



Succession in the Local *Church*



What are
the *trends*
telling us?



What are the *trends* telling us?



25% of pastors plan to retire in the next 6 years (CT April 2023)



Average age of a pastor: 54 in 2017 (Barna, 2017)



91% of ministry leaders are over age 50 (ministry watch, April 2023)



1 out of every 1 people dies



Succession
is coming

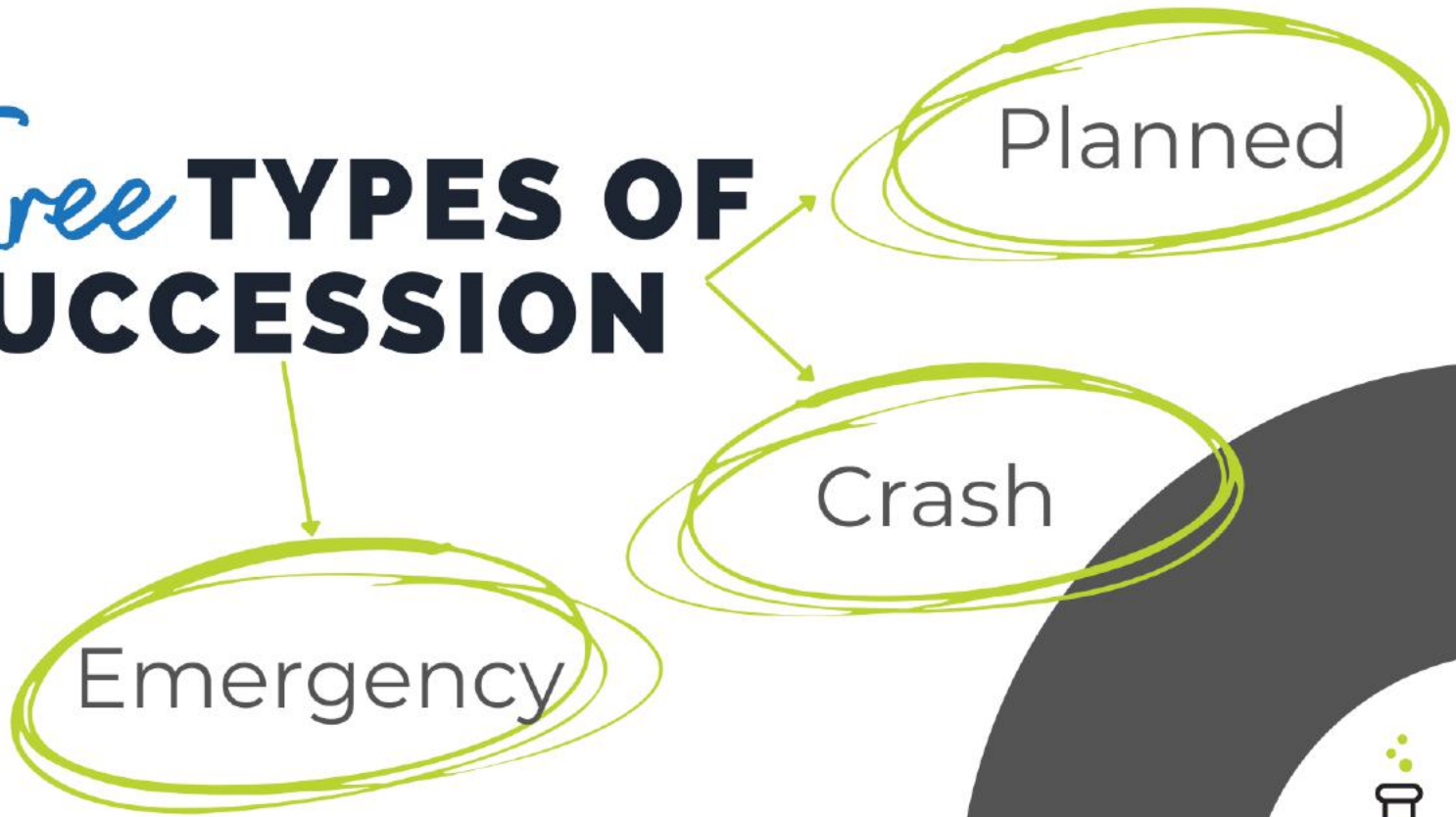
The question is
whether we are
prepared



Three **TYPES OF SUCCESSION**



Three **TYPES OF SUCCESSION**





Emergency Succession



Moral Failure



Medical Emergency



Crisis Based





Crash Succession

-  Less than 18 months to prepare
-  Focus is on the search
-  Clean up comes later





Planned Succession



3-5 years



Focus is on preparing for
the next season



Clean up happens now



How can
we *help*?

chemistrystaffing.com/succession





Matt Steen

Chemistry Staffing Co-Founder

chemistrystaffing.com/succession

Workshop Presentation:
Pastoral Succession in the Local
Church



Communication *Plan*



- Who needs to know what, when, and how?
- What are the major milestones of the search?
- FAQs

Sample →



Foundational Principles



The outgoing pastor has an outsized influence on success or failure



This will be hard



Communication and pastoral care are critical

A Few *Best* Practices



Written plans are essential



Counseling for the outgoing pastor is a solid investment



Create clarity on what's next for your pastor as soon as possible



If your pastor stays, they need a sabbatical



COMPETENCE

POTENTIAL

ETHIC

BEST PRACTICE

KNOWLEDGE

PERFORMANCE

DEVELOPMENT



Getting *Practical*



When should we start?



Start with your emergency plan



Next, develop a general succession plan



Emergency *Plan*



- Clarify roles and responsibilities (elders, staff, etc)
- Create a clear understanding of who will communicate what to who
- Understand what is required of your polity, bylaws, and denomination
- Who leads in the short-term?
- Strongly advise an interim pastor in these situations
- Review this annually



General Succession Plan



- This is a general plan based on bylaws and polity
- Identify a short list of internal candidates
- Identify a short list of search team members
- Identify areas within the church that could use attention ahead of a transition
- Create a “Lid List” for your current key leaders. Which areas are they the lid?
- Review at least every 36 months

Actual Succession Plan



- Launch 3-5 years in advance of the transition
- This is where the outgoing leader spends their chips
- Share the pulpit more regularly
- Empower others to lead

Evaluate *Everything*

- Bylaws
- Facilities
- Board health
- Staff health
- Finances



Shore Up Your Foundation



Eliminate debt



Create board health



Create staff health



Update bylaws



Begin Your *Search*



-  Identify an internal successor, if one exists
-  Create a plan for what is next for the pastor
-  Develop communication plan

Crash Succession Plan

- Determine whether an interim is appropriate
- The focus is on the search; foundation work will be done by the next pastor
- Identify a search team
- Create a communication plan
- Create a transition plan for the gap



Communication *Plan*



- Who needs to know what, when, and how?
- What are the major milestones of the search?
- FAQs

Sample →





Be *Aware*

- It is not uncommon for attendance to drop by 15-20%
- It is not uncommon for giving to drop by 10-15%
- It is not uncommon to see significant staff turnover
- It is not uncommon for succession to cost 2x the senior pastor's salary



Prepare NOW!

- Share the pulpit to prepare your people to appreciate other voices
- Share leadership for the same reason
- Get into the habit of creating a lid list for your senior leaders
- Help your pastors fund their retirement
- Work to ensure your salaries keep pace with the outside world
- Create a financial reserve
- Get a hobby





How can
we *help*?

chemistrystaffing.com/succession





Matt Steen

Chemistry Staffing Co-Founder

chemistrystaffing.com/succession

Workshop Presentation:
Pastoral Succession in the Local
Church

