

Principles of Policy Based Governance

Introduction:

The principles below are an attempt to provide a concise and accurate view of how Policy Based governance works and the advantage it provides for a larger congregation to 'keep the main thing the main thing' ("main thing" = mission of *living to love people to Christ*).

Principle #1: Trade in Meetings for Ministry

Policy based governance entrusts governance issues to one governing body rather than several boards and a church council. Rather than 30-60 people sitting at monthly board meetings managing ministry and staff, nine people meet 4 – 8 times a year to hold staff accountable to the congregationally approved mission, vision and work plan (*budget*). This frees members from administrative meetings to serve the Lord in ministries that match their spiritual gifts and passion, directly touching the lives of people (*Living to Love People to Christ*).

Principle #2: 20/80 Decision Making

Policy based governance frees congregational meetings (Vision Assembly) from numerous managerial decisions to focus on decisions of mission and vision. The Constitution and By-Laws outline the big 20%'er decisions (*Mission, Vision, Work Plan, Real Estate, Divine Calls, etc. See Constitution Article VIII. Organization, C. Mission and Ministry Council; and By-Laws Article 11. Authority of the Mission and Ministry Council and Article 12. Duties of Mission and Ministry Council*) made by the congregation and entrust all 80%'er decisions (managerial and operational) to staff and ministry leaders.

Principle #3: Operation vs. Governance

In policy based governance the congregation entrusts the responsibility of governance to the governing board (Mission and Ministry Council), and the spiritual oversight of the congregation to the Commission of Elders. The governing board is responsible to monitor (hold accountable) and provide parameters (policies) to the Senior Pastor for the accomplishment of the mission (*Living to Love People to Christ*). The governing board (MMC) entrusts the operation and management of ministry to the Senior Pastor. In other words, the governing board (MMC) is concerned with 'ends' and the Senior Pastor is concerned with the 'means'.

Principle #4: Each One Report to One

Policy based governance streamlines accountability. Rather than a staff member being accountable to multiple supervisors (board, council, staff supervisor, etc.) each one report to one. The sequence looks like this. The governing board (MMC) is accountable to the congregation. The Senior Pastor is accountable to the governing board (MMC). The ministry staff is accountable to the Senior Pastor. Support/department staff is accountable to department supervisor. Ministry leader is accountable to ministry staff member. Ministry team member is accountable to Ministry leader. Another way to put it is:

The mission is accomplished when ... (Ephesians 4:11-16; John 3:16)

Christ empowers and commissions
The congregation envisions and entrusts
The governing board monitors and protects
The staff leads and equips
The members are equipped and serve
The world is served and loved to Christ