercrest). Another limitation is that only three of the eight worship leaders participating in the focus groups had more than ten years of worship leading experience (and none of the focus group participants had over twenty years of worship leading experience). Therefore, focus group results may reflect issues that are more relevant to less experienced worship leaders.

Further limitations include the low number of participants in both the focus groups (eight) and interviews (three), as well as the unknown usefulness of the focus group and interview questions. Finally, the administration of the interviews over e-mail may have hindered participants from asking questions that might have helped them with their interview responses.

Research Methodology

Purpose Statement

To learn how to nurture effective mentoring relationships with beginning worship leaders.

Research Design

Following an examination of relevant Biblical passages and a literature review, the research part of this study consisted of two focus groups and three individual interviews.

Population and Sample

Focus group number one consisted of four worship leaders (two males and two females) who were taking part in a worship class offered by Briercrest Seminary (“Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Worship”). Their estimated ages ranged from late-twenties to early-forties. These worship leaders had between 5 and 15 years of experience and all of them had

some experience as paid worship leaders. All but one of them indicated that they had received some form of mentoring as a worship leader (mostly from their senior pastors).

Focus group number two consisted of four worship leaders (three males and one female) who were students in the worship arts program of Briercreech College. Their estimated ages ranged from 19 to 23 years old. One of these students was in first year, two were in second year and the third was in third year. Their worship leading experience ranged from two to eight years and none of them had worked as a paid worship leader. All but one of them indicated that they had been mentored as a worship leader. Interestingly, these students indicated that their mentors had been worship leaders as opposed to senior pastors (compare with focus group number one).

The three men who were interviewed were of approximate ages 45, 50 and 60. All of them had extensive experience as paid worship pastors. Two of them identified their current church roles as being that of “Pastor of Worship and Music”, while the third identified his church role as being that of “Associate Pastor of Worship Ministries”. The cities in which they currently pastor include: London, Ontario; Orillia, Ontario and Billings, Montana. The eldest interviewee indicated that he had not been mentored, the second eldest interviewee indicated that he had learned a lot from a senior pastor (in addition to his college training), and the youngest interviewee indicated that he had been mentored by two of his former worship pastors.

Instrumentation

Participants in the focus groups were given a sheet of eight questions that formed the basis for discussion. The focus group sheets also included general information questions, key definitions, the study’s purpose statement and an additional question that asked participants to independently prioritize six “worship leader skills / areas of competence” (see appendix one for a copy of the focus group discussion sheet).

Those participating in the interviews were e-mailed a “Mentoring Developing Worship Leaders Questionnaire” (see appendix two). These questionnaires included general information questions, key definitions, the study’s purpose statement and six of the same questions that were used in the focus groups.

Testing the Instrument

I asked my worship arts professor at Briercrest Seminary to look over the focus group discussion sheet and he offered me several suggestions for its improvement. I incorporated these suggestions into the creation of the final instrument. Afterward, I used the focus group discussion sheet to create the interview questionnaire.

Survey Administration

Focus group number one took place on Tuesday, March 18th 2003 at 4:45 p.m. I gave some instructions, allowed the participants to begin filling out the general information questions and then initiated a half hour period of discussion. Our discussion was recorded on tape for later analysis.

Focus group number two took place on Friday, April 4th 2003 at 1:20 p.m. and proceeded in the same manner as per focus group number one.

The e-mail interviews were sent out to the three participants in early November 2003. Only one of the participants completed the interview at this time (one week later). The other participants were eager to help but were distracted by Christmas musical preparations. As a result, I re-sent the interviews to the final two participants in early February 2004 and received their responses within the following two weeks.

Results

Focus group discussions were transferred from tape to written form and then analyzed. The participants' rankings of the "Worship Leader Skills / Areas of Competence" were also analyzed, as were the interview responses. Finally, an effort was made to look for interaction effects among the variables. For example, I looked for evidence to suggest that people who have been mentored value different mentoring skills than people who have not been mentored. I also looked to see if more experienced worship leaders view mentoring differently than less experienced worship leaders.

Anticipated Outcomes

I expected to discover that worship leaders highly value the mentoring of other worship leaders. I also expected that most worship leaders would suggest there is a lack of worship leader mentorships in today's church. Of greatest importance, I anticipated learning much about the process of mentoring other worship leaders. Finally, I expected to find some small interaction effects between the different variables used in the study (i.e. between worship leader experience and valued mentor skills).

Theological Perspectives

This is the part of the study where we pause and carefully search the Scripture to seek God's direction. The Bible is God's revealed Word - our foundation for Christian living along with prayer and a dependency on the Spirit. Therefore, it is very important that we study the Bible's teaching on leadership development and mentoring!

Understanding Church Leadership

To be a good mentor, it is important to understand the Bible's teaching about church leadership. Church leadership begins with God, the Father, who is head of Christ (1 Cor. 11:3). Christ, in turn, is head of the church (Col. 1:15-18, Eph. 4:15). Under Christ's leadership is the body of believers comprising one body of many parts (1 Cor. 12:12), each uniquely gifted and important for the health of the church (Rom. 12:4-8, 1 Cor. 12:12-31, Eph. 4:11-12). With these things in mind, the job of a worship leader mentor is to be sensitive to God's leading (regarding when and whom to mentor) while being very conscious of the gifts and talents that have been entrusted to potential worship leaders.

Worship Leader Development In The Bible

Depending on your perspective, the Bible has either very little to say about training worship leaders (i.e. 1 Chronicles 25 and Psalm 33:3?), or quite a lot to say about it! This is largely dependent on your definition of "worship leader". For example, consider Andrew Hill's perspective: "The role of the elder-bishop as worship leader in the church appears to be assumed, given the authority invested in this official."¹¹ Clearly, this definition is much different than what many people would understand today!

As you may recall, this study's definition of worship leader is: "An individual responsible for leading people in corporate worship of God through such means as music, prayer, the Lord's Supper, Scripture reading, etc.". Although these means of worship are certainly found throughout the Bible, a person who fits this description is harder to find. The Bible does, however, focus on characteristics required for Godly leadership, and these characteristics are important for the developing worship leader!

¹¹ Andrew E. Hill, *Enter His Courts With Praise: Old Testament Worship for the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 156.

Importance of a Discipleship Foundation

David Lee's first priority for leadership development is discipleship.¹² This conviction stems from the Great Commission, which calls us to make disciples, "teaching them to obey everything" Christ commanded. Some key aspects of discipleship include growth and understanding of God, commitment to Godly leadership in the home, commitment to service, and commitment to financial responsibility. Furthermore, Lee believes disciples should be willing to sacrifice all in order to gain all (Mt. 16:24-25; Lk. 9:23-24). I would agree with Lee that the first step toward becoming a Christian leader (and in this case, a worship leader) is to be an excited, committed and growing disciple of Christ!¹³ With this in mind, let's take look at the disciples that Christ recruited.

Christ's Example of Leadership Development

Jesus recruited a diverse group of disciples who were not stuck in a fixed religious mindset and were therefore more open to be taught. A sampling of these people includes: "Andrew, the cautious; John, the poet; Simon Peter, the impulsive one; Philip, the shy one" and "Nathanael, the guileless."¹⁴ Christ's example reminds us that potential leaders are not always those who seem to have it all together! What does matter is their love for God and their God-given giftedness.

We can also learn from the strong emphasis that Christ placed on prayer! Jesus spent a night praying before choosing the twelve (Lk. 6:12-16), prayed for the joy, protection, and sanctification of the disciples he sent out into the world (Jn. 17:6-18), and urged "the seventy-

¹² David Lee, "Developing Lay Leadership" *Class Notes - as recorded by Joel French* (Caronport, SK: Briercrest Seminary, 2003), 10.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ J. Robert Clinton, "Effective leadership: The recruiting techniques of Jesus," *Worship Leader* 8 (6, 1999): 14.

two” to ask the Lord for more workers for the harvest field (Lk. 10:1-2). From these examples, we can learn that prayer should saturate the entire process of leadership development!

Jesus’s example also teaches us the importance of giving over responsibility and authority to developing leaders. He demonstrated this when sending out the apostles with “authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness” (Mt. 10:1). It is notable that in giving the apostles this authority, Jesus also offered detailed instructions meant to assist them on their mission (see Mt. 10:5-42).

An interesting observation about Christ’s sending out strategy is that he sent out both “the twelve” and “the seventy-two” in twos. Other New Testament believers appeared to have followed his example, as demonstrated by the sending out of Saul and Barnabas (Acts 13:2), Judas and Silas (Acts 15:27), Timothy and Erastus (Acts 19:22), Barnabas and Mark, and Paul and Silas (Acts 15:39-40). The two-by-two strategy should teach us the importance of mutual support and accountability that can be found in mentorships, apprenticeships, and partnerships today.¹⁵

Biblical Examples of “Mentorships”

Some well-known examples of biblical mentorships include Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Barnabas and Paul, and Paul and Timothy.¹⁶ The Barnabas and Paul relationship is a particularly good example of mentoring! Barnabas demonstrated excellent mentoring skills by helping convince the believers to accept Paul (Acts 9:26-27), allowing Paul to grow into leadership (Acts 13:7; 13:13) and engaging in conflict with Paul over the John Mark issue (Acts 15:36-38). The results of Barnabas’s efforts were extraordinary! Because of his influence on

¹⁵ Ron Lee Davis, *Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 21.

¹⁶ Davis, 21.

Paul, people from around the world and throughout history have had opportunity to respond to the gospel message.¹⁷

Although lesser-known, Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, is another excellent example of a mentor! When he visited his son-in-law, he took the time to listen to him, encourage him, and worship God with him (Ex. 18:8-12). In addition, Jethro was willing to lovingly challenge Moses and urge him to find assistants (Ex. 18:13-23). His valuable mentoring skills were also evident from his careful observation of Moses's leadership, his advice (which stemmed from his personal experience as the priest of Midian), and his encouragement to seek God's will above all else (see Ex. 18:24 – "If you do this and God so commands"). Finally, Jethro's advice to appoint additional judges shows the value that he placed on mobilizing new leaders. Mobilizing new leaders not only allows for more efficient leadership, but also enables those skilled in leadership to use the gifts and talents that God has given them for the good of the church!

Another enormous benefit of mentoring is its power in future generations! This is illustrated in that Moses became a valued mentor to Joshua and Paul became a valued mentor to Timothy. Thousands of years later, Christians around the world are still benefiting from the leadership of each of these men; men who embraced the tremendous value of mentoring!

Literature Review

Now that we have a basic understanding of what the Bible says about leadership development, it is time to take a look at what some of today's leaders have to say about the topic. We will begin by examining definitions of mentoring, before discussing the importance of mentoring, and in particular, the importance of mentoring worship leaders. Next, we will look at

¹⁷ Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1995), 141.

removing barriers to leadership development, creating a leadership development plan, how to identify potential mentees, and how to initiate mentor-mentee relationships. Finally, we will examine the process of developing and maintaining dynamic mentoring relationships with beginning worship leaders.

Defining Mentoring

In order to mentor effectively, we must understand mentoring. Stanley and Clinton define it as being “a relational experience through which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources.”¹⁸ Linda Phillips-Jones adds that today’s “mentors are influential, experienced people who personally help you reach your major life goals. They have the power. Through who or what they know – to promote your welfare.”¹⁹ Finally, the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* says that a mentor is one who “relates to persons in ‘their total personality in order to advise, counsel, and/or guide them with regard to problems that may be resolved by legal, scientific, clinical, spiritual, and/or other professional principles.’”²⁰

Stanley and Clinton further define different types of mentors including disciplers, spiritual guides, coaches, counselors, teachers, and models.²¹ In this paper, I am focusing mostly on the coach and counselor mentor-types. A coach is someone who motivates and equips, and a counselor is someone who offers advice, while helping people understand themselves and their environment. In contrast, disciplers and spiritual guides focus on spiritual mentoring, teachers focus on training in a particular area, and models are historical or contemporary people who inspire others from a distance.²²

¹⁸ Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life*. (Colorado Springs, Colorado: NavPress, 1992), 33.

¹⁹ Hendricks and Hendricks, 165.

²⁰ *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (1977), s.v. “mentor.”; quoted in Thomas V. McGovern, “The Dynamics of Mentoring”. In *Learning About Teaching*, ed. John F. Noonan (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1980), 53.

²¹ Stanley and Clinton, 33.

²² *Ibid.*, 42.

Why is Mentoring Important?

The reasons for mentoring are many. Some of these reasons include the progressively higher level of performance demonstrated by mentees, increased mentee loyalty to the organization, the ability of mentees to cover some of the mentor's workload, the creativity that is released through secure mentor-mentee relationships, and the development of influential mentees who will later become important allies and resource people.²³ Indeed, John Maxwell claims that "an organization's growth potential is directly related to its personnel potential"²⁴, and that as leaders observe strong leaders in an organization, they tend to be attracted to join that organization.²⁵ With these things in mind, the development of people around us is a very important enterprise!

The extraordinary influence of mentoring helps explain why "over half of all Nobel prize winners were once apprenticed to other Nobel laureates."²⁶ In fact, Davis claims that most people who have exerted powerful influence on our world are people who have been mentored. An example of such a person is Ludwig van Beethoven, who was mentored for three years by Franz Joseph Haydn.²⁷ Paul is another such person; because of Barnabas' influence, many cities and people around the world were impacted for the cause of the gospel.²⁸

Unfortunately, in today's busy society, mentoring is no longer used as the predominant means of teaching.²⁹ As a result, there is an urgent need to regain the strategy of investing in the

²³ Florence M. Stone, *Coaching, Counseling, and Mentoring: How to Choose and Use the Right Technique to Boost Employee Performance* (New York: AMACOM, 1999), 1999.

²⁴ John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leaders Around You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁶ Ron Lee Davis, *Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 19.

²⁷ Davis, 19.

²⁸ Hendricks and Hendricks, 141.

²⁹ Davis, 19.

few for the sake of impacting the many; a practice exemplified by the ministry of Christ's work on earth with the disciples.³⁰

This need is especially urgent in relation to worship leaders! As Robb Redman points out, worship leaders have both a high burnout rate, and a short expected job life. Redman believes this is a result of inadequate training and support.³¹ Leading corporate worship is a very demanding job, especially in a culture where many worship style preferences often result in dissatisfied church members (to their own shame!). Gangel explains how training people "in-house" (i.e. mentoring) can both help churches avoid losing worship leaders to burnout, and help worship leaders in gaining the necessary experience required for survival in today's churches.³²

The job of a worship pastor does not have to lead to exhaustion! As George says, "show me a pastor-centered large church, and we'll find a very tired staff of clergy."³³ On the other hand, he says that "a lay-empowered, simply organized large church" is much more likely to be growing and not to have exhausted clergy.³⁴ Accordingly, George believes that the minister of worship should focus on broadening leadership as opposed to improving personal performance techniques.³⁵ He would even suggest that hiring a poor performer and strong equipper / producer is a preferable situation to hiring a world-class performer who does not know how to develop others.³⁶ The importance of mentoring lay worship leaders cannot be emphasized enough!

³⁰ Ibid., 21.

³¹ Robb Redman, Learning strategies for the long haul. *Worship Leader* 7 (1, 1998), 27.

³² Kenneth O. Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 180.

³³ Carl F. George, *The Coming Church Revolution: Empowering Leaders for the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revel, 1994), 35.

³⁴ George, 35.

³⁵ Ibid., 156.

³⁶ Ibid., 162.

Removing Barriers to Leadership Development

Four potential barriers to church leadership development include: theological barriers, crises of control barriers, time and energy barriers, and competency barriers.³⁷

Theological barriers can be overcome by ensuring that there is a solid theological basis for leadership development. With this foundation in place, leaders become more willing to invest themselves in others.³⁸

Crises of control barriers can be overcome when people are taught that these crises are normal developmental events.³⁹ Perhaps the best illustration of this is found in the control issues that arise between parents and children. Despite the inevitable crises, the parents' gradual release of responsibility and control is absolutely necessary for their children's development! Similarly, church leaders' gradual release of responsibility and control is absolutely necessary for the growth of the church!

Time and energy barriers can be overcome when people begin to realize the tremendous payoff of developing others.⁴⁰ Yes, the process of developing leaders may take a significant amount of time, however, the assistance that mentees offer mentors is often far greater (especially in the long-run!).

Finally, the competency barrier to leadership development can be overcome with common sense. Very simply, competency will never be attained until skills are attempted.⁴¹ It is very difficult to become an effective leader in the church without having opportunity to do so!

Perhaps the most valuable thing we can do to help remove these barriers is to educate church members about the importance of leadership development (as well as about various other

³⁷ Lee, 2.

³⁸ Ibid., 2.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Lee, 2.

types of development within the body!). Toward this end, we must learn how to communicate this goal in the language of our church people and at the appropriate times for them to embrace the challenge.⁴²

Creating A Leadership Development Plan

Once barriers to leadership development are examined and addressed, it is time to create a leadership development plan. David Lee proposes three steps for this process. These are: 1) Reflection: “What kind of leader are we trying to produce?”, 2) Evaluation: “Are we capable of producing this kind of leader?”, and 3) Planning: “How should we go about developing these leaders?”⁴³ Following are some suggestions for each of these steps:

1) Reflection: “What kind of leader are we trying to produce?”

Kevin Navarro believes that the complete worship leader should be strong in the four areas of “theology, discipleship, artistry, and leadership.”⁴⁴ Redman would agree, believing that worship leaders should be committed to grow in “spiritual formation, musicianship, theological depth and ministry leadership.”⁴⁵

Of particular relevance to Canada is a study that was conducted by Dale Dirksen. His extensive research led him to conclude that there are four areas of discipline and five areas of competence that are important for becoming an effective worship leader. He believes the four areas of discipline are: “pastoral ministry, Bible/theology, history, and the arts”⁴⁶, while the five areas of competence are: “leadership, team building, music and the arts, communication

⁴² Ibid., 4.

⁴³ Ibid. 11.

⁴⁴ Kevin J. Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 14.

⁴⁵ Redman, 27.

⁴⁶ Dirksen, 81.

technology and administration.”⁴⁷ Over and above each of these areas, Dale believes that spiritual formation is of central importance for worship leaders.⁴⁸

It is interesting to note that all three of these men (Navarro, Redman, and Dirksen) believe that having a sound theological understanding is essential for worship leadership. Navarro, Redman and Dirksen also all value leadership, spiritual formation and artistry as being important areas of competence.

Some final thoughts come from Noland and Long. Long is convinced that worship leaders should be positively connected to the congregation⁴⁹ and “should in word and action, embody the holy character of worship”⁵⁰, while Noland adds that worship leaders should be known for humble, service-oriented love.⁵¹ Worship leading is far more than just leading the congregation on a Sunday morning!

2) Evaluation: “Are we capable of producing this kind of leader?”

For this step, we must carefully examine the leaders who will be involved in mentoring. It is important that these people have both a solid grasp of the kind of worship leader desired, as well as the ability to move others toward this goal. However, it is even more important that these leaders are pursuing similar growth in their own lives and ministry!; otherwise, mentees are unlikely to pay much attention to their advice.

Great mentors are good at relating to others, have great connections both inside and outside of the organization, recognize others’ achievements, know their area of skill, are great supervisors, and are willing to encourage the organizational advancement of others.⁵² Great

⁴⁷ Ibid., 86.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 80.

⁴⁹ Thomas G. Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship* (The Alban Institute, 1991), 100.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 105.

⁵¹ Rory Noland, *The Heart of the Artist* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 58.

⁵² Stone, 172-173.

mentors are also known for developing leaders by appreciating “them for who they are”⁵³, believing they will excel, and by praising their accomplishments.⁵⁴ Finally, great mentors are people who truly care for those they mentor,⁵⁵ and continue to grow in love through nurturing their relationship with God (see 1 Peter 1:22; Navarro⁵⁶ and Falson⁵⁷).

3) Planning: “How should we go about developing these leaders?”

This step of the leadership development process will be covered in the remainder of the literature review as we look at identifying a potential mentee, initiating mentor relationships and developing dynamic mentoring relationships.

Identifying a Potential Mentee

Personal Preparation

Before looking for a potential mentee, you should consider what you have to offer others.⁵⁸ This should include evaluating your willingness and ability to be a mentor.⁵⁹ A prayerful approach to the idea is critical! The last thing you want to do is to teach the wrong person “the wrong things for the wrong purpose.”⁶⁰ It is also essential to be sensitive to God’s timing. Jesus waited thirty years, Moses waited forty years, and Paul waited fourteen years (after having seen his vision) before beginning their ministries here on earth.⁶¹ Similarly, we should be sensitive to God’s leading in order to help others at the appropriate time.

⁵³ Maxwell, 1.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁵ Navarro, 127.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 131.

⁵⁷ Falson, 90.

⁵⁸ Hendricks and Hendricks, 170.

⁵⁹ Maxwell, 87-88.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 85,

⁶¹ Falson, 80.

How To Search For A Mentee

If you believe that God has prepared you to begin mentoring, it is time to begin looking for someone to mentor! There are many ways of searching for these people, including enlisting the support of other ministry leaders. It can also be useful to invite potential worship leaders to events where you can observe them, interact with them and get a feel for their ministry readiness (i.e. at worship conferences, various types of worship gatherings, or at your own church - perhaps by asking them to join you on a worship team or to help you with planning corporate worship⁶²). The important task of interaction is to discover the character, spiritual maturity, passion, and talent of potential mentees.⁶³

George also points out the value of having various types of “guild” groups in the church (i.e. drama groups, music groups, etc.), in which potential worship leaders may be able to learn from experience and instruction.⁶⁴ Riddle agrees, suggesting that leadership development may require some form of intermediate training, like singing in a church choir.⁶⁵ The benefit of the “guild approach” is that it allows for the building of a strong “bench” of potential leaders who will be ready to step up when needed.⁶⁶

What To Look For In A Mentee

“With worship leading it’s not ‘what you know’, it’s ‘who you know.’”⁶⁷ Accordingly, the most important thing to look for when searching for a potential worship leader is a deep, committed love for God. As Robb Redman says, worship leaders should be passionate

⁶² Lee, 21-22.

⁶³ Monty Kelso, “All for one, one for all: Building and leading an effective worship team,” *Worship Leader* 7 (2, 1998), 24.

⁶⁴ George, 158.

⁶⁵ Melissa Riddle, 1999. “The Song of the Hills,” *Worship Leader* 8 (1), 34-37.

⁶⁶ Maxwell, 169.

⁶⁷ Matt Redman, *Renewing The Intimate Friendship* [online article]; available from http://www.worshiptogether.com/wt_zine/archive_article.cfm?ArticleID=4; Internet; accessed 19 December 2000.

worshippers themselves.⁶⁸ Passionate worshippers should not only be passionate about worshipping God on the stage, but should also be passionate about worshipping God throughout the day as they offer their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to Him (Rom. 12:1-2).

Spiritually, those with a proper perspective of leadership believe “ministry flows out of being” as opposed to “out of doing.”⁶⁹ These people not only recognize their own abilities and giftedness, but also continue to develop these gifts and abilities to the glory of God.⁷⁰ This is in agreement with Robb Redman who believes worship leaders should be life-long learners committed to grow in “spiritual formation, musicianship, theological depth and ministry leadership”.⁷¹

Also of value are the top seven desirable qualities David Lee looks for when searching for a leader. These qualities are: 1) A teachable spirit, 2) Growing in the Spirit and wisdom, 3) Integrity, 4) A positive attitude, 5) Stability, 6) Servanthood, and 7) Responsiveness to the Word of God.⁷² In addition, Lee looks for: proven faithfulness (1 Tim. 3:10), strong home leadership (1 Tim. 3:11; Tit. 1:6), and the ability to handle change.⁷³

Practically, potential worship leaders should be strong communicators. Sweet claims that “the top three most desirable traits in any [job] applicant are: communication skills, interpersonal skills, and creativity”, and that an absence of these qualities destroys pastors and other leaders quicker than anything else.⁷⁴ Worship leading requires effective communication with church leadership, worship teams, and, of course, the church congregation. Therefore, a potential

⁶⁸ Robb Redman, 27.

⁶⁹ Clinton, 16.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Robb Redman, 27.

⁷² Lee, 16.

⁷³ Ibid., 20.

⁷⁴ Leonard Sweet, *Aqua Church: Essential Leadership Arts for Piloting Your Church in Today's Fluid Culture* (Vital Ministry, Loveland, CO, 1999), 166.

worship leader should demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively within these environments.

Those who have strong communication skills are often also catalysts; those described by Maxwell as being intuitive, communicative, passionate, talented, creative, initiating, responsible, generous, and influential.⁷⁵ If you find a catalyst who is passionate about worshiping God, than I would suggest that it would be well-worth considering that person as a potential worship leader!

Let us also not forget that God uniquely gifts people for His purposes! As Rick Warren says, “Whenever God gives us an assignment, he always equips us with what we need to accomplish it. This custom combination of capabilities is called your **SHAPE**” and includes your God-given, “**S**piritual gifts, **H**earth, **A**bilities, **P**ersonality and **E**xperience.”⁷⁶ It doesn’t matter how good of a potential worship leader you find – if God has not called that person to be involved in worship leadership then your efforts will be for naught!

Initiating Mentor Relationships

Approaching a Potential Mentee

In order to attract a young protégé, one must find opportunity to get close to them. “‘Low-risk’ opportunities for interaction” are a good way to start, and may include anything from inviting people to participate in large-group events with you, to taking people out for lunch.⁷⁷

Introducing potential leaders to the possibility of mentoring will require special sensitivity, as demonstrated by Jesus’ recruitment of the disciples.⁷⁸ For example, some people may be intimidated if the concept of “mentoring” is brought up during informal interaction, or

⁷⁵ John C. Maxwell, *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork: Embrace Them and Empower Your Team* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 78-83.

⁷⁶ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life: What On Earth Am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 236.

⁷⁷ Hendricks and Hendricks, 185-186.

⁷⁸ Clinton, 14.

even during the start of an actual mentoring relationship.⁷⁹ In some cases it may be better to describe the opportunity in a less formal way or to simply begin meeting together for the purpose of practical assistance, encouragement, friendship and mutual support.

Initial Mentorship Meetings

If a mentor does not know a mentee reasonably well, it becomes very difficult to offer worthwhile advice. Therefore, initial mentorship meetings should emphasize developing the mentor-mentee relationship; a process that requires collecting lots of information in a short amount of time.⁸⁰ As the relationship begins to develop, mentors should concentrate on leveling the communication field (i.e. de-emphasizing any apparent power discrepancy), offering reflective responses, and being attentive to the mentee's feelings.⁸¹ Developing trust should be the focus of these early meetings,⁸² and can be aided by using positive body language (i.e. "leaning slightly forward", "open arm gestures", and "relaxed head movements"⁸³), and open-ended questions.⁸⁴

Encouraging Proper Motivation

In addition to developing trust, mentors should encourage mentees to pursue their goals for appropriate motivational reasons. Mentors should ask their mentees what they want, if they have a way of achieving their wants, and if they will be rewarded upon achieving those wants.⁸⁵ The goal is to challenge the mentee "to a bigger more satisfying existence and life purpose".⁸⁶

⁷⁹ Hendricks and Hendricks, 234.

⁸⁰ Norman H. Cohen, *Mentoring Adult Learners: A Guide for Educators and Trainers* (Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 1995), 60.

⁸¹ Chip R. Bell, *Managers as Mentors: Building Partnerships for Learning* (San Fransisco: Berret-Koehler, 1996), 50-52.

⁸² Cohen, 47.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁸⁵ Maxwell 1995, 113-114.

⁸⁶ Clinton, 14.

This requires letting the mentee have primary control of the learning process, keeping in mind that people only want to learn what is useful.⁸⁷

In developing this intrinsic motivation, a mentor should look for the mentee's spiritual giftedness, because "a man always prefers to function according to the way God has wired him."⁸⁸ The mentor can also encourage positive motivation by modeling high levels of personal motivation, and by letting the mentee know that what they're doing is worthwhile.⁸⁹ In addition, mentees are motivated when they realize that their goals are similar to that of the organization.⁹⁰

Setting Goals and Objectives

The process of realizing dreams is the driving force behind mentoring,⁹¹ just as dreams are typically the driving force behind a person.⁹² Therefore, the mentor's primary purpose is to help the mentee move toward his or her dream; a goal requiring purpose, plans, and direction.⁹³ Toward this end, Stanley and Clinton offer some helpful advice. They urge mentors and mentees to jointly agree on the mentorship purpose, how often meetings will take place, how the mentor will keep the mentee accountable, how long the relationship will last, and how the mentoring relationship will be evaluated and adjusted in order to keep it as effective as possible.⁹⁴

Developing Dynamic Mentoring Relationships

Remember The Uniqueness of Those You Are Mentoring!

⁸⁷ Hendricks and Hendricks, 196.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 218.

⁸⁹ David Campbell, *If You Don't Know Where You're Going You'll Probably End Up Somewhere Else* (Allen, Texas: Argus Communications, 1974), 71-73; quoted in Kenneth O. Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 157.

⁹⁰ Gangel, 169.

⁹¹ D. Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (New York: Knopf, 1978); quoted in Thomas V. McGovern, "The Dynamics of Mentoring," in *Learning About Teaching*, ed. John F. Noonan (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. 1980), 60.

⁹² Maxwell 1995, 93.

⁹³ Hendricks and Hendricks, 195.

⁹⁴ Stanley and Clinton, 197.

As the mentoring process begins to take shape, it is important to remember that God has created everybody differently. Along with our excitement to encourage and equip others, we must make a conscious effort not to change people to become what they are not. Instead, we should aim to help form developing worship leaders by assisting them in identifying, understanding, and valuing their own strengths and gifts.⁹⁵

Create A Great Learning Environment

David Lee teaches that developing leaders will flourish in a supportive, nurturing, challenging environment.⁹⁶ He suggests that mentors can contribute to a great learning environment through: a positive attitude, openness and honesty, dealing with people's felt needs, having the desire to both teach and learn, being highly relational, giving people permission to fail, offering a challenging environment, and by giving useful feedback and interaction. On the flip side, he believes that mentors can kill a learning environment through: an intimidating attitude (often hierarchical), irrelevant teaching, failing to promote interaction, providing limited opportunities, and having unrealistic expectations.⁹⁷

As many of these tips indicate, healthy communication is a critical component of a great learning environment! According to Maxwell, "the best leaders listen, invite, and then encourage participation".⁹⁸ Creating high morale is also important! This can require some effort ("You need to act your way into feeling, not feel your way into acting"⁹⁹), but is well worth the increased performance that results!

⁹⁵ Lee, 5.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁹⁷ Lee, 12.

⁹⁸ Maxwell 2001, 233.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 241

The Mentor-Mentee Relationship

Loving and caring for those we mentor requires a strong relational bond. This bond is strengthened when the mentor and mentee spend time with each other outside of the “professional” mentor relationship. It is in these informal settings where true character and personality can be seen¹⁰⁰ (and where deeper connections can be forged through common experiences.¹⁰¹

The mentor must remember that it is his or her responsibility to initiate these informal connections.¹⁰² It is also their responsibility to be available to their mentees through keeping close contact, by relating to them as if they were part of the family, and by enjoying their company.¹⁰³ The goal of the mentor should always be to love others as opposed to exercising power and control over their lives.¹⁰⁴

Modeling

Modeling is essential, because when people see something done well it inspires and encourages them to do the same.¹⁰⁵ For example, as leaders maintain a positive attitude and positive organizational environment, people tend to become more motivated to succeed. This, in turn, results in increased momentum, and increased levels of production.¹⁰⁶

Regular Mentorship Meetings

Regardless of the form that mentorship meetings may take, mentors must always concentrate on being good listeners. As Stephen Covey says: “Seek first to understand, then to be

¹⁰⁰ Maxwell 1995, 93.

¹⁰¹ John C. Maxwell and Jim Dornan, *Becoming a Person of Influence: How to Positively Impact the Lives of Others* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 177.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Stanley and Clinton, 98.

¹⁰⁴ Henri J. Nouwen, *In The Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad, 1990, 59-60.

¹⁰⁵ Stanley and Clinton, 83.

¹⁰⁶ Maxwell 1995, 18.

understood.”¹⁰⁷ Without demonstrating empathetic listening, it becomes very difficult to offer meaningful advice. This is because everyone approaches life from a radically different viewpoint.¹⁰⁸ As the old saying goes, “You are not eligible to change my view until you first show that you understand my view.”¹⁰⁹

Asking great questions is another must for the effective mentor. Fortune 500 CEO’s were most likely to mention this as a valuable mentor skill, and great mentors through the ages (i.e. Jesus, Moses, Buddha, and Mohammed) have been known to make frequent use of questions.¹¹⁰ Bell suggests using statements to set-up questions, asking deep questions, and avoiding “why” questions.¹¹¹

Cohen believes that hypothetical questions can be useful in challenging one’s views, and that assumptions can be analyzed more carefully in light of one’s background experiences and education. He also believes that it can be helpful to evaluate current mentee pursuits, recreational activities and job preferences. The purpose of this evaluation is to stimulate appropriate mentee decisions by helping them look at issues from a variety of different angles.¹¹²

Finally, John Maxwell’s comments suggest that follow-up mentorship meetings should include the discussion of feelings, the measurement of progress, and the giving of feedback and encouragement.¹¹³

Providing Encouragement, Opportunity, and Resources

John Maxwell believes that the BEST acronym is a helpful device for encouraging new organizational members. BEST stands for “Believe in them. Encourage them. Share with them.”

¹⁰⁷ Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic*. (New York: Fireside, 1989), 237.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 240.

¹⁰⁹ Bell, 91.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹¹¹ Bell, 70-74.

¹¹² Cohen, 61-62.

¹¹³ Maxwell 1995, 107.

and “Trust them.”¹¹⁴ Encouragement is so important that it has been likened to “oxygen to the soul.”¹¹⁵ As mentors, we can encourage and empower others by giving them “permission to succeed” and by affirming them in public.¹¹⁶

Maxwell also believes you must give away authority and responsibility in order to empower others and stretch their leadership ability.¹¹⁷ In fact, he suggests that “there is no greater investment you can make in a team than giving it new opportunities.”¹¹⁸

A good leader is known to provide for even the smallest needs of their followers.¹¹⁹ However, when it comes to providing opportunities, mentors should learn how to support their mentees without rescuing them. A good principle is to look for teachable moments as opposed to always bailing out a mentee. Trial and error can be a very fine teacher, and learners are more likely to take risks if their leaders are willing to do the same.¹²⁰

Lee advises mentors to capitalize on mentees’ intrinsic motivation, to provide relevant information and to emphasize constructive feedback. He advocates the “teach – assign – do – teach – assign – do...” cycle of learning and adds that the motivation to learn should stem from both the vision of the church and the vision of the individual (according to their God-given gifts and talents).¹²¹ Overall, it must be stressed: “To help people maximize their effectiveness, stretch them out of their comfort zones, but never out of their gift zones” (Maxwell’s Law of the Niche).¹²²

Giving Advice and/or Feedback

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 61.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 70.

¹¹⁶ Maxwell and Dornan, 191-192.

¹¹⁷ Maxwell 2001, 250.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 252.

¹¹⁹ Barry Liesch, *The New Worship: Straight Talk on Music and the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 214.

¹²⁰ Bell, 125, 124, 128.

¹²¹ Lee, 15-16.

¹²² Maxwell 2001, 41.

As a navigator, a mentor should identify their mentee’s destination, look ahead, and plan ahead (in order to know how to navigate through potential problem areas)¹²³. Appropriate advice should help mentees discover their strengths while also inspiring future vision.¹²⁴ In offering advice, it is wise to make sure both the performance issue or goal and the focus are clear.¹²⁵ It is also helpful to ask for permission to give advice, and to offer advice by using the first person singular voice.¹²⁶

When giving feedback, it is wise to give a rationale for your comments, to offer the feedback as if you were giving it to yourself, and to ask for feedback on your feedback.¹²⁷ People are also more likely to listen to your feedback if you tell them that they probably would have come to the same conclusions on their own.¹²⁸

A “tender-tough” approach to mentoring involves communication that is honest, direct, specific, empathetic, encouraging, affirming in public, and relationally-based.¹²⁹ Davis also reminds us that we are instructed to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15¹³⁰); an instruction that is worth memorizing and practicing as we seek to offer helpful feedback to others.

Problems to Avoid

Some common mentoring traps include: a mentee becoming overdependent on their mentor,¹³¹ not having a designated ending time for the mentorship¹³² and ignoring rumors associated with cross-gender mentoring.¹³³ My advice is to avoid these problems. ☺

¹²³ Maxwell and Dornan, 123.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 123, 131.

¹²⁵ Bell, 58.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 60.

¹²⁷ Bell, 65.

¹²⁸ Stone, 185.

¹²⁹ Davis, 71-78.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 63.

¹³¹ Stone, 208.

¹³² Hendricks and Hendricks, 220.

¹³³ Stone, 209.

Some More Practical Advice For Mentoring Worship Leaders

When initiating new leadership training strategies it is important to remember that long-time church members and leaders also need training and encouragement. If they don't receive these, new leaders may quickly learn bad habits from them.¹³⁴ However, one must be very careful in how they approach existing leaders. George suggests avoiding the word change and working to liaison with existing leaders before having them join in leadership training opportunities.¹³⁵

The mentoring process can also be greatly helped by outside resources (i.e. books, videotapes, websites, etc.) and surrounding opportunities (i.e. worship conferences). It is recommended that the church pay for these opportunities; this not only communicates their value, but also makes them more accessible for those with limited resources.¹³⁶

Another good opportunity to consider is "Turbo training", which involves bringing several leaders together for joint training sessions (an approach that has been found to be particularly effective for training small group leaders).¹³⁷ I believe that in a large church setting, this approach could be very helpful for simultaneously equipping and encouraging several developing worship leaders.

Ongoing training hints include keeping vision prominent, capitalizing on major issues, keeping roles clearly defined, and being sure to affirm and encourage developing leaders often, both in person, and in public.¹³⁸ It is also wise to keep the mentorship process needs-driven (self-motivation has been found to greatly increase the desire for learning¹³⁹). This will require close

¹³⁴ Lee, 33.

¹³⁵ George, 272.

¹³⁶ Lee, 35.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 30.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 33.

¹³⁹ George, 79, 72.

interaction with worship leaders in order to determine what will be most helpful in their unique situation.¹⁴⁰

This leads us to the next section of our study – advice gained from the worship leaders who took part in the study’s focus group discussions and interviews.

Project Narrative

Focus Group and Interview Results

Focus group discussions were centered around eight questions (see appendix one), while the interviews were made up of the first six of these questions (see appendix two – note that the order of these six questions is slightly different on the interview questionnaire). Following is a summary of focus group comments (see appendices three and four) and interview responses (see appendices five, six and seven).

Question #1: *“How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?”*

Both focus groups agreed that the task of mentoring worship leaders is very important! In coming to this conclusion, three of the four college students referred to personal experience. In contrast, the seminary students’ conclusion was based more on meeting the needs of others (i.e. those who might be mentored). The need for a spiritual emphasis in mentoring was another theme of the discussions (especially among the seminary students).

All three interviewees also agreed that mentoring worship leaders is “very important”! Gast added that it is especially so “in churches where there are multiple leaders working under one staff person” and Loshbough said that “A veteran in the field can really assist in molding a budding worship leader in principle, excellence and presentation.”

¹⁴⁰ Lee, 35-36.

Question #2: *“Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?”*

Once again, the college students focused on their own church backgrounds. Their general sense was that successful mentoring is happening to various degrees in some church families; especially those where worship music is a strong priority (see Georgina Otsuji’s comments).

Meanwhile, the seminary students thought that there is a lot of room for improvement! Both Lorne Gieck and Jane Martens believe this is partly due to the risk of mentoring; Gieck suggesting that the pressure to produce as a worship leader can be difficult to overcome.

Anderson agreed with this assessment and suggested that volunteer mentors might feel less of this type of pressure. Plett added that it is especially challenging to mentor worship leaders in a new and constantly changing corporate worship environment.

As for the interviewees, Wells believes there is “very little mentoring of worship leaders in the church today”. He claims “This is partly out of time constraints, but mostly because most of the people in the church don’t see the value in it.” Loshbough believes the problem is largely due to our “instant society” that “has entered the realm of church music and worship.” Finally, Gast thinks that successful mentoring is occurring “in some churches and probably not in others” dependent “on the initiative of the top person or pastor responsible.”

Question #3: *“What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?”*

Otsuji believes this person should “show natural leadership skills...and show an interest”. Smith agreed that leadership skills are important, while also stressing that it is important to build upon peoples’ natural giftings and abilities. If he was mentoring worship leaders, he would like

to mentor both strong up-front leaders and strong musicians so that there would be a balance of both types.

Having a teachable spirit and a desire to be mentored were characteristics emphasized by Martens (she also mentioned musical ability in churches where music is important). Plett added that it is critical for a worship leader to have a shepherd's heart that is in tune with the needs of the people. Anderson agreed, saying, "I love for the body of Christ to love the community".

Among the interviewees, various characteristics and skills were mentioned in answer to this question. Gast listed spiritual maturity, musical giftedness, an outgoing personality, and good organization skills. Wells listed present ministry involvement, humility, a teachable spirit, not being afraid in front of people and having a love and passion for God. Finally, Loshbough said that a good candidate should have "a passion for God and His Kingdom", "a teachable spirit", "a desire to see God's people grow in their walk with Him" and "a passion to use their identified gifts and talents for God".

Question #4: *"What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?"*

The seminary students discussed the need to create structured mentoring relationships while still being somewhat informal. Plett commented, "If you can't follow through on the structure, it's really more of a friend thing". The key, according to Martens, is to be clear to the mentees "about what they might expect". The risk of mentorships that lack intentionality is that mentees may become more like you than like who God has made them to be.

Adding to these thoughts, Guldemond stressed the need for honest feedback, while Massier believes there should be a tension between giving young leaders freedom and giving them necessary leadership support. Otsuji believes nurturing a give-and-take relationship (in

which both parties are willing to learn) is important. Smith agreed, saying that it's wrong for mentors to instill their own personal style in others.

Gast had some more good practical advice for mentors, suggesting that they should "Set up a regular time to meet" with their mentees, involve mentees "in the actual planning of services" (including "talking out loud about the thought processes at work") and carefully evaluate services with their mentees.

Wells added that it is critical for the mentee to want to be mentored. Furthermore, he advised that it is important to begin the mentoring process knowing that it will take time and that it will be a learning experience for both parties. Finally, Wells said, "Spend a lot of time in prayer asking God for wisdom in how to best influence this person (the mentee) for him."

Question #5: *"What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?"*

Both focus groups discussed the need for worship leadership that flows out of a strong relationship with God. This type of relationship allows worship leaders to sense where God is going (Guldemon). Without it, long hours of preparation will prove to be ineffective in leading people into God's presence (Otsuji).

Overcoming a performance-oriented mindset was also mentioned (by Martens and Plett). In a culture that is obsessed with "the stage" and "the performance", Martens believes it is important for worship leaders to learn how to deal with feedback. She also mentioned how it is essential for worship leaders lead out of a real self as opposed to a false stage image. Meanwhile, Plett advised mentors to teach of the risk of trying to please everyone when God should be our primary audience.

A large concern of all three interviewees was focusing on the true essence of worship. Wells said, “Worship is a lot more about attitude than musical style” while Gast said that an important issue is “Keeping the focus on Christ and His church”. Finally, Loshbough said: “Keep the object of our worship (God) in focus. Style, tempo, volume, public opinion, and the gamut of everything else is secondary.”

Some other important issues mentioned by the interviewees included learning how to strive toward excellence, “dealing with people who want to be ‘on the platform’”, and learning how to achieve a “balance in musical selection” (Gast). In addition, Wells mentioned knowing where your congregation is at (i.e. spiritually and musically), knowing where your church leadership is at (i.e. in their approach to corporate worship), teaching your congregation about lifestyle worship, and learning how to constantly teach, thank and encourage your worship team.

Question #6: “*What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?*”

Both focus groups discussed how flexibility was an important quality in a worship leader mentor, Anderson adding that mentors should be teachable and should value continuous learning. Patience, availability, humility, grace, musical skill, prayer and common interests were other traits and skills that were mentioned.

Another agreed-upon skill was the ability to deal with difficult situations (Martens and Plett). Being willing to see mentees go beyond themselves (Martens), being accountable to others in the same ministry area (Martens), and creating environments in which mentees are safe to fail (Plett) also made the list.

Finally, representing the interviewees, Loshbough believes a worship leader mentor should be “one who actively acknowledges the worth of God, experiences the presence of God,

commits to the will of God, and obeys the voice of God.” Furthermore, that person should be “One who produces a consistent life of worship, personal and corporate”. Wells added that mentors should have the same characteristics as those who are good candidates for mentorship, as well as “some musical skills and people skills”. To conclude, Gast’s comments also identified musical leadership skills as being important, including skills in singing, coaching music teams, and leading the congregation verbally and musically “with humility”.

Question #7: *“What is a more important focus in mentoring worship leaders: Skill development or spiritual formation?”*

Anderson’s words that, “Art and heart should always be held in tension” summed up the discussion of both groups very well.

Of note, the college worship leaders observed that churches seem to lean more toward skill development. Guldemon wondered whether it is right for worship bands to spend an hour or two practicing and only five minutes in prayer. Meanwhile, Massier approved of developing strong relationships among worship team members (he feels this is an important aspect of spiritual formation). Otsuji suggested that criticism may be handled better in groups that have the stronger spiritual and relational approach. She also noted that spiritual growth can be much more difficult to observe than musical development. Because of this, special effort is needed to look for fruit in people’s spiritual lives.

The seminary group, while acknowledging the need for a healthy tension, also expressed a need for mentees to be in an on-going mode of skill development. Martens said that this indicates a proper attitude for ministry and Gieck added that performance is a bigger issue in larger churches.

Question #8: *“How important is it that those who are mentored, in turn become mentors?”*

Unanimously, both focus groups agreed that it is very important for mentees to become mentors! We not only continue to learn as mentors (Martens) but also fulfill the on-going growth and reproduction that is necessary for health as the body of Christ (Anderson and Smith). Massier said, “I think if you’re mentored properly it will probably just flow into that anyways” and Gieck said that he thought that mentees becoming mentors would be a good gauge of our success!

Exploring Possible Interaction Effects Among Variables

I examined the focus group discussions and interview responses to see if I could find any significant patterns. In doing so, I compared data from the two focus groups, compared data from the focus groups with data from the interviews and compared data from less experienced worship leaders to data from more experienced worship leaders. A fourth comparison between mentored and non-mentored worship leaders was more difficult to do and did not yield any significant discoveries.

The largest qualitative difference in data was found between the college and seminary focus groups, however, further reflection seemed to indicate that the main interaction effect at work was likely one of experience; namely less experienced as compared to more experienced worship leaders

Interestingly, the less experienced worship leaders (represented by the college focus group) were more likely to give answers that were based on their own experience (i.e. “I was mentored and...”), while the more experienced worship leaders were more likely to base their answers on the needs of others. The less experienced worship leaders also placed a high

emphasis on one's relationship with God. Although the more experienced worship leaders likewise placed a high value on spiritual maturity, they also seemed to demonstrate a healthier tension between this and many of the practical skills that are also important for worship leadership.

Worship Leader Skills / Areas of Competence Rankings (Focus Groups)

The college student worship leaders' average ranking of the seven skills / areas of competence were as follows: 1) Pastoral care and leadership, 2) Theological astuteness, 3) Team leadership, 4) Musical and/or other artistic competence, 5) Historical understanding, 6) Understanding of communication technology and 7) Administrative skill. None of these categories received the same ranking by all four students, yet four of the seven categories received the same ranking by three of the four students (see appendix 3 for data from both focus groups).

Meanwhile, the seminary student worship leaders' average rankings were: 1) Pastoral care and leadership, 2-4) Theological astuteness, Team leadership, and Musical and/or other artistic competence (three-way tie), 5) Historical understanding, 6) Administrative skill and 7) Understanding of communication technology. Two of these rankings were unanimous (Pastoral care and leadership, and Understanding of communication technology) while two others were agreed upon by three of the four students (Historical understanding and administrative skill).

The two focus groups ranked these skills/areas of competence in a very similar manner! In fact, the only significant difference between the two groups involved the final two rankings, with the seminary worship leaders ranking communication technology as being least important (unanimously) and the college worship leaders ranking administrative skill as being least important (agreed upon by three of the four students). This is probably due to the relative lack of

administrative experience among the younger worship leaders in combination with the increasing value that is being placed on communication technology by the younger generation.

Development of a Strategy For Mentoring Worship Leaders

Now that we have examined theological perspectives, related literature and the input of our study participants, it is time to summarize some of our findings with the intent of helping mentor developing worship leaders! I believe that a strategy for mentoring worship leaders should include: 1) A theological foundation, 2) A proper understanding of mentoring, 3) An understanding of the need for mentoring, 4) A plan for removing barriers to mentoring, 5) Intentionality - “What type of worship leader is desired?” 6) Taking Stock - “Do we have the people and resources needed?” 7) A process for identifying a potential mentee, 8) A process for initiating mentor relationships, 9) Knowledge of helpful principles for mentoring worship leaders, and 10) An ongoing commitment to mentor worship leaders

1) A Theological Foundation

I would encourage those who are contemplating involvement in mentoring a worship leader (or any other type of leader) to carefully examine some of the mentoring examples found in the Bible. These include: Jethro and Moses, Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Barnabas and Paul, and Paul and Timothy.

An examination of the Bible would also not be complete without looking at the example of Christ. Christ made prayer a priority, was focused on giving over responsibility and authority, and sent out leaders in groups of two; a practice that was continued later in the New Testament.

Finally, I would recommend that mentors should have a good understanding of the characteristics of Godly leaders as found throughout the New Testament (i.e. in the Timothy letters and in Titus) as well as a good understanding of the Biblical concept of worship.

2) A Proper Understanding of Mentoring

The second step that I recommend for developing a mentoring strategy is to understand the type of mentoring that you hope to use. As mentioned earlier, this paper is focused on the coaching and counseling type of mentoring; a coach being someone who motivates and equips, and a counselor being someone who offers advice, while helping people understand themselves and their environment.

3) An Understanding of the Need for Mentoring

Ephesians 4:11-16 reminds us of the need for the whole body of Christ to grow and build “itself up in love, as each part does its work”. Without a commitment to this task, the church is hindering its effectiveness! This is especially true with respect to worship leaders! Today’s worship leaders are faced with the push for constant change while also having the responsibility to stay true to God’s unchanging Word. Coupled with this is the expanding role of the worship leader. For these reasons, it is no wonder that focus group and interview participants unanimously agreed that the mentoring of worship leaders is very important!

4) A Plan for Removing Barriers to Mentoring

Depending on your unique church setting, various barriers may make it more difficult to effectively mentor developing worship leaders. As mentioned earlier, these barriers may include theological barriers, crises of control barriers, time and energy barriers, and competency barriers.¹⁴¹ It is interesting to note how these barriers are related to the answers of focus group

¹⁴¹ Lee, 2.

and interview participants in response to the question, “Why aren’t worship leaders being successfully mentored today?” (time and energy barriers being a large concern!).

If barriers are found to exist, make every effort to remove them by understanding the reasons why they are poor excuses and by communicating this to others (see “Removing Barriers to Leadership Development” found earlier in this study).

5) Intentionality – “What type of worship leader is desired?” [This step is based upon David Lee’s “Reflection” step for creating a leadership development plan¹⁴²]

I believe that it is important to know of the four key areas in which a worship leader should be strong: spiritual formation, theology, artistry and leadership (see Navarro, Redman and Dirksen). Some additional key areas identified by Dirksen include: communication technology, administration, pastoral ministry and historical understanding. Of interest are the focus groups’ combined rankings of these skills / areas of competence (*excluding spiritual formation - which is assumed to be of central importance*), as follows: 1) Pastoral care and leadership, 2) Theological astuteness, 3) Team leadership, 4) Musical and/or other artistic competence, 5) Historical understanding, 6) Administrative skill and 7) Understanding of communication technology. The tension found between skill development and spiritual formation should also be considered (noting the focus group participants’ unanimous support for both of these being equally important).

At this stage, it is useful to look at how some of the above dimensions of worship leading are important within your specific church context.

6) Taking Stock - “Do we have the people and resources needed?” [This step is based upon David Lee’s “Evaluation” step for creating a leadership development plan¹⁴³]

¹⁴² Ibid., 11.

¹⁴³ Lee, 11.

The single most important resource for mentoring worship leaders (other than the help of the Holy Spirit) is the mentor! A strong mentor should be someone who has a good grasp of the characteristics of a Godly worship leader as gained through experience and intentional reflection. Furthermore, this person should be a genuine worshipper and skilled worship leader who is not only interested in mentoring, but is also committed to their own continuous growth.

This study has also found that good mentors should be flexible, patient, available, humble and secure (i.e. willing to see mentees go beyond their level of skill in certain areas). They should also be great encouragers who appreciate people for who they are, are able to deal with difficult situations and who deeply care for others.

7) A Process For Identifying A Potential Mentee

Just as Christ made prayer a huge priority in the choosing of the twelve (Lk. 6:12-16), mentors should also make prayer a huge priority when looking for people to mentor!

It can be very helpful to ask other ministry leaders for assistance, with the understanding that potential mentees should be people of strong character, spiritual maturity, passion, and talent.¹⁴⁴ Interaction is key to discovering these characteristics!

In addition to spiritual maturity, it is essential that worship leaders are uniquely gifted and called to be involved in worship leadership! Rick Warren's SHAPE model can be useful in helping people clarify their God-given abilities.¹⁴⁵

Some other valuable characteristics to look out for include: a teachable spirit, a shepherd's heart, strong communication skills, leadership skills, administrative skills and various other type of worship leadership-related skills.

8) A Process For Initiating Mentor Relationships

¹⁴⁴ Kelso, 24.

¹⁴⁵ Warren, 236.

The best way to approach a potential mentee is to spend time interacting with them (i.e. through going out for lunch, being part of the same worship band or participating in an event together). It is important to be sensitive when introducing the mentoring concept. This may require avoiding use of the term “mentoring” or beginning with some informal get-togethers before making an effort to be more intentional about the process.

In early mentorship meetings, mentor and mentee should emphasize getting to know each other, which in turn should help in the development of trust. From this starting point, it is important for the mentor to begin to understand the mentee’s spiritual giftedness as well as their deep desires for serving God.

Finally, it is useful to establish some sort of direction for the mentoring relationship (see comments from the seminary student focus group). This will often include an understanding of the mentorship purpose, length and frequency of meetings. Clarifying the roles and expectations of mentor and mentee is also important.

9) Knowledge of Helpful Principles For Mentoring Worship Leaders

Many helpful mentoring principles have emerged from this study! These include: remembering the uniqueness of mentees, modeling the characteristics that you wish to instill in a mentee, building strong relationships that go beyond the mentorship and creating a great learning environment.

A mentor can create a great learning environment by being positive, open, honest and highly relational. Great mentors listen, discuss feelings, ask great questions, monitor their mentee’s progress, give useful advice and constantly encourage! It is wise to ask for permission to give feedback, to give advice as if giving it to yourself (using first person singular) and to advise in a way that both inspires mentees and helps them discover their strengths.

A great learning environment should also be a challenging environment! A good mentor should not only provide opportunity and resources but should also seek to stretch people according to their giftedness.

Finally, our focus group and interview participants reminded us of the most helpful principle: Encourage and inspire developing worship leaders to stay focused on God and to continue growing in their relationship with Him!

10) An Ongoing Commitment To Mentor Worship Leaders

As the two focus groups unanimously agreed, mentoring worship leaders should become a continuous cycle, with mentees becoming mentors and all leaders being willing to learn and grow together in agreement with Ephesians 4:16!

Conclusions and Evaluations

Final Thoughts and Comments

This has been a most interesting and useful study! The Biblical basis for mentoring was found to be impressive, as was the mentoring advice found in the literature review (both in quantity and quality!). There was, however, little evidence of mentoring worship leaders (according to this study's definition) in the Bible. Likewise, it was difficult to locate non-Biblical resources that spoke of training or mentoring worship leaders.

Fortunately, the data obtained from the interviews and focus group discussions seemed to confirm what was learned from the literature review resources (both those with discussion related to training worship leaders and those that discussed mentoring in general). This leads me to believe that the results of this study are both relevant and useful for mentoring today's worship leaders.

Before taking a final look at the results (in checklist form), I must say that I was very encouraged by the input given by both focus group and interview participants! In particular, I was impressed by these worship leaders' desire for genuine worship that flows from one's relationship with God. Coupled with a healthy appreciation of various necessary worship tensions, I believe that these leaders are on the right track toward being the type of worshippers and worship leaders that God desires. Amen (may it be so)!

The section of the study in which focus group participants ranked worship leader skills / areas of competence proved to be fascinating! It was encouraging to see that this study's participants valued far more than musical and artistic ability (which ranked fourth). It was also interesting to see how similar the rankings were across the board. It is my conclusion that we can begin to learn something about the relative importance of these different skills for the purpose of educating the worship leaders of tomorrow. I believe it would be well worth further study of these skills / areas of competence in order to better understand the reasons given for their perceived importance.

I have two other suggestions for future study. One is the compilation of a more extensive list of resources related to mentoring (or training) worship leaders, and the other is to further examine some of the variables that may influence the way worship leaders approach the concept of mentoring (i.e. experienced worship leaders vs. inexperienced worship leaders and mentored worship leaders vs. non-mentored worship leaders).

It is my hope that this study has been of some benefit to you! I appreciate your interest and would value any comments, ideas or suggestions that you may have.

Grace with you,

Joel French

Checklist For Mentoring Beginning Worship Leaders

1) THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

- I have a solid understanding of Biblical worship
- I understand the value of mentoring as found in the Bible
- I am aware of important characteristics of Godly leaders

2) MENTORING TYPE

- I am aware of the type of mentoring that I will use

3) PROPER MOTIVATION

- I realize the importance of Ephesians 4:11-16 for today's worship leaders

4) REMOVAL OF BARRIERS

- I have looked for potential theological, crises of control, competency, and time and energy barriers to mentoring in my church
- I have learned why these barriers are poor excuses
- I am prepared to share this knowledge with others as is necessary

5) INTENTIONALITY

- I am committed to helping my mentee develop in the areas of spiritual formation, theology, artistry and leadership
- I have determined additional skills that are necessary for my mentee to develop in order to become an effective worship leader in my church

6) ABILITY

- I have a good understanding of the characteristics of a Godly worship leader
- My lifestyle is consistent with the characteristics of a Godly worship leader
- I have the necessary skills required for achieving #5 (Intentionality step)

7) IDENTIFYING A POTENTIAL MENTEE

- I am spending time in prayer seeking God's guidance
- I am spending time interacting with potential worship leader mentees
- I am looking for those who are uniquely gifted and called to be worship leaders

8) BEGINNING THE MENTORSHIP

- Early mentorship meetings have emphasized building a trusting relationship
- Along with my mentee, I have worked out a structure for the mentoring relationship

9) DEVELOPING THE MENTORSHIP

- I am committed to a caring relationship that extends beyond the mentorship
- I am committed to create a great learning environment for my mentee
- I am committed to provide good opportunities, resources and feedback for my mentee

10) ONGOING COMMITMENT

- I am committed to being part of an environment where mentees become mentors and where all worship leaders are eager to learn and grow together.

Appendix One: Focus Group Discussion Sheet

FOCUS GROUP: MENTORING DEVELOPING WORSHIP LEADERS

- Name:
- Total Number of Years as a Worship Leader (paid and/or volunteer):
- Have you been a full-time paid worship leader? If so, for how long?:
- Have you been a part-time paid worship leader? If so, for how long?:
- Were You Mentored as a Worship Leader? (If yes, by whom? What was their role in the church?):

Definitions

- 1) **Worship Leader:** An individual responsible for leading people in corporate worship of God through such means as music, prayer, the Lord's Supper, Scripture reading, etc.
- 2) **Worship Leader Mentorship:** The process by which an experienced worship leader guides, empowers, and equips a less experienced worship leader for the purpose of strengthening Christ's body, the church, for the glory and praise of God.

Purpose Statement: "To learn how to nurture effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders"

Questions to Discuss

- (a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?
- (b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?
- (c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?
- (d) What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?

- (e) What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?
- (f) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?
- (g) What is a more important focus in mentoring worship leaders: Skill development or spiritual formation?
- (h) How important is it that those who are mentored, in turn become mentors?

Worship Leader Skills / Areas of Competence

Prioritize the following by numbering them in order of importance – 1 is highest priority:

- _____ Team leadership
- _____ Pastoral care and leadership
- _____ Theological astuteness
- _____ Historical understanding
- _____ Musical and/or other artistic competence
- _____ Administrative skill
- _____ Understanding of communication technology (i.e. P.A. systems, lighting, PowerPoint, etc.)

Comments:

Thanks so much for your help with this project!

Joel

Appendix Two: Interview Questionnaire

MENTORING DEVELOPING WORSHIP LEADERS QUESTIONNAIRE

- Name:
- Church Role / Position:
- Were You Mentored as a Worship Leader? (If yes, by whom? What was their role in the church?):

Definitions

- 1) **Worship Leader:** An individual responsible for leading people in corporate worship of God through such means as music, prayer, the Lord's Supper, Scripture reading, etc.
- 2) **Worship Leader Mentorship:** The process by which an experienced worship leader guides, empowers, and equips a less experienced worship leader for the purpose of strengthening Christ's body, the church, for the glory and praise of God.

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The Questions

- (a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?
- (b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?
- (c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?
- (d) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?
- (e) What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?
- (f) What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?

Appendix Three: Focus Group #1 Discussion

SEMINARY FOCUS GROUP: MENTORING DEVELOPING WORSHIP LEADERS

(Lorne Gieck [L], Jane Martens [J], Sherridan Anderson [S], and Llyndon Plett[LP])

a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?

- L: *“Ephesians 4:11 makes it pretty clear that that’s our role as pastors”* – to prepare the people for works of service. The question is, “are we doing it?”, and should it be formal or not? Personally, he learned a lot from watching people.
- J: Extremely important, because one of the most important factors in developing worship leaders is the development of their spiritual lives. *Certain aspects of spiritual development require the help of others* (mentors can offer feedback to assist others in seeing beyond their blind spots).
- S: *So many worship leaders are essentially trained musicians, but there is a need to take them beyond performance* “into other possibilities” including the spiritual relationship.
- LG: There are a lot of misconceptions about what worship leading is. *The simple mechanics of the job and knowing how to deal with staff and other relationships are very important parts of the job!*
- L: Pride factor – has noticed how easy it is for beginning worship leaders to be full of themselves. *People who can lovingly give you a kick in the pants are important! – they are the ones who help you mature and do the job well (as opposed to simply those who are constantly encouraging).*

b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?

- LG: *Not in his environment* (believes it must be elsewhere) – it’s trying to happen, but not succeeding very well yet

- J: *Starting to happen in her context* – thinks she could do a lot of things better. In many places it isn't happening or is happening on a musical level only (referring to her church or the larger church here?)
- LG: Need to be able to know people's gifts – how can you perceive who is a shepherd and who isn't? *Hard for him as a young worship pastor because of his lack of experience and context to say who would be a good shepherd and who wouldn't.*
- L: Mentoring as taking someone farther down the road than you've been. *Factors affecting the struggle in mentoring worship leaders today: 1) The way we do worship is new 2. There aren't that many experienced people 3. Worship pastors in churches don't last very long these days because they get booted out due to controversies 4. Worship is way more than music. // We have the responsibility to teach what we're learning about worship leading and worship music – will take time.*
- LG: *Sense of risk in mentoring because you're investing your life, but may not get anything out of it. Part of being in church is producing – you have to have the service. You need to have practices to put out the finished product. Mentoring is not as cut and dry. Sometimes it seems like mentoring is a waste of time compared to these pressures.*
- J: Yes, mentoring is a real risk! She has been involved formally or quite loosely in mentoring others at her church. Jon Buller was mentored at her church and went on to itinerant ministry. Another girl went to Hillsongs and then BC. *Must think of benefits to the larger church as opposed to just to the local church!*
- S: *Problem of expectation of a paid person putting on a show. Perhaps it is easier for volunteer leaders to coach others* (i.e. like her role - people might feel like they can learn from each other more in this context - J: Less intimidation this way?). Some of the new worship leaders making recordings, etc. seem to have been mentored well as evidenced by lives consistent with their music.
- L: Are worship leaders necessarily just song leaders? *Are they also pastors? / good shepherds? Are they going to be able to pastor historically, biblically, etc.?*
- LG: *All pastors should really be worship leaders* when we think of a true biblical definition of the term – team context within which to work

c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?

- J: *Musical ability has to factor into it somehow if you're at a church where music is important – otherwise leaders may become a distraction. Even more important though is a teachable spirit and the desire to be mentored (as compared to those who are insecure and just want to be on the stage). A true test can be when we must challenge them on various issues (can they take it or not?).*
- L: Believes that some pastors are some of the most insecure people that he knows. Instead, people must know who they are, must be honest about their feelings and must not feel that they have to be all things to all people. We need to go beyond insecurities by learning to trust the Lord. *Importance of a shepherd's heart!, vs. someone who is "more of a strong, director, kind of visionary guy who doesn't care about people". "Those are different roles. I think that the guy who's going to lead as to the throne, as it were, needs to have a tender heart and needs to be sensitive to the needs of the people – not going to beat the flock but lead the flock*
- S: *"I love for the body of Christ to love the community." - An embracing type of Spirit attitude.*
- J: Or if they're young – recognizing their need to grow in these areas (teachable spirit again).

d) What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?

- LG: *Help teach people how to deal with failure. You don't want to set them up for failure; instead, you want to give them opportunity to succeed as much as possible. However, failure is inevitable and we need to help coach people through these times (including disconnecting failure from who you are as a person and recognizing the role of failure in ministry).*
- L: *"Consider the cost before you build a tower." Don't make commitments you can't keep. Pick one or two to mentor, do it well and stay committed to a structure. If you can't follow through on the structure, it's really more of a friend thing than a mentor thing. Be intentional – help them learn specific things they can do better. Without intentionality, mentorships may sort of float around and mentees may become like you (vs. who God has*

made them to be) or may develop all sorts of bad habits because no one has taken the time to teach them otherwise.

- J: *“Be clear about what they might expect.” “Don’t promise the world.” “Can be quite effective and still somewhat informal.”* Be aware of the people who are secretly expecting you to mentor them when you have no intention of doing so.
- Great communication is a key (see above)

e) What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?

- J: Helping in the whole struggle between performance and worship. *Helping people learn to evaluate themselves and to deal with feedback people give them in a culture where we are so focused on stage and performance. How to really live out of a sense of real self vs. a false self or stage image – a reality of service and identity*
- S: *Serving from the point of an on-going relationship with Christ.* Boundaries may come up eventually (see discussion from Dale’s class)....
- L: The question “why?”. *People must understand why they are called to do this (must understand there is a calling involved!) – makes it easier to get through the difficult times (because they will come).* Difficulty of having a performance-oriented mindset – what if I fail? *Dealing with the reality that you can’t always please everyone, and that that isn’t your job in the first place - If God is your audience, then that shouldn’t matter.*
- S: *Mechanic kinds of things (tools in your toolbox) also need to be addressed – public interaction with people, technical skills, musical skills, creativity, etc. Until these things are learned, they can prevent progression to deeper issues.*

f) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?

- LG: *Patience – mentoring people may not happen on your time-frame.* Driven leaders need to step back and let things happen in their own time. *There is also a need to let go – for mentors to take control out of their hands, and to be flexible in the way they do things.* The cookie-cutter approach is not always the best way! We need to let people grow into the people God created them to be.

- J: *Mentors should be willing to cheerfully see people go beyond them. This takes humility and an understanding of the value of roles (often different than what culture values). Mentors should also be willing to deal with hard things and should avoid isolation. It is helpful to be able to bounce ideas off others in the same ministry area (helps you to beware of your own biases).*
- S: *Mentors should be teachable, should be learning to continue to embrace the body of Christ, and should value continuous learning.*
- L: *Mentors should be people of grace who are also able to have the hard conversations. They should know how to create environments in which mentees are safe to fail. They must also be able to tell people that they don't have the gifting. "Ministry is a series of difficult conversations" – have these conversations immediately so as not to get people's hopes up.*

g) What is a more important focus in mentoring worship leaders: Skill development or spiritual formation?

- LG: *The bigger the church the more performance becomes an issue – but he's from a smaller church so looks more at spiritual formation. Believes skills can be taught easier than spiritual development. At the same time skill level is almost assumed.*
- J: *At the same time, a mentee should be in an on-going mode of skill development; this indicates a proper attitude for ministry.*
- S: *Art and heart should always be held in tension. There is a pendulum that is often swung back and forth between these two areas. We need to encourage people toward holding these two things in tension.*

h) How important is it that those who are mentored, in turn become mentors?

- LG: *Thinks it would be a good gauge of our success as mentors*
- J: *We can often learn a lot more as mentors – completes the circle.*
- S: *We need to think of on-going reproduction for the glory of God!*

Appendix Four: Focus Group #2 Discussion

COLLEGE FOCUS GROUP: MENTORING DEVELOPING WORSHIP LEADERS

(Terry Smith [TS], Georgina Otsuji [GO], Brad Massier [BM], and Bradley Guldemond [BG])

a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?

- **GO:** *“I think it is important to build relationships with them so that you can mentor them effectively...so that they can understand what you’re trying to say”. However “if you mentor them too much then they never get a chance (to discover) what leadership is on their own...they’re too busy following”. “I think there’s a certain point when you have to let go and let them do it on their own”.*
- **BM:** *In his case, mentoring was more “something that just naturally happened”. “I don’t know if the pursuit of a mentoring relationship was entirely there”. It was good to have someone to look up to, but the nurturing of a mentoring relationship perhaps wasn’t there so much.*
- **BG:** *Believes it is very important! Hasn’t had the experience of being given advice. Has picked up things mostly by himself. Had to learn a lot by “messing up”, and he often didn’t know when he was messing up at the time. In coming to Briercrest he began to realize how much “he did wrong” in leading. For example, in leading youth worship he often based the success of his leading on how much people were getting into the worship and getting excited about worshipping.*
- **TS:** *Had a mentor (Richard Cleaver), and believes having a mentor is of the utmost importance. Richard was someone with musical experience and knowledge who was able to encourage him and give him advice. Terry could have used someone with more boldness and courage to tell him when he was doing something wrong, but overall really values mentoring relationships.*

b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?

- **BG:** *Unique situation at his church – the last two years they have not had a full-time worship pastor. No one really had the authority to lead or mentor. He’s gotten occasional comments but hasn’t really had anyone teach him much about worship, other than perhaps the pastor in his sermon once in a while.*
- **GO:** *Hasn’t been in her home church for a few years. Thinks it depends a lot on the church that you’re attending. Her home church did not spend a great deal of energy on worship music – it was more of a piano-accompanied hymn-based church (older members and pastor led the songs). Over the past few years she has gone to an AGC church in Banff and worship was very important – included having full bands, a full time worship pastor, and leaders underneath that person. This church put a lot of emphasis on mentoring people in the church, including the priority for spiritual formation in worship leaders. *Thinks that in some cases mentoring is successfully happening, but that it varies depending on the church, denomination, and community of people* (i.e. older congregations aren’t as likely to have full bands, but younger, “Vineyard-type” churches may have lights and be more kerygmatic in approach). Therefore, *believes it is happening in churches where worship music is a strong priority, and that it is not applicable in churches where worship music does not receive much attention.**
- **BM:** *His initial church background was of a songleader who conducted the congregation in hymns. Believes as we have moved more into more complex song forms (choruses) that people have been learning by the example of leaders. Is “leery to say that in some places (developing worship leaders) is not required”, however, perhaps it is the case in some settings (see George’s comments)*
- **BG:** *Brad wasn’t a leader at his church – he played the piano while someone else led. “They would work a lot with the leaders...but there was nothing really in place” for those who might be potential future leaders (as he hoped to be).*

c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?

- **GO:** *“People who show natural leadership skills...and show an interest” (therefore motivated by self and not motivated by obligation only)*
- **TS:** *If he was to be mentoring people he would like to draw evenly from the pools of those who have gifts in leadership and those who have musical gifts. *Would like to**

mentor both strong up-front leaders and strong musicians so that there is a good balance of both types. Doesn't "believe you can change a man by mentoring him, but I do believe you can help equip him in some ways that he's lacking". It's very difficult to find the all-around perfect worship leader – believes we should try to help develop people's natural giftings and abilities.

d) What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?

- **BM:** *Musical skill is important, as is leadership skill. Also advises leaders to give people some freedom to develop their own style while helping them avoid major blunders (i.e. theological problems). Believes it's important to beware of creating leaders in a certain form (i.e. like yourself). Therefore, values flexibility, but also values support and leadership within the relationship so that mentees are able to learn to lead in a God-honoring manner.*
- **TS:** *Thinks it's wrong for mentors to instill their own personal style in others. "There's a lot of things that make a worship leader a good worship leader and that is the way that God uses their particular personality and flavor to give a new taste to His worship."*
Example: hand signal dependence in a church he recently tried to lead worship in.
- **BG:** *Values feedback beyond friends' "You did a good job!". Would like to have someone to say that certain things were really good, or certain things could be done differently. Thinks leaders often don't have a good perspective of how well they do in leading others. Thinks it would be great to have someone willing to tell the truth about how things went and how things could be improved.*
- **GO:** *Both parties need to be willing to learn. The give and take is really important. Less formal and more relationship based – not rigid. Valuable for mentee to feel like he can*

share things with the mentor – not just a one-sided relationship in which the mentee is always taking from the mentor.

e) What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?

- BM: *Teach the importance of being sensitive to the Spirit's leading – therefore being flexible with song order, repetitions within songs, etc.* Know where the congregation is at and be willing to adjust accordingly. Really stresses flexibility in general!
- TS: Beware of gender implications! *Recommends same-sex mentors, especially because music is a big open door for emotional back-and-forth – need to monitor closeness of the relationship if a same sex mentorship.* Also says that it is *important not to be elitist with the person you are mentoring within the band setting.*
- GO: People sometimes don't realize the importance of being spiritually sound. Leaders should be disciplined in doing their devotions, reading their Bible, and taking time to spend with God. *You can spend a lot of time preparing and making an amazing worship service, but if God's not in it, then it won't be effective. You are leading people into God's presence – you need to be right with God.* Your life should be a testimony of what you're leading people into. This means that you also need to be a worshipper. *Because you are a leader, God is probably going to judge you more harshly – therefore should ask potential leaders if they're sure they're ready (knowing what worship leading entails).* If not, tell them not to be ashamed to wait because it could be really harmful to church worship if they're not prepared spiritually to lead.

- BG: Spirituality and closeness to God is really important so that leaders can sense where God is going and what he wants to do through your worship leadership.

f) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?

- GO: *Flexibility and availability* (echoed by Brad). *Someone with a healthy relationship with God who also has time for others.*
- TS: For him, Richard really valued musical skill (plus prayer), but there was also a *dynamic of sharing common interests* (i.e. for Terry and Richard it was video games and for Lorraine and some of the girls in the band it was other things).

g) What is a more important focus in mentoring worship leaders: Skill development or spiritual formation?

- BG: Thinks it's a balance of both. *It's important to use the skills God has given you to the best of your ability. Thinks churches are leaning more toward skill development though* (i.e. the priority of music without distractions, and the pattern of having an hour or two of practice compared to five minutes of prayer).
- GO: Need both. *Determining peoples' spiritual maturity can be quite difficult while skills are a lot easier to see.* Look for fruit in people's lives as well as solid musical skills.
- BM: Group he was in focuses a lot on skill but not much on spiritual formation. Thinks you can have a healthy balance between the two of them. From Dale – if he had a two hour practice he would usually spend the first hour goofing off, hanging out and praying before practicing for the second hour. *Developing healthy relationships among group*

members is another important part of spiritual formation. Thinks skill development will follow if the spiritual and relational components are in place.

- GO: *Criticism may also be handled better in groups that have the stronger spiritual and relational approach.*
- TS: "A little from column A and a little from column B".

h) How important is it that those who are mentored, in turn become mentors?

- BM: *"I think if you're mentored properly it will probably just flow into that anyways".*
(GO: Agrees / some people just aren't meant to be mentors)
- TS: *Very important! Like the church – if a person is saved and doesn't go out and share the gospel then that's the end of it! Same thing for worship leaders. An evolving tradition that is passed along - almost like a father-son type thing where you pass on "the wisdom of the ages". Would hate to see worship end for lack of mentorship.*
- BG: *It would be horrible if there was an expert in the audience who wasn't doing anything to help worship leaders!*

Appendix Five: Interview Responses - Jim Wells

- **Name:** Jim Wells

- **Church Role / Position:** Pastor of Worship and Music

- **Were You Mentored as a Worship Leader?** (If yes, by whom? What was their role in the church?): Yes, by Charlie Loshbough and Doug Thomson – Pastors of worship and music at different times in the life of West Park

The Questions

(a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?

- **I think mentoring worship leaders is very important, and will greatly effect where our worship will go in the future.**

(b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?

- **No, I can see very little mentoring of worship leaders in the church today. This is partly out of time constraints, but mostly because most of the people in the church don't see the value in it.**

(c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?

- **Already involved in ministry, humble, teachable, not afraid to be in front of people, love and passion for God.**

(d) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?

- **In addition to (c), he/she needs to have some musical skills and people skills.**

(e) What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?

- **Make sure they want to be mentored. Plan on this being a long process, it doesn't just happen in a couple of months. Go into the process with the mindset that this will be a learning experience for both of you. Spend a lot of time in prayer asking God for wisdom in how to best influence this person for him.**

(f) What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?

- **Worship is a lot more about attitude than musical style**

- **Where is your congregation at when it comes to spiritual maturity, musical taste, non-Christians**
- **Where does your church leadership stand on tradition, contemporary, blended worship**
- **Work on how to educate your congregation to learn how to worship during the week**
- **How to teach, thank and encourage your worship team constantly**

Appendix Six: Interview Responses – Charlie Loshbough

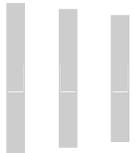
MENTORING DEVELOPING WORSHIP LEADERS QUESTIONNAIRE

- Name: Charles L. Loshbough
- Church Role / Position: Pastor of Worship and Music
- Were You Mentored as a Worship Leader? (If yes, by whom? What was their role in the church?): Joel, back when I started we really were not called worship leaders. The term Minister of Music was most widely used. Worship Leader and worship teams seemed to come in the 1980's. So when I was formulating music and worship ministry, I'm sure the senior pastor had a great deal to do with that (Paul Fawcett). Also, my training at college really shaped my philosophy of ministry.

The Questions

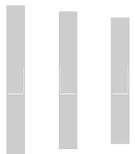
(a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?

Very important! It seems in so many situations any one who can play a guitar and sing a few notes is classified as a worship leader. A veteran in the field can really assist in molding a budding worship leader in principle, excellence and presentation.



(b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?

In isolated cases, yes, but overall I really don't think so. That is just my opinion. Why not,...a variety of reasons, we live in an instant society. Everything is quick, done the easy route, etc. I really think this has entered the realm of church music and worship as well.



(c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?

- one who has a passion for God and His Kingdom
- a teachable spirit
- one with a desire to see God's people grow in their walk with Him.
- a passion to use their identified gifts and talents for God



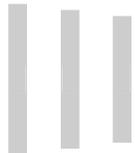
(d) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?

One who actively..

 acknowledges the worth of God, experiences the presence of God, commits to the will of God, and obeys the voice of God.

One who produces a consistent life of worship, personal and corporate

 (e) **What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture**

 (f) **What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?**

Keep the object of our worship (God) in focus. Style, tempo, volume, public opinion, and the gamut of everything else is secondary.

Appendix Seven: Interview Responses – Dave Gast

- Name: **David Gast**
- Church Role / Position: **Associate Pastor of Worship Ministries**
- Were You Mentored as a Worship Leader? (If yes, by whom? What was their role in the church?): **No. I was not mentored.** **Worship leading looked a lot different when I began church music ministry in the late 60's. I have always sought to keep abreast of the changing trends over these past four decades, seeking to be as relevant as possible in the contexts I have ministered.**

The Questions

- (a) How important is the task of nurturing effective mentoring relationships with developing worship leaders?
Very important especially in churches where there are multiple leaders working under one staff person.
- (b) Are developing worship leaders being successfully mentored in the church today? Why or why not?
I'm sure they are in some churches and probably not in others. This would depend on the initiative of the top person or pastor responsible. I'm not sure what you mean exactly by "successful". Helping a leader improve from where they are would be successful.
- (c) What type of person is a good candidate to be mentored as a developing worship leader?
I would look for someone who is spiritually mature, musically gifted, and out going as opposed to shy. They need to be organized and good at planning.
- (d) What character traits and skills are desirable in a worship leader mentor?

They need to be talented in music and especially in singing. They need to be able to coach a music team. They should be able to lead the congregation verbally, musically and certainly with humility.

- (e) What advice would you have for someone wishing to nurture an effective mentoring relationship with a developing worship leader?

Set up a regular time to meet together. Involve them in the actual planning of services that you are putting together – talking out loud about the thought processes at work in making choices of songs and in planning the flow of a service. I think that evaluation is also necessary, going over in detail services that have been done, what has gone well and what didn't.

- (f) What are some important issues that should be addressed in a worship leader mentorship?

Define excellence. How to strive in that direction.

Keeping the focus on Christ and His church.

Dealing with people who want to be "on the platform".

Balance in music selection, blending familiar and unfamiliar, newer with older songs, loud versus soft, slow and fast. etc.

Appendix Eight: Focus Group Skill / Area of Competence Rankings

WORSHIP LEADER SKILLS / AREAS OF COMPETENCE RANKINGS

Focus Group #1: Seminary Student Worship Leaders (LP = Llyndon Plett, SA = Sherridan Anderson, LG = Lorn Gieck, and JM = Jane Martens)

	<u>LP</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>LG</u>	<u>JM</u>	<u>Average</u>
Team leadership	4	2	2	4	3
Pastoral care and leadership	1	1	1	1	1
Theological astuteness	2	3	4	3	3
Historical understanding	6	5	5	5	5
Musical and/or other artistic competence	3	4	3	2	3
Administrative skill	5	6	6	6	6
Understanding of communication technology	7	7	7	7	7

Focus Group #2: College Student Worship Leaders (BM = Brad Massier, GO = Georgina Otsuji, BG = Bradley Guldemon, and TS = Terry Smith)

	<u>BM</u>	<u>GO</u>	<u>BG</u>	<u>TS</u>	<u>Average</u>
Team leadership	4	3	3	3	3
Pastoral care and leadership	1	1	2	1	1
Theological astuteness	3	2	1	6	2

Historical understanding	6	6	5	2	5
Musical and/or other artistic competence	2	4	4	4	4
Administrative skill	7	7	7	5	7
Understanding of communication technology	5	5	6	7	6

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