

THE RIGHT "COACH" MATTERS

By Rodney James

No matter what type of construction project a church is planning — from renovation to expansion, or even a new facility — it will take a great deal of team players doing their part to provide a win for the church.

There will likely be a lender, a capital campaign partner, an architectural team, your staff and ministry leaders, a team of engineers, an AVL integrator, a builder, furnishing vendors, security integrators, and many others.

That's a lot of moving pieces!

WHO'S THE "COACH"?

Who is calling the plays and making sure the team plays well together? Issues usually arise when the coach is chosen by default. Unfortunately, that responsibility and burden too often falls on the church administrator, executive pastor, or even the pastor himself. I've seen it over and over, with devastating results in both the build and the ministry.

Why? *Because it's a full-time job.*

The church hires an architect whose focus is programming and design. The architect will likely bring some of the players into the game, but not all of them. That leaves the church to find the lender, capital campaign partner, and others. If the church brings in its own AVL or security integrator, for example, who's managing all their needs, scope and budgets? The church!

That begs a question: When the leadership of the church takes on that additional responsibility, what portion of their ministry will be left lacking? What will fall or fail?

SO, WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

A church can make sure its pastors aren't completely sidelined as ministers as they try to oversee a construction project by partnering with a leader who has a ministry-focused approach and has successfully managed many other projects. A coach who has developed relationships, recruited the right players for the team, and led them to work together to a successful project completion on budget.

In short, *bring in a ringer!*

There is power when you bring in a design builder whose focus is purely ministry facilities, has a ministry background, and has a proven track record of finishing on budget, on time, and on vision. When considering who to bring in as a partner to lead your project, be bold. Ask them about their relationships, strategic partnerships, and ministry

experience. These relationships within the entire ministry design, development and construction realm are invaluable to you.

This type of partner will:

- Be trustworthy in ministry, not just in business
- Bring *relationships* to the table, not just connections
- Be able and willing to help you create those relationships with vendors, organizations, resources and people — because your partner has the same mission as you!

If forged over time and multiple projects together, these relationships can only benefit your church and add peace to your team as you navigate all the various aspects of your complex Kingdom-building journey.

IT CAN BE A GAME-CHANGER

The synergy gained when the same players come to the table for every project is a powerful force. When the lender trusts the builder, the capital campaign partner and designer are communicating, the AVL team is being led and assisted by your builder and design team — all these connections bring the team together with one common goal: to provide the best outcome for your church.

Significant potential for conflict is a danger when each individual player is brought in by the church and hasn't worked together. That might place your church in the middle to resolve ... or to lose.

That's no place for any pastor to be caught. Their work is too important for them to get caught in the details and relationships of a building project! It can be draining at the least; worse, it can completely derail a project, costing the pastor and staff leadership equity.

LOOK FOR A KINDRED SPIRIT

Find a design builder whose team members have walked in your shoes as ministers and church staff. It will bring a powerful perspective that will help the design be functional, and they will serve your team by guiding you through the entire process as trustworthy partners.

Imagine the advantage of having former staff members of a healthy church who completely understand the design and construction process, have the church's best interest in mind, and have relationships with every partner you'll need leading your project — coaching the same amazing team, just in a different game. You'll have a team that looks at your project through the eyes of a pastor, but with the skills and relationships that provide for every project need with excellence.

There is so much positive power in good partnerships, and they're built on trust and relationship. I've watched this powerful force create synergy in projects that saves money, time, energy — and most of all, heartache and pain — for the church staff and building team. We believe in this model because it delivers successful projects and builds leadership equity for your team.

Find a great coach and partner for your next project in a design build firm that has the relationships, the partnerships, and a history of success. Then, follow their play-calling, so you can carry the ball across the goal line and win! **CE**



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