



**Commission**  
Adventure Together



# A Leadership Framework





**God has called every single one of us to fulfil the Great Commission: in all of our going to make disciples of all nations.**

**That call of Jesus is the prophetic and biblical inspiration for the name of our family of churches – we are on Christ’s mission. But it’s also “co-mission”; we’re in this together.**

We’re united by a shared passion for Jesus, shared biblical values and with a clear vision to see thousands of lives transformed, through hundreds of churches, in tens of nations. If we’re to see this vision from God fulfilled, the urgent priority is for each person to play their part. There are no exceptions.

The church is the family of God, and strong families need fathers and mothers who embrace their God-given responsibilities! This means every church leader has a mandate to not only care for the local church but also to give themselves to raising men and women to take on leadership roles for the good of the whole body, investing in their growth and seeing people released into leadership – according to their gift and calling. Without more leaders of every kind, we’ll struggle to resource the churches we already have in Commission, let alone planting more sites and churches in the future. Jesus says the harvest is plentiful and the labourers few, so developing a leadership pipeline is vital for every generation.

We want to see the flourishing of all God’s people: young and old, men and women, from every nation, tribe and tongue. This excellent ‘leadership development’ tool has been created as a way of serving and helping each of us do this; to spot leadership potential in others, to begin thinking about how they might grow into all God has for them, and to start a conversation that leads to some intentional action. It’s not the full package by any means...it’s just a starting point. But I want to commend this to you as an accessible way to increase your ability to start people off on a journey towards leadership – whether that’s church planting, aspiring to eldership, or any other type of leadership. All play an important role in equipping God’s people to reach the lost.

I believe we’re on the edge of seeing many more salvations and the multiplication of our churches. To fulfil God’s gracious plan everyone needs to play their part and every leader must give themselves to raising more leaders.

This comes with great excitement and love and with our continued prayers,

**Guy and Heather**





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# Introducing a Leadership Framework

Have you ever tried typing 'Leadership'  
into the Amazon Books search engine?  
You'll get over 100,000 results!



**...So if there's at least 100,000 books on leadership (and that's probably at least 100,000 different opinions) we know there's not just one 'right' definition of what good leadership looks like in practice, when considering how we identify, support and release leaders across the Commission family of churches.**

The truth is that every leader is different. There may well be common ingredients but the way they combine will produce a very diverse set of results.

We all have our favourite leadership acronyms and models and we're not suggesting that they be consigned to the bin – in fact we've considered some of them as we've formed this Framework! However, we do think they are part of the picture rather than anything near the whole picture; often relevant at a particular time or context but certainly not a 'one-size fits all' for everyone, all of the time.

Our objective has been to find a way of providing a frame on which we can 'hang' the various ideas and approaches to leadership; we've called it the Leadership Framework!

It's not a prescription for what leadership should look like, but rather a tool to help leaders explore and reflect upon some of the various ingredients of Christian leadership, including the practical aspects of leading that we can sometimes overlook.

It provides three broad categories that combine together to define any particular leader.

These categories are simply defined as:

- Character
- Calling, and
- Capability

Each of these will mean different things to each of us, but the detail provided in this short brochure is designed to help you to understand where we've put what. Leaders don't always possess (or have to possess) every ingredient and each leader will represent a uniquely fashioned and gifted (and imperfect!) individual. It's up to you to decide what you think is needed in each context, using the Framework as a prompt to help your thinking. The Framework is by no means perfect and it's not intended to be; we hope to see it develop and find local, contextualised expressions as you find ways to make it work for you and the potential leaders around you.

**The Leadership Framework is intended to help with:**

- Easier and broader identification of leadership gift and ability
- Developing leaders' gifting, character, and leadership skills
- A greater number and variety of leaders raised, leading to an abundance of equipped leaders across Commission to serve in every area of church life and beyond.





# **Overview:**

**Character, Calling, Capability**



## **Here's an overview of the framework – helping us to think about different aspects of leadership.**

**There are definitions within the framework**, that are not exhaustive, but start to help us think about what those aspects of leadership might look like in more detail.

**There are conversation cards** – to help you to start talking about the aspects of the framework in a natural and relational way. These are designed to make the aspects of leadership easier to explore. They're largely in the form of questions and can be used in a variety of ways by you, your team, or by potential leaders.

**There's a suggested approach** for those of you who'd like help with some structure or flow – this is one way of approaching raising leaders, and it may be that you use some of it, all of it, or none of it, depending on what suits your circumstances. There are some key points to focus and prioritise our thinking, as a helpful prompt.

### **What's next?**

In future, we'll be developing other tools and ways of helping you to raise leaders in your own local context, as well as reviewing our centralised leadership development offerings to complement this, as part of the ongoing SURE strategy (our plan to enable churches to Send, Unify, Release and Equip, through volunteers from across many of the churches in the Commission family). We've invested in a Director of Leadership Development for a fixed term to focus on creating more resources to enable this work across our churches.

### **Leadership Framework: The 3 Cs**

- Character
- Calling
- Capability

# Character

<b>Aspects to consider...</b>	<b>What it looks like</b>
<b>Like Jesus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good moral character</li><li>• Biblical requirements</li><li>• Gracious, loves people, humble and servant-hearted</li></ul>
<b>Attitude</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teachable, good follower, submitting to others</li><li>• Mature, leading self, motivated</li></ul>
<b>Walk with God</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Godly conduct and behaviour</li><li>• Seeking spiritual growth</li></ul>
<b>Commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• God first; stuck in to the life of the church and in life</li><li>• Reliable and consistent</li></ul>
<b>Charisma or Clout</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural influencer of others; can be quietly or loudly – beware of stereo-typing and particularly in your own image!</li><li>• Clout / gravitas / energy / warmth</li></ul>
<b>Chemistry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good team fit – NB unity doesn't mean uniformity!</li><li>• Aligned hearts for vision</li></ul>
<b>Beliefs &amp; behaviours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gets and lives the Commission culture / DNA</li></ul>
<b>Identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Secure in their identity as a person and as a leader rather than in any title or position-led authority.</li></ul>

## What it isn't...

- **Perfection!**
- **Extraversion; charm; those who shout loudest**
- **Being the same/replicas.**

# Calling

## Aspects to consider...

## What it looks like

### Anointing

- Continuing evidence of God's anointing / power

### Spiritual Gifting

- A desire to take risks and so grow in the supernatural

### Ephesians 4 ministry

- Operating in spiritual gifts and/or Ephesians 4 ministry in a recognised & observable way

### Passion / Heart

- A clear and specific driving force / motivator, such as love of the local church; the poor; the lost; the workplace; a certain nation or people group etc.

### Story / Testimony

- A clear, coherent journey of what's led up to leadership moment and faith

### Prophetic / Apostolic call out

- Prophetic or wisdom observation

### Recognition

- Validated by others – and not just by existing leaders

### Stretch – beyond the probable

- Courage to step out beyond what you can do yourself
- The presence of real personal risk and discomfort
- A preparedness to dream and connect with those dreams

### Availability / Capacity

- Right timing, available and / or mobile

## What it isn't...

- An automatic right
- Expectation or an over-rider of character.

# Capabilities – Leading Self

## Aspects to consider...

## What it looks like

### Self-awareness & emotional intelligence

- Accurate assessment of self, remaining secure
- Knows own strengths & weaknesses
- Understands how others perceive them – and their impact on others
- Makes adjustments to own behaviour to manage impact
- Recognises and manages own emotions well
- Is authentic, congruent and has a level of ‘comfort in their own skin’
- Able to be flexible rather than dogmatic

### Managing myself

- Personal responsibility – takes ownership and control of own circumstances
- Can prioritise and manage own time & resources well
- Emotionally healthy and resilient
- Achieves an appropriate work-life balance
- Disciplines of spiritual health
- Develops personal capacity (to carry the load)

### Accountable & Teachable

- Actively seeks, receives and acts on feedback from a range of sources. Recognises need for continual growth
- Looks to learn from others – all ‘types’
- Intentionally plans and records own learning
- Able to adapt to changing circumstances

## What it isn’t...

- An over-rider of character or calling
- A high bar of perfection – growth and ongoing development needs are to be expected. This is about potential capabilities as well as current.

# Capabilities – Leading Others

## Aspects to consider...

## What it looks like

### Style, impact & interpersonal skills

- Effective communicator – clarity, listener, engaging
- Able to adapt style to different people
- Handles conflict well providing constructive feedback
- Encouraging – looks to catch others doing something well
- Relational – relationship builder whether 1to1 or broad network
- Courteous and respectful of others
- Builds community

### Ability to grow & release others

- Good coach / mentor / developer of others so they're well-equipped and able to be released into their own leadership
- Isn't afraid to speak difficult truth into others' lives for their good
- Happy to step back to let others shine and flourish
- Honouring of others – gives credit where credit is due
- Calls out gifting, potential, and good in others. Spots potential leaders
- Able to address under-performance and ultimately remove from leadership if necessary

### Able to apply situational leadership

- Adapts management style (direction v support) according to context – directing, mentoring, coaching and delegating
- Can lead individuals and teams with different levels of expertise and experience. Engages and leads volunteers well
- Able to effectively lead others through change

### Getting things done through others and in teams

- Builds effective teams
- A track record of delivering with and through others. Spends time leading as well as doing!
- Leader of a team; not a leader with a team
- Can reconcile personal views with supporting the team or wider view, when needed. Able to resolve inner conflicts with integrity
- Effective facilitator of groups and meetings
- Organises and manages others effectively. Builds sustainable processes.

# Capabilities – Leading Leaders

## Aspects to consider...

## What it looks like

**Finds quality time to think, plan and articulate direction over the medium and long-term**

- Very effective personal time-management and prioritisation skill
- Takes time to understand external context
- Able to lift themselves above the 'day-to-day' and take a 'helicopter view'
- Articulates a mission and vision that motivates and unites
- Articulates clear outcomes rather than prescribing the 'How'
- Repeatedly communicates and models culture
- Focuses on 'what next'; lifting eyes to the horizon whilst still knowing where feet are treading now

**Allocates the majority of their time to develop and empower other leaders. Creates an environment where other leaders can flourish and grow.**

- Very effective at identifying those who can lead vs. those who can do
- Empowers and releases leaders, defining clear boundaries and permissions
- Holds other leaders accountable for how they lead
- Develops relationships of deep trust with their leaders; not afraid to provide 'stretch' and challenge as well as support
- Resists the temptation to take over or do it themselves
- Develops leaders to contribute to the whole as well as their specific area of responsibility
- Provides meaningful learning opportunities
- Effective in equipping leaders to identify and develop other leaders

**Enables others**

**Barrier Breaker**

**Bridge Builder**

- Enables the team and other leaders to break through barriers to progress
- Builds networks of key relationships internally and externally
- Manages and allocates resources effectively – makes the big calls when consensus cannot be found

**Finger on the pulse**

- Tests the detail through occasional and targeted focus in key areas
- Creates and takes opportunities to listen actively, widely and carefully

**Relationship and accountability**

- Develops and is accountable to an external and internal relational network
- Responds positively to apostolic input.

# Capabilities – Leadership Impact

## Aspects to consider...

## What it looks like

**Leaders in churches will usually have the greatest impact in one of or a combination of the following types – but they will tend to possess a leadership ‘peak’ in one of them.**

- **Visionary/ Strategic leader**
- **Theological/ Thought leader**
- **People leader**
- **Organisational leader**
- **Pioneering leader**

**Continual development and application of these strengths is a key priority for leaders.**

**These ‘peaks’ can be particularly effective when combined with passion/heart – e.g. ministry to the poor.**

### Visionary/Strategic Leader

- Creates ‘tilt’
- Motivates through casting a compelling vision of the future
- Thinks bigger picture, sees connections
- Not afraid to try something new
- Establishes broader relationships and networks inside and outside church

### Theological/Thought Leader

- Thinks theologically
- Has developed deep knowledge and insight
- Shapes consensus around core values
- Deep, broad passion for learning
- Analyses and communicates clearly

### People Leader

- Easily engages others. Creates time and opportunity to listen
- Works across teams to ensure alignment and cooperation
- Leads change well. Takes people with them
- Releases capacity in and through others
- Builds community

### Organisational Leader

- Builds sustainable governance, processes and structures that release and survive key people
- Skilled at strategic planning including key resource allocation and management

### Pioneering Leader

- A self-starter, loads of initiative
- Loves to start new things and structure for future
- Generates fresh ideas, comfortable with wise risks and ambiguity
- Has tenacity and drive, is proactive, creates momentum and has ability to bounce back after disappointments.

# Leadership Framework: ways to use

**There are definitions within the framework that are not exhaustive, but start to help us think about what those aspects of leadership might look like; either for your own reflection in preparing to develop leadership, or as a prompt for the potential leader themselves to consider what they might want to focus on nurturing themselves.**

**Here are a few ideas on how you could use the Framework...**







**Review the framework & agree together:**

**1. Which areas are priority / relevant?**

**2. Which aspects need to be well established before taking on a leadership role, and which can still be developing? (and how will you know when you've reached that point?)**

**3. What sort of timeframe is reasonable for this initial development journey?**

**Use the conversation cards:**

The Conversation Cards are designed to help you to start talking about the aspects of the framework and explore leadership in a natural and relational way. They're largely in the form of questions and can be used by you to prompt your own thinking, or that of your team, about who might be showing some of these leadership aspects.

Or the cards can be used by you to reflect on as preparation before talking to a potential leader, or for use during the conversation as a visual aid for both you and the potential leader. Or even as a reflection tool for the potential leader to prepare for discussion, focus their self-development priorities or even to assess themselves and identify growth points.

- We suggest only using 1 or 2 cards each time you meet, otherwise a natural conversation can become an interrogation if too many questions are asked in each meeting! But they are asked in the first person to help avoid the conversation feeling like an interview!
- Some people might find the answers easy to talk about straight away, some might need time to reflect. Everyone's different – try to establish what will work best for the person before you meet.

# Ideas for leadership development activity

One of the best ways to learn is by putting leadership into practice! Perhaps start by giving small opportunities to lead, increasing over time; or try some of our other tips...



**With a new or inexperienced leader, it's good to give lots of clear direction and support at first, slowly decreasing this over time as their confidence and ability grows, or as you discuss together how they feel they would be best supported.**

Give feedback so they can learn as they go – this isn't a one-off test with a pass or fail outcome, it's a learning journey. When things don't go as well as hoped, the developing leader should receive honest and specific feedback coupled with pastoral care (truth spoken in love) and be helped to grow as they gain understanding about how to do things differently.

If they are an experienced leader (for example in business or a previous church) they might need less direction and more freedom to show what they can do. It's good to work out what approach will work best for the person before you.

**Other ways to develop include:**

- **Shadowing and observing** other leaders as they lead, and/or prepare to lead
- **Mentoring and / or discipleship** – direct input from a good existing leader
- **Coaching** – getting a 121 coach to help explore specific areas of development for short, focused periods of time, particularly in the areas of capability and skills (this is best with a qualified or experienced coach, and usually requires some financial investment)
- **Self-teaching / study or research** (recommended books, blogs, videos, conferences, web-based learning etc.)

- **Diverse 'stretch' experiences** – this could be anything ranging from encouraging them to lead something outside of their usual context (such as a serving team at Connect Festival, or in the community – a setting where they're leading an unfamiliar activity with people they don't know) to spending time with a church plant or even being based in a different church
- **Courses and training** – while these alone don't 'make leaders' they do provide some helpful teaching and input from a broad base (usually require financial investment)
- **Self-awareness tools** – such as personality or psychometric profiling, etc. (sometimes requires a small financial investment)
- **Exposure** – to leadership meetings, difficult pastoral situations etc. – whatever looks like appropriate practice, first observing / doing with you but taking a back seat, then doing with you (taking a lead with you as back up), then enabled to do without you
- **Increased, regular leading opportunities** in the context they aspire to lead in, with appropriate support as needed
- **Learning groups / discussions** – meeting with other new or developing leaders to reflect on what's going well, and what's not going so well, and share learning
- **Feedback** – from you, from others they regular interact with, teams they lead etc. as well as their own self-reflections. This can be done informally through conversation, or in a more structured way during a meeting, through an email or feedback survey etc.

# Top tips

**Growing leaders can take many different forms, but it should always be tailored to what suits the circumstance and the relationship – there's no magic formula or one right way of doing things!**

**Here are some top tips before you begin:**

- Be intentional about leadership development: know why it matters to you, how it advances the Kingdom and what priority you want to give it, in terms of how you want to spend your time. Then ensure you've booked out that time in your diary, and make firm plans to put your conviction into practice!
- Growing and developing leaders can be done by other leaders in the church too; it doesn't have to all be done by one person. But the church leadership team, and especially the lead elder, will communicate that this matters by leading by example and doing this themselves with at least one potential leader.
- Try to think beyond the 'usual' candidates: if we always do what we've always done, this means we'll always get what we've always got! Human nature causes us to notice leadership most often in those who are quite like us. By consciously pushing yourself to consider people who are different to you and using the framework to reflect on the people in your church you haven't considered before, you might find there's more potential than you'd thought!
- Not everyone will suit being a leader or have the necessary gifting, and it's up to you or those you're asking to develop leaders to work out what potential there is for someone to learn, and when to communicate that – considering whether leadership might not be right for them, or whether it's just that the context may not be right for them. Could they lead elsewhere?
- Just start somewhere: even if it's just one or two people initially and even if they're not sure about taking on a leadership role yet!
- Manage expectations: don't promise leadership as an automatic result of the development, but rather just some time exploring it and investing in the person for a season, being open to where it may or may not lead.
- Reflection and discussion should lead to action: either a clear plan of what steps need to be taken by the potential leader in order to grow and develop, and/or eventually a decision on what they will lead (or not!) and when.
- Use the PREPARATION CARDS within the Conversation Card set to help you with your own thinking before you begin.

In truth, developing leaders is very much like making disciples: the focus must be on 'What does Jesus have in store for this person?' rather than just trying to fill a need. That's not to say we don't plan for the future though – we rarely give time to planning the future of leadership and we must for the future of the church.

So look to sow seeds widely when you consider who you'll be using the Leadership Framework and Conversation Cards with! Why not get a series of conversations in the diary and have a go?

### **Where did this come from?**

This is an output of the work within the SURE strategy (to Send, Unify, Release and Equip people across our churches). We developed the Leadership Framework and created the 'Conversation Cards' to help with using it in a relational way.

### **How was it developed?**

A working group of volunteers (made up primarily of leaders within Commission churches), led by Robin Willison, Eireana Davis and championed by Steve Petch, gaining input from:

- Hubs (groups of leaders gathered by region)
- A sample of elders and lead elders, and other strategic leaders in a variety of churches
- Commission UK Leadership Team
- Best practice in other spheres of Newfrontiers
- Best practice in church groups outside of Newfrontiers
- Mainstream leadership best practice, where appropriate.

We researched multiple models, listened to challenges faced and existing resources leaders favoured, before drafting this tool as an initial response to help raising leaders. We also used these places of input to share drafts of the Framework as we created it and gathered initial feedback to help us shape it as we went.

We piloted the Framework and Cards with a number of lead elders who used the tools in real-life leadership conversations and development groups within their churches for a few months, and their feedback informed this latest version.

### **What it's intended to do (and not do!)**

This is an optional tool for the essential work of raising leaders in your local context, and although it can be used for leadership outside of the church, it has been primarily designed with church leadership roles in mind. It's intended to help you think more about the potential of the people around you, the future of leadership in your church and key ministries, or even releasing those who are gifted to lead in other contexts.

It's not intended to be prescriptive... We know the majority of leadership identification and development will happen in the context of the local church and seek to offer a helpful 'aid' in doing so, to make it easier to prepare and hopefully even more fruitful in outcomes.

It's also not intended to set an impossibly high bar – no one is going to perfectly fulfill every aspect of leadership potential. It's up to you to work out which aspects are essential to the specific context of the leader.

This is just the first tool in a wide range of resources we're aiming to provide for leadership development over the next year or two.

# Background

## Who is the Leadership Framework for?

**As we'll need hundreds of leaders for 'hundreds of churches' to see our vision fulfilled, the initial priority focus in Commission is to support:**

- Those who may have potential to lead a church or site in future (as an individual) or those who have potential to lead in church as part of a leadership team
- Those with potential to plant a new church
- Those with (or with potential for) a ministry beyond their local church, including Ephesians 4 ministries.

It's important to note that we aren't limiting the Leadership Framework to apply exclusively to the role of 'elder' within a church context, but to all forms of broad leadership that each local church wishes to put in place, recognising that team structures vary across churches. Therefore, 'leader' and 'elder' are not used interchangeably, but leadership is used as a broad term to encompass eldership within it and also include all other types of leadership as well – the Framework is equally applicable to both.

In order to keep this as a broad and multi-purpose tool as a starting point for all leadership development, the Framework doesn't seek to cover any specific theological learning required or any other detailed role / gift-specific development, such as how to develop an evangelist. This is work we will be doing as a next step, in future, utilising the expertise of those amongst us already operating in these gifts or roles.

Whilst the Leadership Framework has been created with a current priority focus of church-based leadership, it can be used for all leaders in any context, by selecting and adapting the relevant aspects to suit your needs. Leadership in the workplace is also a hugely important and equally valuable role with significant Kingdom impact!





