

Leadership Development in Queensland Baptist Churches

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Abstract

There is anecdotal evidence of a shortage of quality volunteer leaders in churches. It is hypothesised that this is because there is inadequate investment in volunteer leadership development. This research brings empirical evidence to bear on this hypothesis. Using a survey of Queensland Baptist pastors it is concluded that pastors are moderately satisfied with the number of volunteer leaders in their churches, but less so with the quality. However, even though moderately satisfied, they are more likely to indicate that their churches do not have enough volunteer leaders to operate as effectively as they would like. Churches that have better volunteer leadership training have more and better leaders, regardless of church size. The *quality* of church leadership grows with increasing church size. An effective but underutilised method of leadership training is discipleship programs especially for leaders.

Introduction

While teaching a unit on Christian Leadership and Management at Malyon College students were required to post on a forum what they were doing in terms of lay leadership development in their local church and how effective that process was. An alarming number of students responded that they were not actually involved in intentional leadership development. However, they also recognised its value and would be looking to establish a process in the future. The responses piqued the researcher's interest in lay leadership development in local churches.

A possibly related issue is the anecdotal shortage of volunteer leadership in churches. Having been involved in churches for numerous years, the researchers are aware of an ongoing struggle to find quality volunteer leadership to lead ministries in the church. Sometimes there is no leader to facilitate a ministry; often the leader of a ministry is either unsuited for the role or unsuitable for leadership at all.

The intuition of the researchers is that the reason for this shortage of suitable volunteer leadership is, at least in part, a lack of intentional leadership development. A review of the literature (see below) revealed this hypothesis is supported by anecdotal evidence. However, little empirical research has

been done in this area. Hence a social scientific investigation of volunteer leadership and the factors which shape its quality and quantity is justified.

The research was driven by the following questions related to the research focus:

1. Do Queensland Baptist churches have enough volunteer leaders to function as effectively as they would like?
2. What methods of leadership development are Queensland Baptist churches using and which are most effective?
3. What is the relationship between satisfaction with training offered to volunteer leaders and levels of satisfaction with number and quality of volunteer leaders?

In order to perform this research a number of steps were necessary. First a review of the literature related to leadership development and then particularly leadership development in churches was undertaken. The purpose of the review was to:

1. Position the research within the contours of the existing research on these issues and to inform the research process.
2. Develop a model of church leadership development against which to compare the current practices of Queensland Baptist churches.

A summary of the review is presented below.

Literature Review

The Leadership Shortage

In a survey by Right Management, employers were asked to identify their most pressing human resource challenge in 2012¹:

¹ Jonathan Katz, "Executives Fear Leadership Shortage," *Industry Week*, 11th March 2012.

Table 1: Greatest Human Resource Challenges in 2012

Responses	2012	2011
Lack of high-potential leaders in the organization	31%	30%
Low engagement and lagging productivity	26%	22%
Shortage of talent at all levels	23%	18%
Defection of top talent to other organizations	19%	30%

The Right Management survey included responses from senior executives at more than 600 U.S. firms in the government, nonprofit, public and private sectors.

Similarly, in Aon Consulting's *2008 Benefits and Talent Survey*², 56% of the respondents reported that they were experiencing a shortage of qualified leadership talent. This was up from 40% from the previous year. The leadership shortage is predicted to grow dramatically over the next decade as greater numbers of baby boomers retire. Hence, grooming leaders is one of the most critical business needs in the modern workplace.³ Anecdotal evidence would suggest that this is also true of churches.

Leadership in Local Churches

Although there is ample anecdotal evidence for a shortage of adequate lay leadership in churches, there does not appear to have been any empirical research on the topic. However, in 1997 church researcher George Barna concluded "that the American Church is dying due to a lack of strong leadership."⁴ Forman, Jones, and Miller confirm, "It is no secret that one of the biggest needs in the church today – all around the world – is well-equipped leadership."⁵

Malphurs and Mancini argue that the issue is to do with leadership development:

Today some experts argue that the problem is a general lack of people with leadership ability - we just don't have as many leaders as we used to. Our experience as church trainers and consultants,

² Aon Consulting, "Aon Consulting's 2008 Benefits and Talent Survey" - http://www.aon.com/benefits_survey.

³ Seymour Adler and Amy Mills, "Controlling Leadership Talent Risk: An Enterprise Imperative," *Ready* 1, no. 1 (2008).

⁴ G. Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God's People* (Ventura: Regal, 1997), 18.

⁵ R. Forman, J. Jones, and B. Miller, *The Leadership Baton: An Intentional Strategy for Developing Leaders in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 23.

as well as Aubrey's involvement in seminary education over the past twenty years, has shown us that we have many potential leaders, but we are not developing them. And it's this failure in development that has precipitated the leadership crisis in our world in general and the church in particular.⁶

Some empirical evidence can be inferred from the National Church Life Survey 2011 for Queensland Baptists.⁷ Of the nearly 8000 participants, only 22% said that their leaders encourage them to use their gifts and skills to a great extent. Further, 39% said their church should encourage people to discover and use their gifts as the top priority in the next 12 months. These responses indicate that, at least in regard to gifts and skills, there is inadequate training in many Queensland Baptist Churches.

Having identified that there is reason to think there is a shortage of volunteer leadership in Queensland Baptist churches and that the reason for this shortage is the lack of leadership development, the review now turns to possible models of leadership development. To this end, first the theological principles of leadership development will be considered. These will then be used to screen and contextualise the social scientific principles and models.

Theological Principles of Church Leadership Development

The example of Jesus can serve as a model for conduct. Paul says "Imitate me as I imitate Christ" (1 Cor 11:1). The way he developed his twelve disciples serves as a model of leadership development. The key verse in this respect is Mark 3:14: "[Jesus] appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach." His strategy, it can be postulated, was to call the twelve into his presence so he could form them through modelling and mentoring and then to send them out to do ministry. "Jesus seldom did ministry by himself. Jesus was Lord and Master and needed no one to help him. Yet no matter what he was doing, he ministered with his disciples nearby."⁸

Hence, at the core of Jesus' leadership development strategy was discipleship. As Collinson suggests, discipleship "was the specific form favoured by him in developing the leaders who would proclaim his message to humanity and establish his church across the Roman Empire."⁹ This is reflected by the later emphasis in the New Testament on the importance of character for a church leader (1 Tim 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9). Although not every disciple will be a leader, Huizing argues that it is through the fulfilment of this model of discipleship that new leaders develop and are recognized by the

⁶ A. Malphurs and W. Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 10.

⁷ National Church Life Survey, "Regional Church Life Report - Queensland Baptist Church," (Strathfield: NCLS Research, 2012).

⁸ C.G. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998), 213.

⁹ S.W. Collinson, "Making Disciples and the Christian Faith," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (2005): 1.

community.¹⁰ In highlighting the need of churches to re-focus on discipleship as a core activity Hirsch writes:

The quality of the church's leadership is directly proportional to the quality of discipleship... Discipleship is primary; leadership is always secondary. And leadership, to be genuinely Christian, must always reflect Christlikeness and therefore...discipleship.¹¹

From the book of Acts we can discern that leadership was first discerned and then formalised. "Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them" (Acts 6:3). Such an approach is confirmed by Paul's discussion of leadership criteria in the Pastoral Epistles. Before being appointed to leadership in the church, the candidate must first demonstrate leadership in other spheres, especially the family. "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?" (1 Tim 3:5).

Paul also demonstrated a modelling–mentoring process of leadership development. According to Acts 16:1–3, Paul found at Lystra a young disciple named Timothy, the son of a Jewish Christian mother and a Greek father. Paul was so impressed with the young man that he asked him to join the missionary party. Only two years later (a.d. 49) he was ready to become an apprentice.¹² He became one of Paul's most trusted helpers, so that the apostle could write, "I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare" (Phil 2:20).

In conclusion, the following principles of leadership can be discerned from the Biblical record:

1. Discipleship as a part of leadership development
2. Modelling-mentoring
3. Discernment of leadership before appointment

Having explored the Biblical principles of leadership development, these will now be used to screen and contextualise the social scientific principles and models.

Social Scientific Principles of Leadership Development

¹⁰ Russell L. Huizing, "Leaders from Disciples: The Church's Contribution to Leadership Development," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 35, no. 4 (2011): 334.

¹¹ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 119.

¹² Ralph Earle, "1 Timothy," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981).

“The development of leaders is often stated as a primary goal in many organizations, yet a validated general framework and theory for leader development does not exist.”¹³ There are literally thousands of books written on leadership, and even a greater number of journal and magazine articles.¹⁴ A search based on the keywords “leadership development” yields 34,080 results on Amazon. Leadership development is clearly a complex and somewhat nebulous field. Hence any approach must be held lightly and applied carefully with sensitivity to context.

The purpose of this research is *not* to establish a theory of leadership development. Rather than seeking to systematise the current plethora of principles in the literature, one set of principles which summarises the field will be chosen. In choosing which set of principles to begin from, the experience of the theorist is one valid criterion. Another criterion would be the recentness of the work. On this basis, the thoughts of John Adair¹⁵ are worthy of consideration.

Adair has identified seven key principles of effective leadership development:¹⁶

1. The basic principle in leadership development is that *an organization should never give a team leadership role or position to someone without training* (70).
2. It is actually very hard, maybe impossible, for an organization to grow leaders. “Therefore – and here is a paradox for you – *choose people who are leaders already*” (84).
3. Line leaders should act as teachers of the apprentice “... growing leaders need that one-to-one attention” (101).
4. The opportunity to lead. “Organizations cannot grow leaders. It is nature or God that grows leaders. All that organizations do is to provide some of the necessary conditions for growth, and chief among them is *the opportunity to lead*” (114).
5. How to grow leaders transcends organizations, for it is society that grows leaders. Families are one matrix of leadership. Schools and universities are the second nurseries of leaders providing the opportunity to develop values. “Schools and universities equip the potential leader with general *knowledge* and the means for acquiring *technical or professional* knowledge later on. Curiosity – the hunger to learn – the ability to think clearly, and the seeds of creativity: such are the legacies of a good education to a leader” (144).

¹³ B.J. Avolio and S.T. Hannah, “Developmental Readiness: Accelerating Leader Development,” *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* 60, no. 4 (2008): 331.

¹⁴ R.E. Riggio, “Leadership Development: The Current State and Future Expectations,” *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* 60, no. 4 (2008): 383.

¹⁵ John Adair is one of the world’s leading authorities on leadership and leadership development John Adair, “John Adair Leadership & Management,” <http://www.johnadair.co.uk/>. Over a million managers worldwide have taken part in the Action-Centred Leadership programmes he pioneered. After being senior lecturer in military history and adviser in leadership training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and Associate Director of The Industrial Society, in 1979 John became the world’s first Professor of Leadership Studies at the University of Surrey. He has written over 40 books. Adair holds the higher degrees of Master of Letters from Oxford University and Doctor of Philosophy from King’s College London, and he is also a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. It is Adair who introduced the term “thinking outside the box.”

¹⁶ J. E. Adair, *How to Grow Leaders: The Seven Key Principles of Effective Leadership Development* (London: Kogan Page, 2005).

6. Organisations must have a *strategy for leadership development*. The strategy should be holistic including chances to lead, training and line leaders whom they can respect and learn from (155).
7. *An organization that grows leaders is one where the chief executive leads the process from in front* (156).

The transfer of these business principles to churches is generally straightforward, except in the case of the 5th principle. Adair distinguishes between training and the type of education provided by universities and schools. The 5th principle does not relate to specific skills needed to fulfil a function but the broader experiences provided by society's educational institutions that shape values and character. The local church cannot provide this education – it can only encourage the developing leader to pursue it. The ideal place for them to pursue it would be a Theological college.

Church-Focused Leadership Development Models

A number of writers have attempted to develop church-specific leadership development models for volunteers. Malphurs and Mancini¹⁷ develop a model of leadership development based on the model of a training hospital. They identify a “blueprint” for leadership development with five steps:

1. Discover new leaders for development.
2. Launch new leaders into their positions of leadership.
3. Develop new and current leaders for ministry in the church.
4. Regularly evaluate your leadership-development process.
5. Regularly reward those in the leadership-development process.

They identify four Core Leadership Competencies (Character (being), Knowledge (knowing), Skills (doing) and Emotions (feeling)).¹⁸ They also identify four means of training: Learner-driven training, content-driven training, mentor-driven training and experience-driven training. Although apparently prescriptive, they claim their process will help leaders arrive at a unique training model for their particular context.¹⁹

The model reflects a number of Adair's principles. Both models suggest identification of potential leaders and then giving opportunity for potential leaders to lead in the right situation. Both models advocate deliberate leadership strategies/blueprints, and the role of a variety of learning methods. Neither model is based on rigorous research. However, the extensive experience of the theorists and the similarities between the two models give confidence in their validity.

¹⁷ Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders*, 13.

¹⁸ Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders*, 251.

¹⁹ Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders*, 12.

The model of Forman, Jones, and Miller also has common themes with that of Adair.²⁰ They suggest the answer to the shortage of leaders around the world is restoring the church to the centre of leadership training. They advocate a church leadership development culture based on a wisdom-based (“courses”), relationship-based (“community”), and personal (“mentoring”) learning process. Like Adair and Malphurs and Mancini, the authors emphasise strategy as a key component of the leadership development process and a variety of learning methods.²¹

Hence a composite model which will, according to the informed and experienced authors, develop quality volunteer leaders can be developed:

Theological Principle	Adair’s Principles	Malphurs and Mancini	Forman, Jones, and Miller
Modelling-mentoring	Growing leaders need one-on-one attention	Mentor-driven training	Personal (“mentoring”) learning
Discernment of leadership ability before appointment	Appoint leaders who show leadership		
Discipleship as a part of leadership development			Relationship-based (“community”) learning
	Develop a leadership development strategy	A “blueprint” for leadership development	
	Leaders should not be appointed without first receiving training	Content-driven training	Wisdom-based (“courses”) learning
	Give opportunities to lead	Experience-driven training	
	Leaders need education		
	The Pastoral staff		

²⁰ Forman, Jones, and Miller, *Leadership Baton*, 25.

²¹ Forman, Jones, and Miller, *Leadership Baton*, 61.

	need to lead the leadership development process		
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Methods of Leadership Development

In addition to these *principles* of leadership development a number of *methods* are suggested by management literature. Van Velsor, McCauley, and Ruderman²² have recently summarised the various approaches:

Table 2 Methods of Leader Development

Methods of Leader Development	
Developmental relationships Mentors Professional coaches Manager as coach Peer learning partners Social identity networks Communities of practice	Developmental assignments Job moves Job rotations Expanded work responsibilities Temporary assignments Action learning projects Leadership roles outside work
Feedback processes Performance appraisal 360-degree feedback Assessment centers	Formal programs University programs Skill training Feedback-intensive programs Personal growth programs
Self-development activities Reading (books, articles, online resources) Speakers and colloquia Professional conferences and trade shows Fireside chats, town hall meetings, all-staff meetings	

Some of these methods are not applicable in volunteer, non-profit organisations like churches. For example, very few churches would have resources to utilise Assessment Centres for their volunteer leaders. However, the table presents an informed and broad list of methods that a church could use in leadership development.

From the literature described above, many different frameworks could be derived. The researchers adopted the following list of principles and methods as a best compromise between conciseness and detail when seeking to combine the scholarship into some kind of framework of methods/principles:

²² E. Van Velsor, C. D. McCauley, and M. N. Ruderman, *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, vol. 122 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 45.

1. Formal one-on-one modelling-mentoring
2. Informal one-on-one modelling-mentoring
3. A discernment process of leadership ability before appointment
4. Discipleship programs especially for leaders
5. A formal leadership development strategy/process
6. Church-based leadership training programs
7. Leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations
8. Recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study
9. Creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders
10. Performance appraisals
11. 360-degree feedback
12. Ministry/job rotation
13. Reading programs

Methodology

The purpose of this research was to ascertain how Queensland Baptist churches are developing volunteer leaders and how effectively are they doing it. This section will address the reasoning behind the research methodology. Two factors influenced the methodology chosen for this research:

1. Baptist pastors are in an excellent position to describe the levels of volunteer leadership in their churches and the leadership formation processes that are in place.
2. The researchers had access to the vast majority of Queensland Baptist pastors through two large conferences which occur annually and through an electronic database.

Given brief access to this large and informed sample, a survey was the most suitable method to explore the breadth and effectiveness of Queensland Baptist leadership development. The survey was distributed at the two conferences attended by the pastors and via a hyperlink to an online version sent out via the database. The survey is attached in Appendix A.

The survey defined volunteer leaders as ministry team leaders, home group leaders, elders. After obtaining basic respondent information (role in church, size of church) the survey used five-point Likert scales to measure:

- the pastor's satisfaction with the number of volunteer leaders in his/her church.
- the pastor's satisfaction with the quality of volunteer leadership in his/her church.
- the pastor's satisfaction with the volunteer leadership development process in his/her church.

This enabled a check for the relationship between the number and quality of volunteer leaders and the quality of leadership development. The primary tool used to measure the relationship between two

items is correlation. The most common measure of correlation is the Pearson correlation (r).²³ However, Spearman's rho (r_s) is the non-parametric alternative to correlation, and it is used when the data do not meet the assumptions about normality, homoscedasticity and linearity. Spearman rank correlation works by converting each variable to ranks. Once the two variables are converted to ranks, a correlation analysis is done on the ranks.²⁴ Both measures of correlation were used in the research.

A correlation measures the degree of relationship between two variables on a scale from 0 to +/- 1.0. A correlation of +/-1.0 indicates a perfect relationship. A correlation of zero indicates no relationship at all. Intermediate values represent the degree to which the data points approximate the perfect fit.

However, all variables are correlated to some extent; rarely will a correlation be exactly zero. Once a correlation is computed, the probability that the observed correlation occurred by chance must be determined. This is called the significance test. The significance level (p) indicates how likely it is that the correlations reported may be due to chance. The smaller the p -level, the greater the probability the correlation is *not* due to chance. A significance level of $p < .05$ means that the odds that the correlation is a chance occurrence are no more than 5 out of 100.

The second part of the survey related to volunteer leadership development methods. Participants were asked to indicate whether they used the methods/principles identified by the literature review and how effective they were in developing volunteer leaders. It was assumed that if a pastor was unsure what terms like "360 degree feedback" or "discipleship programs especially for leaders" meant they would not be using that principle/method and would just indicate "no" on the survey. Hence pastors would construct their own meaning from terms such as "discipleship programs especially for leaders" but the meanings constructed by those using the method would be informed and consistent.

The methodology also involved a focus group of Queensland Baptist pastors. The group was composed of pastors from large and small churches. The purpose of the group was to assess the overall validity of the research project and to draw feedback on a draft survey form. The focus group confirmed that the hypothesis that there was a shortage of quality lay leaders was worthy of further investigation. Minor suggestions to improve the survey form were incorporated as suggested by the pilot group.

Findings

One hundred and six pastors from geographical range of churches successfully completed the survey. (There are approximately 300 Queensland Baptist pastors). Slightly over half (50.4%) of the sample had a congregation size of less than 200. Approximately a sixth (15.0%) listed their congregation size as larger than 500.

²³ Frederick Gravetter and Larry B Wallnau, *Statistics for the Behavioural Sciences*, 7th ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson, 2007).

²⁴ J. H. McDonald, *Handbook of Biological Statistics*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Sparky House Publishing, 2009), 222.

The makeup was as follows:

Position	Frequency	Percent
Senior Pastor	29	27.1
Solo Pastor	18	16.8
Associate Pastor	23	21.5
Other	36	33.6
Total	106	99.1

The first research question related to the number and quality of volunteer leaders. The mean responses to the relevant questions based on a five point Likert scale were as following.

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
How satisfied are you with the <i>number</i> of volunteer leaders in your church?	3.2	1.0
<i>"Our church has enough volunteer leaders to function as effectively as we would like."</i>	2.6	1.0
How satisfied are you with the <i>quality</i> of the volunteer leaders in your church?	3.7	0.9
<i>"The quality of the volunteer leaders in our church is adequate for us to function as effectively as we would like."</i>	2.6	1.0
How satisfied are you with the quality of the training offered to volunteer leaders in your church?	2.7	1.0
<i>"The quality of the training offered to volunteer leaders in our church is adequate for us to function as effectively as we would like."</i>	2.7	1.0

These results indicate a moderate level of satisfaction with the number and quality of lay leaders. Pastors were generally more satisfied with the quality (3.7) than the number (3.2). Although only 46.7% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the *number* of volunteer leaders in their church the majority (72.0%) of pastors were satisfied or very satisfied with the *quality* of the lay leaders in their church. The smaller churches (<99) (50% - 15 out of 30) and the largest (500+) had the highest percentage of satisfaction (50% - 8 out of 16) with the number of leaders.

The respondents were less satisfied with the quality of training they were able to offer (2.7). Over half of the pastors (52.3%) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of training offered to lay leaders. Only three pastors could strongly agree with the statement.

In terms of both the number and quality of leaders and their impact on the ability of the church “to function as effectively as we would like” the mean response was 2.6. This was less than the mean response to the corresponding “satisfaction” questions. This indicates that on average, although pastors are moderately satisfied with the number and quality of their leaders they were less likely to have enough quality leaders to operate as effectively as they liked.

There was no relationship between pastoral position and perception of quantity and quality of leaders. Respondents were similarly satisfied or dissatisfied regardless of their position in the church.

The results also indicated that there is no relationship between:

- Attendance and satisfaction with the number of leaders ($r = 0.000$, $p = 0.997$)
- Attendance and enough leaders to function effectively ($r = 0.073$, $p = 0.452$)
- Attendance and satisfaction with volunteer training ($r = 0.120$, $p = 0.220$)
- Attendance and quality of training to function effectively ($r = 0.130$, $p = 0.181$)

This suggests that satisfaction with the number of lay leaders and the quality of training is independent of church size.

However, attendance levels and satisfaction with volunteer quality ($r = 0.191$, $p = 0.049$) and agreement with the statement “The quality of the volunteer leaders in our church is adequate for us to function as effectively as we would like” ($r = 0.252$, $p = 0.009$) were related, suggesting larger churches are more likely to have the quality of leaders to operate effectively. The highest level of satisfaction with quality of volunteer leaders (68.9%) was with the larger congregations (500+), although the smallest congregation (< 99) were also generally satisfied (56.7%). The highest level of disagreement with the statement “The quality of the volunteer leaders in our church is adequate for us to function as effectively as we would like” was in the smaller congregations (60% disagreed). Conversely, the congregations with the highest number of weekly attendees had the highest agreement (66.6%).

The second question related to the methods/principles used by Queensland Baptist churches and their effectiveness.

Usage of Leadership Development Methods/Principles		
Method/Principle	N	%
Creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders	90	84.1
Informal one-on-one modelling-mentoring	90	84.1
A discernment process of leadership ability before appointment	83	77.6
Formal one-on-one modelling-mentoring	73	68.2
Leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations	65	60.7
Church-based leadership training programs	59	55.1
Recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study	50	46.7
Performance appraisals	47	43.9
Discipleship programs especially for leaders	38	35.5
A formal leadership development strategy/process	37	34.6
360-degree feedback	30	28.0
Reading programs	29	27.1
Ministry/job rotation	19	17.8

The most widely used methods/principles of leadership development are informal one-on-one modelling and mentoring, creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders and a discernment process of leadership ability before appointment. Amongst the least utilised were two of the secular management techniques: 360-degree feedback and ministry/job rotation.

Discipleship programs especially for leaders, formal leadership development strategies/processes, church-based leadership training programs, leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations, recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study and ministry/job rotation are all much more popular in the larger congregations (over 500+).

However, when effectiveness is taken into account it is possible to identify effective but under-utilised methods/principles:

Effectiveness of Leadership Development Methods/Principles		
Method/Principle	Mean Effectiveness	% of Churches Using
Creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders	3.7	84.1
A discernment process of leadership ability before appointment	3.7	77.6
Discipleship programs especially for leaders	3.7	35.5
Informal one-on-one modelling-mentoring	3.6	84.1
Formal one-on-one modelling-mentoring	3.6	68.2
Church-based leadership training programs	3.5	55.1
Leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations	3.4	60.7
Performance appraisals	3.2	43.9
Recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study	3.1	46.7
A formal leadership development strategy/process	3.1	34.6
360-degree feedback	3.1	28.0
Reading programs	3.1	27.1

Ministry/job rotation	2.9	17.8
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The table reveals that although “Discipleship programs especially for leaders” is amongst the most effective methods of lay leadership development, it is relatively underutilised with only 35.5% of churches using that method. The widely used “Creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders” and “discernment process of leadership ability before appointment” were also found to be effective.

The third question was concerned with the relationship between the training offered to volunteer leaders and levels of satisfaction with number and quality of volunteer leaders.

- There was a significant correlation between satisfaction with volunteer training and satisfaction with the *number* of leaders ($r = .276$, $p = .004$) and having enough leaders to operate as effectively as desired ($r = .352$, $p = .000$).
- There was also a significant relationship between satisfaction with volunteer training and the *quality* of volunteer leaders in the church ($r = 0.236$, $p = 0.016$) as there was between having enough leaders to function effectively and the quality of the training offered to volunteer leaders being adequate for the church to function effectively ($r = .201$, $p = .038$).
- Churches where the pastors considered the quality of leadership training was adequate to function as effectively as they would like, not surprisingly, had a quality of leaders to function as effectively as they would like ($r = .299$, $p = .002$).

This confirms the hypothesis that if churches invest in leadership development they can develop more and higher quality leaders.

Discussion of Findings

1. Do Queensland Baptist churches have enough volunteer leaders to function as effectively as they would like?

Pastors are generally more satisfied with the quality (mean = 3.7) than the number (mean = 3.2) of volunteer leaders in their church. However, both mean scores fall within the “satisfied” range of the Likert scale rather than the “very satisfied” range. Hence we can conclude that pastors are moderately satisfied with the quality of their volunteer leaders but less so with their number. The worst case scenario is that an older generation of quality leaders are retiring but there are less younger leaders coming through, although, hopefully there are other explanations for this phenomenon.

However, pastors were less likely to indicate that they had enough quality leaders for the church to operate as effectively as it could (mean = 2.6). In other words, pastors recognise that the ministry of their church is hampered by a lack of quality leaders, yet they are generally satisfied with those they

have. This implies a sense of resignation and acceptance of the status quo. More quality leaders would make the church more effective, but “I need to be satisfied with what I have got.”

If a church’s effectiveness is being hindered by a lack of quality leaders, it needs to do something to address the situation. Unless the church can import fully functional leaders from other churches they must devote resources to developing their own. Doubtless most would subscribe to the assertion that if a church devoted more resources to leadership development, that investment would pay a handsome dividend. However, the survey indicates few churches are doing what it takes to develop their own leaders to allow the church to function more effectively.

There was no relationship between pastoral position and perception of number and quality of leaders. Respondents were similarly satisfied or dissatisfied regardless of their position in the church. However, the survey revealed that larger churches are more likely to have the *quality* of leadership to operate as effectively as they would like than smaller churches. Smaller churches would seem to have enough leaders, but they are lacking in quality. On the surface this would be expected because larger churches have more people to draw on. However, when one considers that larger churches have more ministries for which they require more leaders to function effectively, and hence a greater demand for leaders, other explanations are required. A suggestion for why larger churches have a greater quality of volunteer leaders is explained below.

2. What methods of leadership development are Queensland Baptist churches using and which are most effective?

The most widely used methods/principles of leadership development are informal one-on-one modelling and mentoring, creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders and a discernment process of leadership ability before appointment. Significantly, although effective, all three could be classified as “informal.” They reflect a likely scenario where a pastor has a position that needs filling (“creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders”), they look for the best qualified person to fill the role (“discernment process of leadership ability before appointment”) and give them a phone call as time allows to see how they are going (“informal one-on-one modelling and mentoring”). Notably absent are the methods requiring pre-planning and strategic investment of resources before or after appointment (e.g. Formal one-on-one modelling-mentoring, Church-based leadership training programs or Leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations.) We can conclude that in many Queensland Baptist churches any discernible leadership development methods/principles are largely *ad hoc* and reactive.

As Malphurs & Mancini²⁵ assert, this is not intentional. Either the church is growing so rapidly, or is so under-resourced, that this *ad hoc* approach is all the leaders of the church have time for. "Churches are always in need of more volunteer leaders, but many pastors are so busy keeping everything running that they haven't had the time or capacity to dedicate to creating a leadership development process."²⁶ Yet, this lack of strategic investment in leadership development inevitably results in a lack of quality leaders and the same continual demands on the existing competent leaders.

The survey also indicated that although "Discipleship programs especially for leaders" is amongst the most effective methods of lay leadership development, it is relatively underutilised with only 35.5% of churches using the method. The model resonates with the methods of Jesus in personal discipleship of his prospective leaders, the twelve disciples (Mark 3:14). Again, this method requires strategic investment and pre-planning, yet it bears fruit in terms of the quality of the leaders it provides for the church.

3. What is the relationship between satisfaction with training offered to volunteer leaders and levels of satisfaction with number and quality of volunteer leaders?

The research demonstrates that there is a relationship between satisfaction with volunteer training and having enough leaders to operate as effectively as desired and the quality and number of lay leaders in a church. This confirms the anecdotal hypothesis discussed earlier. We can now confidently assert that if pastors invest in leadership development they will have more quality leaders and the church will be able to function more effectively. However, as discussed, many pastors are so stretched that they do not have time to invest in this crucial activity.

The issue would appear to be aggravated in smaller churches. Although no more satisfied with the quality of training, larger church pastors were more satisfied with the quality of their leaders. However, we can discern that the leadership development principles/methods are different in the larger churches. Larger churches are more likely to use strategic and formal methods/programs such as discipleship programs especially for leaders, formal leadership development strategies/processes, church-based leadership training programs, leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations, recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study and ministry/job rotation. Although the pastors of larger churches are still not very satisfied with what they are offering, these methods/principles are contributing significantly to the quality of the volunteer leaders.

²⁵ Malphurs and Mancini, *Building leaders: Blueprints for developing leadership at every level of your church*: 257-58.

²⁶ Willow Creek Association, "Leadership Development: A Working Model," *Defining Moments* September(2007).

Conclusions & Recommendations

This research has sought to bring empirical evidence to bear on speculation regarding volunteer leadership development in churches. In the Queensland Baptist context, the following conclusions and recommendations emerge:

1. Pastors are moderately satisfied with the number of volunteer leaders in their churches, but less so with the quality. However, even though moderately satisfied, they acknowledge that their churches do not have enough volunteer leaders to operate as effectively as they like. Churches that have better volunteer leadership training have more and better leaders, regardless of church size.
 - Churches should seek to invest more heavily in leadership development for increasing church effectiveness.
2. The quality of church leadership grows with increasing church size. It is unclear from this research why this is the case. However, the more strategic and formal methods of leadership training more often utilised in larger churches are suggestive.
 - Churches of all sizes should utilise more strategic and formal leadership training principles/methods such as discipleship programs especially for leaders, formal leadership development strategies/processes, church-based leadership training programs, leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations and recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study.
 - Further research in this area is warranted.
3. An effective but underutilised method of leadership training is discipleship programs especially for leaders. However, the nature of these programs could not be determined from this research.
 - Research in to the type of discipleship programs especially for leaders used in churches is warranted.

This research has confirmed a number of commonly held hypotheses about volunteer leadership development. However, it has also revealed that the issue is more acute in terms of the number of leaders and that larger churches generally have better quality leaders. It has also highlighted the importance of discipleship programs for leaders reflecting the ancient methodologies of the early church.

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Appendix

Leadership Development Survey

This survey is part of a research project to explore the leadership development of volunteer leaders (e.g. ministry team leaders, home group leaders, elders) in Queensland Baptist churches. It should only take 5 minutes to complete and will provide valuable information for the research. Thank you for your time.

1. What is your position at your church (please circle one):

Senior Pastor Solo Pastor Associate Pastor Other

2. Looking back over the last 12 months, what has been the average total number of people (including children) who attend one or more worship services at your church per week?

0-49	50-99	100-149	150-199	250-299	300-349	350-399	400-449	500+
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3. How satisfied are you with the *number* of volunteer leaders in your church?

Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral/Unsure Satisfied Very satisfied

4. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this statement?:

“Our church has enough volunteer leaders to function as effectively as we would like.”

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral/Unsure Agree Strongly agree

5. How satisfied are you with the *quality* of the volunteer leaders in your church?

Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral/Unsure Satisfied Very satisfied

6. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this statement?:

“The quality of the volunteer leaders in our church is adequate for us to function as effectively as we would like.”

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral/Unsure Agree Strongly agree

7. How satisfied are you with the quality of the training offered to volunteer leaders in your church?

Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral/Unsure Satisfied Very satisfied

8. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this statement?:

“The quality of the training offered to volunteer leaders in our church is adequate for us to function as effectively as we would like.”

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral/Unsure Agree Strongly agree

9. Which of the following methods/principles of volunteer leadership development do you utilise in your church? For each method you utilise, please indicate how effective it has been:

1 – Very ineffective 2 – Ineffective 3 - Unsure 4 - Effective 5 – Very effective

Method/Principle	Does your church utilise this method/principle?	Effectiveness of Method (please circle)				
		1	2	3	4	5
Formal one-on-one modelling-mentoring	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Informal one-on-one modelling-mentoring	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
A discernment process of leadership ability before appointment	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Discipleship programs especially for leaders	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
A formal leadership development	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5

strategy/process						
Church-based leadership training programs	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership training seminars/conferences run by other organisations	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Recommending volunteer leaders undertake theological study	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Creating leadership opportunities for potential leaders	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Performance appraisals	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
360-degree feedback	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Ministry/job rotation	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Reading programs	Yes / no	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please give details):		1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your time.