

How to actually do something about my Growth Plan

I hope you were inspired by last month's Worship Fertilizer to begin creating a Growth Plan, but chances are that it's collected about 30 days of dust by now. Poor little Growth Plan. Following the outline below will help you put your own plan into motion.

Why should I have a Growth Plan or do something about it?

If you're asking this, read the previous [Worship Fertilizer](#).

How do I decide what to focus on?

Sure, the exhaustive list of things that you *could* work on is long and daunting! First off, you can't work on everything this year. Can't. You've gotta settle the reality that there are things that you can't work on this year. Clear them off of your mental to-do list, your emotional should-do list. Phew.

Now, pick about five of the ones you really want to work on. Use the following grid to decide: which ones will give me the greatest **long-term benefit** (like learning theory or taking lessons) and which ones will give me the most **short-term WINS!** (like figuring a way to get to rehearsal on time, or buying a tuner) Select a combination of those two categories.

How do I add them to my existing routines?

That's right. It'll be much more doable if you can figure out how to make small shifts in the way you're doing stuff, rather than adding more things to your schedule. (yes and amen!) Three strategies to use are: Songs, Creating Margin, and Stretch & Recover.

Songs

The songs we use each week are perfect exercises to use as learning tools. Call it reverse engineering – you need certain skills to play the songs, so figure out what songs require the skills you want to learn and use one of them.

Create Margin

If we're not going to add anything to our schedules, we can each carve out space from what we're doing. We all do things that are inefficient (using rehearsal time to listen to a new song for the first time, not having a clear schedule for rehearsals, etc.). We also tend to do more than we need to...casualties (or causers) of the Pareto Principle – 80% of stuff gets done by 20% of us. How evenly spread is the load on your team? Who creates or copies chord charts? Who sets up the stage? Who leads the prayer and devotional time? (you have one of these, right?!) Who brings the snacks? ☺ If you're the leader, learn to give responsibility away. If you're a team member, look for ways to share the load. Leaders that spend all their time and energy doing everything will have little left to help the team grow.

You may try shifting (or simply clarifying) the rehearsal schedule. For example, if rehearsal is at 7:00 does that mean you start playing at 7:00 or the earliest time that anyone arrives is 7:00? (somewhere, a light bulb just went off...and someone else said "I sure hope he reads this!") Also, is there a slot in the schedule specifically set aside for growth? And there's the real boost: anything that you pay attention to or measure becomes more efficient, simply by the attention it suddenly receives. So if you just plan and track how you spend rehearsal times for a month (without even implementing any changes) you will gain more margin in how much time you have at rehearsals to work on growth!

Using systems is also a great way to create margin. Are you still creating emails and attaching chord chart instead of using Planning Center Online or a similar service? Does your team use standardized chord charts or do you have different, hand-scrawled versions? (what is this, 1993?) Do you use services like CCLI's SongSelect? (yes, I know they're not always correct and you can't edit them, but still...) Do you have checklists for your techs or have you systematized the procedure for sound check or creating the EasyWorship schedule?

Stretch and Recover

I'm learning this valuable practice from a book I'm reading called "[The Power of Full Engagement](#)." In every area of our lives we need to exert energy beyond just what's comfortable AND we need to balance that with times of renewal and recovery. (I'll just let that sink in and allow the Lord to speak to your life if your bigger picture needs that – mine does!) For this conversation, if we don't plan for this balance, one of two things may happen: Either you'll get overwhelmed by the thought of "growing, growing, growing...I have too many things to work on!" and you won't do anything, or you'll lose your teammates by going too hard, too fast. Translation: pick one thing you want to work on in one song for this week and push hard on it, but then do the rest of the songs "as usual." That will also help ensure you don't become overly focused on the skills and forget the heart of just loving and worshiping Jesus when you gather for worship.

What resources are available to help me grow?

Good question, because there are tons! And that's not always helpful. In addition to my favorite tools that I shared [here](#), there are three I'd like to give you:

Worship Coaching – this is where I come to you, to your church, to your team, and we walk alongside each other for a season of exponential growth. Get details [here](#), and read what others have experienced [here](#).

Worship Alliance/Guild – there are small groups of worship leaders that meet to encourage each other regularly. In Central PA, there is one in Ephrata and one in [Harrisburg](#). We truly can't make it without each other. Let me know if you want more info on them.

52 Worship Training Events – I'm not referring to a [previous post](#), I wanted to include this one to get your feedback on the idea as well as to give myself some accountability. Wouldn't it be great to have a little idea that would be easy to use for each rehearsal throughout the year that would give your team a balanced diet of growth based on the [Five Areas](#) of the Growth Plan? I'm in the process of writing an e-book that will be this very thing. Does this sound like a helpful tool?

How to sucker-punch the resistance

No wise person embarks on a project without counting the cost, and part of that cost are the obstacles that will oppose you, the resistance you'll face. The cool thing is that you can actually think through what might stop you and create a way around it! Trust me, the energy you spend to do this will be so much less than what it will take to get around it once you're facing it!

We hope you're encouraged by the Worship Fertilizer, a free resource from Ad Lib Music, *"in simple love and pure devotion to Jesus, we are eradicating isolation and burnout so that leaders bear much fruit!"*