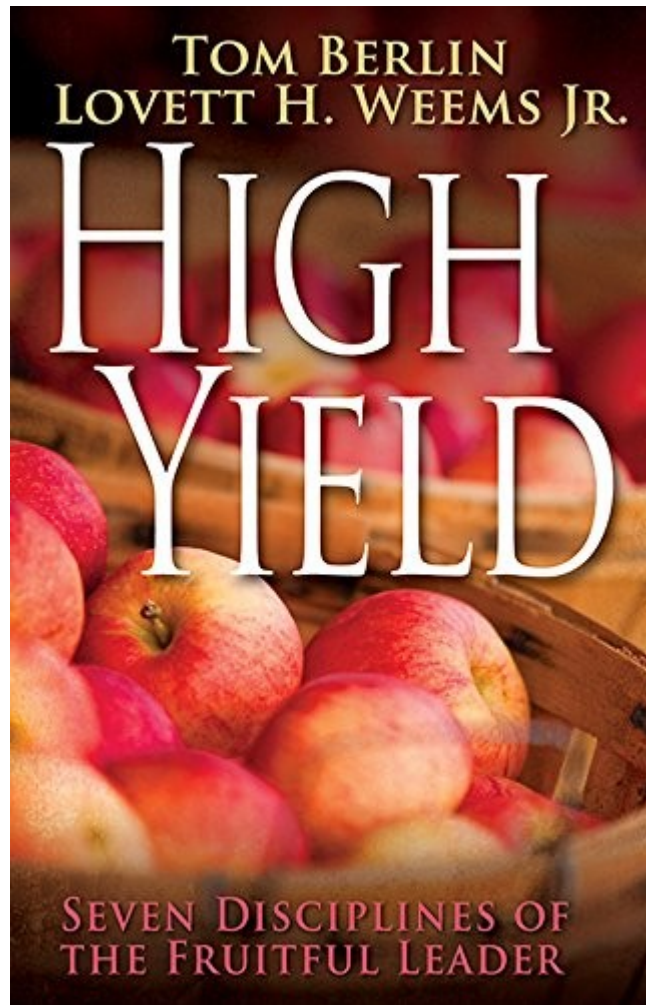


IMPLEMENTATION EXERCISES FOR



ABINGDON PRESS, 2014

These exercises are offered to give readers of *High Yield* suggested ways in which they might practice some of the lessons from the book. Perhaps one or more chapters address a leadership practice you wish to strengthen. By selecting some of these exercises (or others they suggest to you), you will be able to live your way into the improved leadership skill while the new ideas are fresh and your motivation is high. Good wishes as you grow as a fruitful leader.

CHAPTER 1 — BUILD TRUST

LOVE GOD ▪ REMEMBER LEADERSHIP IS ALWAYS ABOUT A GROUP ▪ ATTEND TO PEOPLE IN THEIR TIMES OF NEED ▪ PRESUME GRACE ▪ SPEND YOUR OWN CREDIBILITY ▪ LEAD WHERE YOU ARE

- Practice a presumption of grace by using the “I’m so proud” or “I’m so honored” formula. Remember, those words should be followed by something that is true and that you would like to see in greater abundance. What you are affirming may not be representative of current reality, but it presumes the best in looking to the future. [Presume Grace]
- One key component of credibility is the quality of relationships. Think of individuals and groups important to the fruitfulness of your leadership. Spend time with some of them — time that you normally would not have spent. [Spend Your Own Credibility]
- If you knew you were going to be in your current leadership position for the next ten years, what is an issue to which you would give time and attention that you now are not giving? [Lead Where You Are]

CHAPTER 2 — LEAD THE JOURNEY

NAME THE PRESENT ▪ ENGAGE THE PAST ▪ PAY ATTENTION TO THE CULTURE ▪ ENVISION THE FUTURE ▪ UNDERSTAND HOW HARD CHANGE IS ▪ BELIEVE THINGS CAN HAPPEN

- If your church has a “creation story,” begin using it to connect with current initiatives. If not, develop one and test it out. [Engage the Past]
- How might you encourage your congregation to “take the next faithful step” by framing a new initiative within the context of becoming “more of what we have been”? What “back to the basics” considerations might you include to move your congregation from a survival to a thrive mode? [Envision the Future]
- Think of an upcoming change. Now view it from the perspective of various people not involved in the change. How might your consideration of their perspectives influence how the change is made or communicated? [Understand How Hard Change Is]
- In your prayers, what audacious goal do you sense God might be putting before your congregation that you are not sure you believe is possible? Make a choice to believe it can happen. What changed as a result? What is the first step in moving toward this goal? [Believe Things Can Happen]

CHAPTER 3 — SET HIGH STANDARDS

INSIST ON EXCELLENCE ▪ AVOID CONTROL, EXPECT ACCOUNTABILITY ▪ PAY ATTENTION TO THE SMALL THINGS ▪ MEASURE TO LEARN, NOT JUDGE ▪ COUNT PEOPLE AS CAREFULLY AS MONEY

- If “better is better,” what are some areas for improvement within your church? Pick one and formulate a plan for improvement. Who will be involved and what will be done? Implement the plan and reflect on the outcomes. What did you learn? [Insist on Excellence]
- Choose a focus area (facility, culture, or processes). What small improvements could make a big difference? Make a plan and implement the changes. What was the impact of these changes? [Pay Attention to the Small Things]
- Set or choose a goal that is in place for your congregation (e.g., reach 60 children in Sunday school). Think about what you have done to reach the goal; how you measure, monitor, and report; and what progress you have made. Write what you have *learned* and what you are now *doing* in response to what you learned in order to reach the goal. [Measure to Learn, Not Judge]

CHAPTER 4 — COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

SEE YOURSELF AS THE CHIEF COMMUNICATION OFFICER ▪ PREACH WELL ▪ BECOME AN EXCELLENT SPEAKER ▪ MAKE HEROES OF OTHERS ▪ SPEAK THE WHOLE TRUTH

- Choose a week to make sermon preparation your top priority — a significant portion of each day guarded for this work. Start early in the week to study and reflect on the Scripture daily. Reflecting on the lessons revealed, give your best to preparation. Preach the sermon. What was different about this message? [Preach Well]
- Choose one of the four ways listed to make ordinary people into heroes (*share your ideas generously, share your time, celebrate, notice*), and take action. What did you learn? [Make Heroes of Others]
- Prepare a sermon in which you challenge yourself to “speak the whole truth.” What challenges did you experience in preparing the message? How did you “comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable”? [Speak the Whole Truth]
- Make a list of items you would share with the congregation if you were preaching a “State of the Church” address: a list of accomplishments, challenges and goals that your congregation is working toward at this time. Write a short paragraph that provides good information for each and highlights the contributions of those in the congregation. What are three ways you might share this information with everyone? (Chief Communication Officer)

CHAPTER 5 — REDEEM CONFLICT

ENGAGE CONFLICT ▪ GET COMFORTABLE WITH UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS
▪ KEEP AT IT ▪ BE HUMBLE AND ASSERTIVE ▪ KEEP PERSPECTIVE

- Complete a self-assessment of where you are on the continuum of response to conflict (embrace it too quickly; avoid it completely). What have you learned from conflict within the life of your congregation? How do you “engage conflict” in a way that honors God, others, and you? [Engage Conflict]
- Reflect upon or initiate a “hard conversation.” How did you communicate your concern for the listener and for others? How did you manage the anxiety and emotions that can often be associated with difficult conversations? What did you learn? [Get Comfortable with Uncomfortable Conversations]
- What are the dangers faced when a leadership role becomes an identity? What helps you maintain perspective on your role as a leader? [Keep Perspective]

CHAPTER 6 — CULTIVATE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

DEPEND ON TEAMS ▪ THINK BEFORE ACTING ▪ FIND A FEW WISE PEOPLE ▪ ASK THE
RIGHT QUESTIONS ▪ DELEGATE TASKS, NOT RESPONSIBILITY

- Think of something on which you truly need objective advice. Identify someone you think is a “wise person,” and ask for a time to talk, as suggested in the book. [Find a Few Wise People]
- Identify and use a “right question” with a range of people to receive insights on something important to your leadership context now. [Ask the Right Questions]
- Delegate a task using the steps suggested for effective delegation. [Delegate Tasks, Not Responsibility]

CHAPTER 7 — KEEP GROWING

KNOW YOURSELF ▪ AVOID COMPLACENCY AND OVER-CONFIDENCE ▪ SEEK AND USE
FEEDBACK ▪ FIND MENTORS ▪ MAKE SOME DEAR FRIENDS ▪ STAY IN LOVE WITH GOD

- Engage in a conversation where you are receiving feedback. What did you do to maintain an open and humble posture? What did you learn? [Seek and Use Feedback]
- Engage in mentoring (books, educational events, specialty experts, certified coaches, prayer), and reflect upon the most important lessons learned. [Find Mentors]
- Make time to spend with an old friend or make a new friend. How did this person encourage you or expand your thinking? Reflect on the value of friendship and how God uses it to enhance your ministry. [Make Some Dear Friends]
- What is the difference between your service *for* God and being a servant *of* God? How do your love for God and your understanding of God’s love for you impact your ministry? How do you stay in love with God? [Stay in Love with God]