

## How to Do a Team APA Analysis

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In the [SWOT Analysis](#) we began looking at ways to help coach a ministry team to be more effective. We noted that coaching, whether with an individual or a team, starts with the premise that God has already been speaking to those you coach and your role is simply to ask the right questions to help the coachee discover that direction. When coaching a team, one of the challenges is to help each person on the team participate and yet keep the whole team moving in the same direction. In setting a new direction or making adjustments it's always good to begin with an honest look at the present situation.

We are now ready to look forward and see where God is leading. In order to help the team in their discernment process, a handy tool to keep in your back pocket is the *APA Analysis*. This little discussion tool can be used to brainstorm ideas, uncover key initiatives, identify core values and set direction for the future.

### The APA Analysis

APA stands for Achieve, Preserve, Avoid. The tool is simply a chart that has three columns, one for each word (see next page). When working with a team you will want to have three large newsprint pages or a large white board for capturing people's input.

As you begin, again focus people attention on the present ministry. You will need to discern which list you will start with. If you are working with a group that is somewhat resistant to change and new ideas ("we've always done it this way" or "it was good enough for mama") you might want to begin with Preserve. "As we begin to look at moving into a new future, what are the things we would like to preserve about the present ministry?" Then move on to "Avoid". This will give those most cautious, a chance to give their input. They will also be able to more fully participate in the Achieve list if they know their cautions have been noted.

If you're working with a high energy visionary group, you may want to start with Achieve as it will get their creative juices flowing. "If we could not fail, what would we like to achieve for the glory of God?"

Remember that this is a brainstorming session so write down everyone's input even if it's a little far out of the box. It doesn't mean you will follow-up on all ideas or that everyone has to agree on each statement. Again resist the temptation to rephrase their comments into your own language – use their words! If the comment is too long to write, ask them to rephrase it.

### Analyzing the Info

After you have filled out all three lists to the satisfaction of the team, take some time to reflect on what has been shared. Are there items in different lists that carry the same theme? You may want to

connect them with lines. Are there items in different lists that may be in conflict or contradict each other? For example someone in the nurture committee may say they would like to 'preserve' Wednesday evening Bible study in the old chapel and someone else says they would like 'achieve' mid-week small groups that meet in homes. Can both be honored or is there a possible conflict?

From the information you have now gathered, there are several directions you can go. If you need to clarify core values and vision for a ministry, look for common threads in the three lists and identify the values that are being expressed in each. Your vision should grow out of those values.

If you are looking for new initiatives for ministry, focus on the Achieve list and prayerfully consider which initiatives God is calling you to pursue while honoring those things you want to preserve and avoid.

To take what you've done so far and convert it into a strategic plan, try the [Post-it Note Planning Tool](#).

### SWOT Analysis Tool

This discussion tool can be used to brainstorm ideas, uncover key initiatives, identify core values and set direction for the future.

Achieve	Preserve	Avoid

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