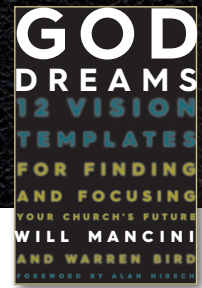




GOD  
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## Additional Exercises for Selecting Templates for Your Church

Explore Consulting Services with Will Mancini  
Will@ChurchPivvot.com | 281-636-6900

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## Visionary Style Exercise

While I generally use the visionary style exercise as a quick assessment tool with all churches, I spend more time on the exercise when the culture of the church expects more direct leadership from the senior or lead pastor. The less collaborative the team, the more likely the visionary style perspective will help select and relate your top two templates all by itself.

In addition, the visionary style exercise can be used with all leaders around the table as an added perspective in team dialogue. Don't hesitate to ask every person on the team to share their personal preference and affinity with visionary style.

## Background on "Spark" and "Posture" that Define the Quadrants

Years ago, a good friend and mentor, Aubrey Malphurs made a distinction between two kinds of leaders; vision castors and vision catchers. I have liked the language itself, but have always struggled with how to use it. On the one hand it is helpful to diagnose the different "speed to realization" times that various leaders have when it comes to vision. But on the other hand it seemed to classify "vision catchers" as lower status on the visionary scale and liable of just photocopying someone else's vision ideas.

However, I never stopped noodling on the unique ways that different leaders seemed to approach vision. Some were aggressive yet some where reflective. Some saw things and acted, some heard things from God and waited. Was there any rhyme or reason to our God dreams?

For me, the answer is yes. Eventually, I found a more precise way to distinguish what Malphurs' clever language was hinting toward. That led to the development of "spark" and "posture" as ideas used to create the quadrants from Figure 11.2 in the book.

Let's define each idea as you consider your team's "spark" and "posture."

## Defining "Spark"

By spark, I mean the vision "point of ignition" of the vision for the individual. I will make the choices really easy; it's either inside of you or outside of you; internal or external. One way I like to think of it is that the leader either sees the vision by looking in the mirror (internal) or by looking out the window (external). Leaders testify clearly to each. Nehemiah heard the reports of Jerusalem's condition (external), which led to confessional prayer and strategic action. Abraham heard the voice of God (internal) and began a journey shrouded with mystery.

When Bruce Wesley hired me in 1997 to join Clear Creek Community Church, he drove



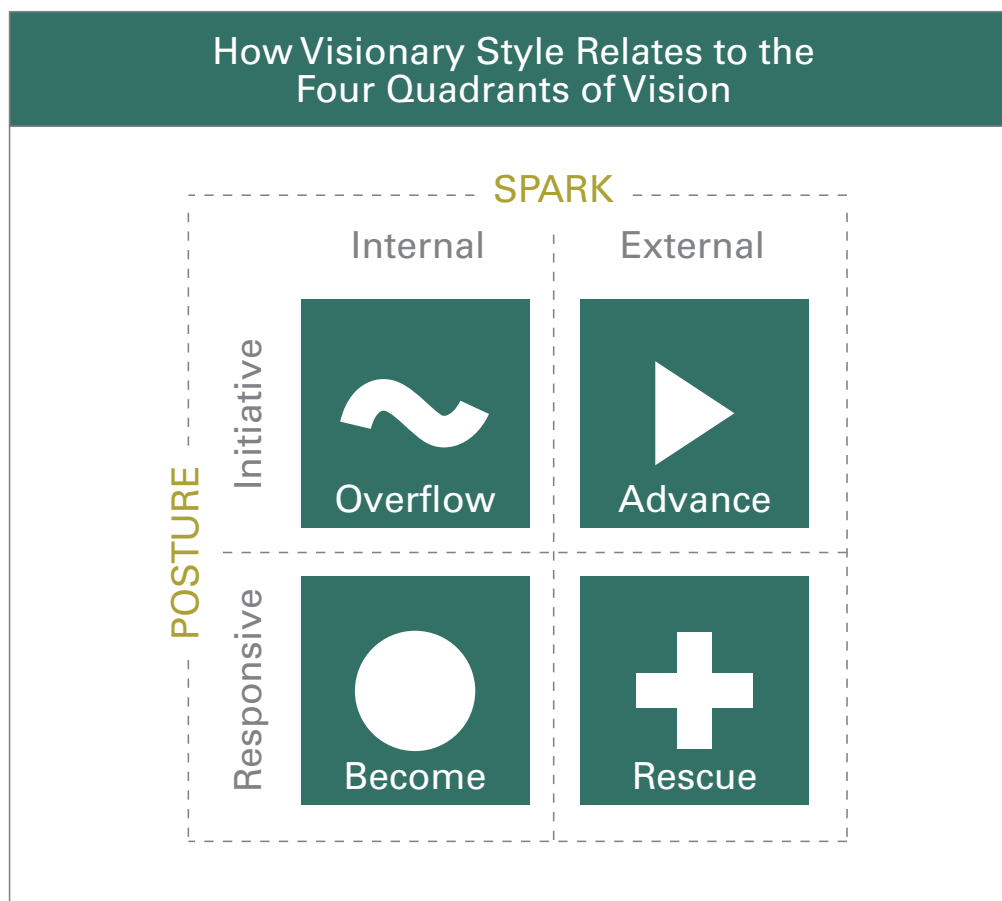


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me literally around Clear Lake and shared his dream of reaching a people from God by showing me the community (looking out the window). When Ken Werlein talks about the creation story of Faithbridge, he recalls God's directive as an inner compulsion for starting a God-dependent and authentic community of believers (looking in the mirror).

It's important to acknowledge that the outside and inside dynamics are not mutually exclusive after the vision emerges. For example, even though Nehemiah's vision was triggered by an external report of the devastation of Jerusalem, he was internally moved in a profound way. Yet, just like with Nehemiah, one "point of ignition" will clearly take precedence in the "creation story" experience, or the moment of awakening. Is it internal or external?





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## Key Questions for Spark

So what was it for you “back then”? When you think about the vision that has carried you, were you looking out the window or looking in the mirror when it all began?

What about right now? Do you see the spark of a new dream by looking around you or by feeling it inside of you?

Consider these questions for your current senior or lead pastor:

- When a vision sparks for you is it typically internal or external?
- What specific vision brought you to your current leadership role? Was it sparked internally or externally?
- What is the creation story of why you are leading what you are leading today? Share the details of the “point to ignition.”
- What other insights from your walk with God help you discern your spark as a leader?

## Defining “Posture”

Now let’s evaluate your leadership posture. By posture, I am referring to a bias or “leaning” within you or your team leader. Some leaders have a bias toward initiative and some have a bias toward response. The best way to contrast the behavioral pattern or personality style difference of posture is through the chart below.

Posture of Initiative	Posture of Response
Direct Style	Indirect Style
Act Then Observe	Observe Then Act
Risk	Calculate
Dominant / Influencing	Steady / Conscientious
Apostle / Evangelist / Prophet	Prophet / Pastor / Teacher
Takers and Traders	Sharers and Keepers
Fire ... Ready, Aim	Ready, Aim ... Ready, Aim







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When evaluating yourself or your leader, don't be tempted to see a responsive posture as "weaker." Some of the best leaders I have worked with are responsive; they are strong, determined and passionate.

To illustrate posture in my life as a leader, I tend to be very initiating in my style. I am comfortable with risk-taking and walking into unknown territory or unpredictable circumstances. I tend to like change, sometimes without a great reason. In fact, I tend to initiate too much for the good of the organization that I lead. For the last 15 years, I have had a more responsive and balanced leader around me—Jim Randall—to offset my over-initiating posture.

## Key Questions for Posture

Consider these questions for your current senior or lead pastor:

- Is your success as a leader connected more to your ability to decide quickly when acting or by your ability to make thoughtful decisions that take time?
- Do you have a history of frustrating people with what they consider to be "change for change sake" or what they consider to be "stable and predictable" leadership?
- If you were a bird would you be more like an eagle or peacock (initiating) or more like a owl or dove (responding)?
- Do people always know how you are feeling (initiating) or do you keep your emotions hidden and on even keel despite what is going on inside of you (responsive)?

## Key Questions for Deciding Your Top Two Templates with Visionary Style

Once you have assessed the leader and shared about your team members' individual styles, you will want to decide how, if at all, the style impacts your team's decision with selecting the top one or two templates. Here are some questions to use:

- Does the visionary style of our team leader create a significantly new perspective from our initial team perspective and vote?
- If yes, would our congregation respond better to a template selection based more on the leader's preference?
- Why or why not?
- Give time for the leadership team to respond and have each individual respond to the questions.

You can also ask the same set of questions based on the inclination of the entire team. Consider the team's overall "average" visionary style and run through the questions.





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## Church Achievements Exercise

The process of reviewing your church achievements is relatively simple and adds great energy and perspective to your discernment process. The key dynamic of the exercise is to help the team see the panoramic view of your church's "storyline" to create context for the next vision chapter of the story. Think of this exercise as a quick "life map" exercise for the church.

### Step One

Start the session with a large white board or at least one standard size flip chart. You will want to be able to record between five and fifteen rows for the achievements themselves. After you record the achievements, you will want to leave room for a column both to the left and right of the achievement column. Be sure to leave space to the left and right of the achievements list. On the left side you will re-number the achievements in chronological order. On the right hand side you will label each achievement with one of the 12 templates.

### Step Two

Ask the team together to list the church's greatest achievements starting as early as possible. (Obviously it helps to have long-term members around this table if the church has a long history. Be sure to invite some additional people as needed before you conduct the exercise.)

Example of achievements include:

- Completion of a building
- Planting a church or campus
- A ministry that launched and experienced significant impact
- Successfully navigating a significant transition or crisis
- Work in foreign mission
- Creating a local partnership
- Serving the community in some dramatic way

### Step Three

After you have listed the achievements, use the space to the left of the achievements list and put the list in chronological order. Most of the items will be in order, but some may not.





## Step Four

Starting with the earliest achievement first, use the space/column to the right of each achievement to label it with one or two of the 12 templates. This may require some dialogue as a team. For example, if the church built a building, there may not be an immediate connection with the template. If it's an education building, it might connect with the "spiritual formation" template. If it's a new worship center, it may be a "presence manifestation/gospel saturation" template. In other words you can feel free to label each achievement with one or two templates.

## Step Five

At the end of the exercise, be sure to consider the panoramic view of God's history of the church as the context for the next season. What template becomes obvious for the next five, ten, fifteen or twenty years? What does God's authorship of the church's story make clear? What has God been preparing the church to accomplish? What should be the church's ultimate contribution be for the next generation?

Sometimes this exercise will create a giant "aha" for the group. At other times there is not a significant breakthrough. In either case, the team will enjoy the exercise and the perspective gained by the dialogue.





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## Team Member Ultimate Contribution Exercise

When discerning the best templates to select for your church, it is helpful to consider the deep motivational dynamics of individuals on the leadership or vision team. This simple exercise is profound primarily because very few teams slow down enough to have significant dialogue around individual hopes and dreams.

The goal of the exercise is twofold. First, use the perspective gained to influence the final decision, as needed, in selecting the top one or two templates. Second, use the language from the exercise in the development of the vivid description of the long-range vision (beyond-the-horizon). The second purpose is accomplished by capturing the recorded insights from the white board or flip chart by taking digital pictures or typing them up for the vivid description writer or sub-team. Be sure to have a way to capture information before you start the exercise.

### Step One

Introduce the team to the idea that you want to discuss the individual motivations of each team member. Ask them to reflect on the question:

*As we move toward the vision that God has for us, what do you want your ultimate contribution to be; that is, in what way has God used you to contribute to the advance of the vision that may have been different without your contribution?*

Other lead-in questions include:

- What motivates you the most as you look into the future and consider our church's vision and impact?
- Why will we win as a team based on your unique contribution?
- What one thing do you hope to see accomplished in our ministry before your time here is complete?
- What would be your potentially greatest regret in this chapter of ministry when your life on earth is complete?

### Step Two

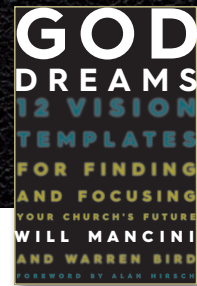
Have people share in random order, but make sure that everyone on the team shares. Record their responses in summary bullets on the white board or flip chart. Be sure to record key phrases and ideas that bring or create meaning and emotion to the team.







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## Step Three

As people share, ask follow-up questions to bring depth and further exploration to the ideas being shared. Ask open ended questions like:

- How so?
- Can you expand on that idea?
- What else can you tell us about that?
- Where else do you think you can make a unique impact?
- Why do you think that motivates you so much?

## Step Four

As the team completes their sharing and with the ideas in front of them on the white board, consider: Does our team's sense of ultimate contribution as individuals impact our final decision in selecting our top one or two templates? Why or why not?

Again, be sure to collect the results of this exercise for the vivid description writing step.

