

VISION INTO REALITY
FINDINGS FROM SELF-ASSESSMENT
Leeds (South) Methodist Circuit
26th April 2003

INDICATOR 1: The Organisation is committed to supporting the development of its people

EVIDENCE	
<p>Top management can describe strategies that they have put in place to support the development of people in order to improve the organisation's performance.</p>	<p>The Circuit aims to provide appropriate support and induction for new officeholders. We aim to improve the organisation's performance and support people's development through worship together and activities to promote spiritual development.</p>
<p>Managers can describe specific actions that they have taken and are currently taking to support the development of people.</p>	<p>Support for property stewards has been improved. Training for worship leaders and local preachers is on-going. Continuing development of local preachers is being addressed. Readings services are united services are being used to encourage and support people's development. Help is being given to improve personal and spiritual development through improving training generally and by promoting bible study and house groups.</p>
<p>People can confirm that the specific strategies and actions described by top management and managers take place.</p>	<p>Twice as many people felt that they had received effective support when starting a new role as compared with those who felt that they had not.</p>
<p>People believe the organisation is genuinely committed to supporting their development.</p>	<p>68 people said that the circuit provides them with support. 91 said it provides them with friendship. 61 said it provides them with companionship. 62 said it provides them with social activities. 22 said it provides them with community service opportunities. 9 said it provides them with mission opportunities. Many people complained that while they get support and training once they are in post, they had very little idea what a job involved before they took it on.</p>

INDICATOR 2: People are encouraged to improve their own and other people's performance

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to improve their own performance.</p> <p>People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to improve other people's performance.</p>	<p>Local preachers, church stewards, junior church leaders and pastoral visitors were able to do this. However, some examples dated back several years.</p> <p>Some people felt they were not encouraged to develop or get more involved. One person said: If you enquire if there is anything you can do to help the answer you get is "no everything is under control"!</p> <p>Some people are uncomfortable about asking if they can help. We need to find non-threatening ways of helping them to volunteer.</p> <p>Junior church leaders and local preachers in particular shared how they support and encourage one another. But most respondents who had office in the church felt they had been encouraged to improve other people's performance.</p> <p>People in similar roles in different congregations could be encouraged to support one another. Away days could help people to gel as a team. Bible studies and house groups are a practical way of getting people together and building a sense of togetherness and mutual encouragement.</p>
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INDICATOR 3: People believe their contribution to the organisation is recognised

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>People can describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised.</p>	<p>Local preachers were able to do this in a formal sense. Most other office holders described the informal recognition they receive from other church members.</p> <p>Circuit services could include more opportunities to recognise and support people's work. More care could be taken at church councils to recognise and appreciate what people do instead of hastily re-electing them before they change their minds.</p>
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<p>People believe that their contribution to the organisation is recognised.</p>	<p>Most office holders felt that their contribution was recognised to some extent, but this was particularly true of people involved in leading worship, such as musicians and preachers. Junior church leaders felt that few people appreciated how difficult their task was. The children at Trinity are affirmed by coming into church at the end of the service to share what they have been doing. The children at St Andrew's lead worship sometimes. Care must be taken not to discourage older children by these activities as they are more easily embarrassed than small children.</p>
<p>People receive appropriate and constructive feedback on a timely and regular basis.</p>	<p>Only until they have completed any initial training or induction. There needs to be continuous recognition and support—not just during the initial training period.</p>

INDICATOR 4: The organisation is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of its people

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>Top management can describe strategies that they have put in place to ensure equality of opportunity in the development of people.</p> <p>Managers can describe specific actions that they have taken and are currently taking to ensure equality of opportunity in the development of people.</p> <p>People confirm that the specific strategies and actions described by top management and managers take place and recognise the needs of different groups.</p> <p>People believe the organisation is genuinely committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of people.</p>	<p>The Circuit Meeting is asked to consider the make-up of the meeting in terms of gender, age and race. People need to feel able to join in the life of their church and the life of the circuit at every level. How can we make our meetings more interactive and interesting?</p> <p>Some people felt they were expected to carry too much responsibility and wanted to share it more equitably. Some felt they were not given enough encouragement to take responsibility or play an appropriate role.</p>
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INDICATOR 5: The organisation has a plan with clear aims and objectives which are understood by everyone

EVIDENCE	
<p>The organisation has a plan with clear aims and objectives.</p>	<p>Everyone knows about Vision into Reality. 37 of the 95 respondents felt that they had an idea of the circuit's priorities. Most were agreed that it these were serving the community, growing the churches, providing resources and mutual support, and networking. Some mentioned oversight.</p>
<p>People can consistently explain the aims and objectives of the organisation at a level appropriate to their role.</p>	<p>People talked about the need for community service, mutual encouragement and support, and spiritual resourcing by the Circuit. Several respondents wanted to see more 'togetherness', more opportunities to get involved and less of a sense that the circuit is run by various cliques. One person was suspicious about why a question was being asked about their willingness to use another church for worship. Some people did not participate in Vision into Reality because they suspect a hidden agenda to promote circuit worship and close churches.</p>
<p>Representative groups are consulted about the organisation's aims and objectives.</p>	<p>Vision into Reality is the first time this has happened in recent years.</p>

INDICATOR 6: The development of people is in line with the organisation's aims and objectives

EVIDENCE	
<p>The organisation has clear priorities which link the development of people to its aims and objectives at organisation, team and individual level.</p>	<p>The circuit's clear priorities are worship and personal spiritual development, as well as supporting and serving the local community.</p>
<p>People clearly understand what their development activities should achieve, both for them and the organisation.</p>	<p>Most respondents had some idea of what was needed to develop their role within the local church or circuit but sometimes it was several years since they had last received any formal support and development. Many people identified Bible study, personal spiritual development and church growth as goals for the circuit. Some identified serving and supporting the local community as another goal.</p>

INDICATOR 7: People understand how they contribute to achieving the organisation's aims and objectives

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>People can explain how they contribute to achieving the organisation's aims and objectives.</p>	<p>Office holders could generally explain their contribution. people who don't hold office tended to talk about offering support, encouragement and prayer. Some felt they were not contributing, either because of time constraints or age and infirmity, or because they had not been enabled to make the contribution of which they were capable. The latter group were in a small minority. Most non or small contributors were perfectly content. A key role of the circuit and the local church has to be helping people to feel part of the team even if they cannot play a particularly upfront or active role because of their personal circumstances. Sharing ideas and prayer are good examples of team work which everyone could share.</p>
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INDICATOR 8: Managers are effective in supporting the development of people

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>The organisation makes sure that managers have the knowledge and skills they need to develop their people.</p> <p>Managers at all levels understand what they need to do to support the development of people.</p> <p>People understand what their manager should be doing to support their development.</p> <p>Managers at all levels can give examples of actions that they have taken and are currently taking to support the development of people.</p> <p>People can describe how their managers are effective in supporting their development.</p>	<p>'Managers' in our context means anyone from a house group leader to a minister or circuit steward. Do house group leafers, for instance, have the knowledge and skills they need?</p> <p>One person described the support she receives in an administrative role. Others talked about support with training or induction to new posts. However, this very much depended n the job they were doing. People often felt supported more by 'colleagues' than by 'managers'.</p>
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INDICATOR 9: People learn and develop effectively

EVIDENCE	
People who are new to the organisation, and those new to a job, can confirm that they have received an effective induction.	New people generally felt that they had been made welcome – but they are, by definition, the ones who stayed! Some people did not feel they had been encouraged to get involved. Many people had had to learn quickly on the job. For some, induction had meant being given the job to do while others shadowed them for a little while. A few talked about on-going support or regular development opportunities.
The organisation can show that people learn and develop effectively.	Most people appreciated the need for development activities and felt they had benefited from them.
People understand why they have undertaken development activities and what they are expected to do as a result.	People said: 'It made me aware of good practice', 'It gave me good ideas', 'It helps me tremendously'. Some said training had been of no positive advantage to them. Some had arranged their own training or brought transferable skills to their church work.
People can give examples of what they have learnt (knowledge, skills and attitude) from development activities.	This is generally true only for local preachers and junior church leaders, although some people said they had learned knowledge, skills and attitude in the areas of Bible study, prayer and spiritual growth. Some people had also received food hygiene accreditation. Some people did not seem to appreciate that meetings they had attended WERE training and development opportunities. Others had perceived them in this way.
Development is linked to relevant external qualifications or standards (or both), where appropriate.	The Methodist Church has some external standards for church stewards and pastoral visitors, and relevant external qualifications for local preachers and worship leaders. Some people had received food hygiene certificates accredited by a local college.

INDICATOR 10: The development of people improves the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>The organisation can show that the development of people has improved the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals.</p>	<p>This was generally agreed to be the case. Most people wanted to see more training carried out to make the circuit more effective. One or two people said that training had done them no good at all. Is our training helping to promote teamwork and to encourage church growth? How important is personal development as compared to growing and developing the Church?</p>
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INDICATOR 11: People understand the impact of the development of people on the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>Top management understands the overall costs and benefits of the development of people and its impact on performance.</p> <p>People can explain the impact of their development on their performance, and the performance of their team and the organisation as a whole.</p>	<p>This was well understood and explained the enthusiasm to take part in Vision into Reality.</p> <p>People understood that training and development would enhance their performance and the performance of their church and the circuit. Although some were satisfied that they had been helped to develop, others felt they could have received more support.</p>
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INDICATOR 12: The organisation gets better at developing its people

<p>EVIDENCE</p> <p>People can give examples of relevant and timely improvements that have been made to development activities.</p>	<p>Some people felt that the training and development of property stewards had been improved. The training of local preachers has been refined and simplified.</p>
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