

BOOK REVIEW

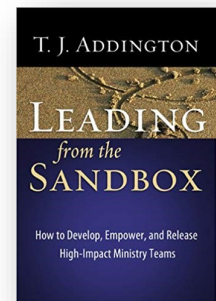
From Bob's bookshelf



LEADING FROM THE SANDBOX:

how to develop, empower, and release high-impact ministry teams

by T.J. Addington



THE AUTHOR: T.J. Addington is the vice-president of the Evangelical Free Church of America. He has spent a lifetime in ministry, serving as a pastor and leader within the EFCA. He has authored several books.

I READ IT BECAUSE: One of my master's level students recommended the book. We were looking to build a required course reading list and this book entered our discussion. We decided to read it together.

THE FEEL: This book invokes action. I immediately wanted to get my staff together and get to work! In fact, that's what I did. We started a weekly meeting, going through each chapter together. As a result of our work, we have a written document that we will present to our board by the end of the year. Getting our ministry philosophy (sandbox) organized will provide opportunities for high impact ministry in the future.

SUBJECT MATTER: Topics Covered: Leadership, Ministry Philosophy Structure, Mission, Vision, Teamwork, Clarity, and Training. This book helps the reader develop, empower, and release high-impact ministry teams.

QUOTABLE: There are so many great statements in this book. Here is just a sampling of the content:

"The sandbox was a place where creativity and fun were synonymous. Likewise, I believe our ministries should be fun and challenging and use the best of the gifts and creativity God has given each of us." (p. 15)

"The most untapped resources in our churches are lay people who could use their leadership skills to come alongside pastors and, as a team, bring a level of leadership to the congregation that would infuse it with huge energy, creativity, and mission, impact." (p. 58)

"I cannot stress enough the importance of being able to visualize the key components of your ministry in one picture. As a leader, you may be able to keep those important elements in your mind all the times. Most others cannot and will not." (p. 74)

"One of the tests of great leadership is whether a leader needs the spotlight, adulation or credit for the results of the teamwork. Power, status, and praise are a deadly aphrodisiac for unhealthy leaders." (p. 95)

"High impact teams insist all members live with a huge degree of intentionality. They focus on results, strategic activity, and a rhythm that keeps everyone aligned with one another and the mission of the team. It is a deeply satisfying place to be." (p. 132)

CAVEATS/DANGERS: The one area that seems to be a little under-developed is the explanation of the process involved with organizing and developing mission, preferred culture, guiding principles and central ministry focus. The author began to walk the reader through the specific areas, providing key questions to ask as the sandbox is developed in the areas of central ministry focus and guiding principles. He fell short of providing questions for the preferred culture and mission sections. It would have been very helpful to provide the step-by-step process for developing the ministry philosophy (sandbox).

RECOMMENDATION: This book is a must read! I don't say that often. It is and will be extremely helpful in my ministry. I recommend it to fellow pastors, board members and chairmen, mission leaders and institution chairs.