DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Women's ministries come in all sizes, shapes and colors. There may be some similarities, but no two are the same.

The dynamic and demographics of each local body is different.

But women's ministries are an important part of the way we minister to each other, to women within our churches, as an extension of our churches, and in our communities.

Perhaps you have a fine tuned women's ministry in place and you'd like to enhance or expand it. Or maybe you're new to the whole women's ministry thing and your want to know more about how to have a strong, biblically-based, and extraordinary ministry. Wherever you are in your women's ministry journey, this resource was designed to help you have the most effective women's ministry possible!

Please note: We also are available for free ministry consultations.

Below are 10 important ingredients for an effective women's ministry.

1 Compare to Learn Not to Compete

We're all on the same team, not in competition with one another. We're a forever family and a win for one is a win for all. That's why we should be each other's biggest cheerleaders, not most fierce competitors.

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Maybe like me, you've been told, *Don't dare compare*. That's good *and* bad advice because comparing can be both healthy and unhealthy.

We don't compare to compete or to copy, but we do compare to learn from others. Too much is at stake to miss the opportunity to learn from one another by doing a bit of healthy comparison.

Paul said, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1 ESV)
Imitating, by it's very nature, calls us to compare…to look at someone else, see what they are doing and what they are not doing, and then decide what changes we can make in our lives that would grow us more into the image of Christ.

So, go ahead, dare to compare. Take stock of other ministries in your community and beyond.

Notice the differences in:

- Leadership styles
- Spiritual maturity
- Generational demographics
- Cultural community & trends
- Denominational affiliations
- Logistics
- Needs
- Opportunities
- Giftedness
- Volunteer base
- Primary focuses
- Methodology
- Pastoral support

Ask yourself these questions:

- What are they doing that could work in our ministry?
- What are they doing to effectively be an in-reach and an outreach ministry?
- What are our strengths and weaknesses in implementing these new concepts or changes?
- What adjustments would we need to make based on who we are as a ministry?
- Who would we consider to spearhead these new concepts or ministry changes?
- What are they doing that won't work in our ministry?

Learning from others in ministry is an indication of strong leadership and a common thread that is found in the fabric of every thriving women's ministry.

So, go ahead. Compare. But compare to learn not to compete.

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2 Leadership Is Key

Leadership is key and good leaders lead by serving. They don't fight for the top, they fight for the bottom. Nothing is beneath them and their hearts are to raise up those around them, not dominate them.

Good women's ministry leaders are those who seek to see women know Christ, grow in their relationship with Him, discover how to walk in their identity, function in their giftedness, and become who they were created to be.

> Good leaders know they don't know know everything.
> That is why they surround themselves with people who are good at what they are not.

They aren't worried about the lime-light, getting credit, being known, or making a name for themselves. Their focus is on knowing Christ and making Him known, and helping other women do the same.

If you are a women's ministry leader, **be sure to choose leaders who serve well, who know their giftedness, who long to see other fulfill their God-given destinies, and who are ready and willing to help you realize your calling as an individual and as a ministry**.

3 Prayer Is Essential

Oswald Chambers once said, "Prayer is the greatest work."

Nothing happens of any value apart from the leading of God.

That's why prayer is essential and developing a passionate prayer team is vital. A team of women who not only pray for direction, for an upcoming event, or for the church staff - but a team of prayer-warring women who will relentlessly intercede

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with you and for you and for the women God has given you the privilege of ministering to.

God is already at work behind the scenes of your life and your ministry.

The key is praying like He is listening… because He is - and listening like God is speaking… because He is.

Develop a consistent prayer time with your team and jealously guard it like you would guard something of great value, because time in prayer is priceless.

4 Use Your Purpose Statement as Your Filter

As a ministry *and* as a woman, you can't *be* and *do* every. God calls us to fulfill specific things as a body of Christ.

Women's ministries are to function in their calling. Not every good idea is a *God* idea for you and/or your women's ministry. Not everything everyone else does is what you should be doing. Remember, we compare to learn from one another. Not to compete or compare.

If what we learn from others… or if something that others are proposing doesn't fit into what you are called to as a ministry, then ditch it.

Develop a clear and concise Purpose Statement and filter each and every one of your potential ministry opportunities through that Purpose Statement. It will save you a lot of wasted time and energy and keep you from diving into something that isn't yours to do.

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Sometimes we walk through someone else's open door and then wonder what we are doing there. Remember… not every door that is open is yours to walk through. Not every need is yours to fulfill.

Your prayer team and Purpose Statement are there for you and will help you head in the right direction as a ministry and as a leader.

5 Be Inclusive

We are all given different spiritual gifts and different natural abilities to be used for the glory of God.

As the women's ministry leader, you are entrusted with the gift and the responsibility of inviting women to join your leadership team as well as becoming part of any upcoming projects or events.

Be sure to keep your eye out for those precious women on the fringe who are never asked to do anything. They are probably starving to be part of something bigger than themselves but have never been invited.

Ask them what their spiritual gifts are. If they don't know, help them discover them. Ask them what they like doing or are good at and invite them to participate in the next event or some aspect of the ministry.

Your vision for your ministry may be inclusive, but if you don't seek to intentionally observe and invite women in, your vision will merely be an hallucination.

Be inclusive. Be intentional. LOVE them with the love of Jesus and watch them bloom as they become part of the team. It's a beautiful thing, sweet sister!

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6 Assemble a Ministry Minded Team

Not everyone involved in doing ministry really *gets* ministry. It's not about finishing the task, it's about the people you are ministering to. Assembling a team of women who *get* that is an important link to your women's ministry chain.

Having a group of people who can accomplish a goal doesn't mean they are people who will love the body well and serve from a heart of humility.

Your ministry team has to be *ministry minded* or they'll find themselves frustrated with those who aren't giving at the same level they are.

Gather a group of women who really have a heart to minister to others in a completely sacrificial way for the glory of God and you've got your team. These aren't necessarily the women who get voted onto a women's ministry board, but key women you will want to surround yourself with - women you have prayed about and sense the Lord leading you to invite to be part of your team. A woman who has been recommended to you by other women you trust.

7 Diversify to Expand

A women's ministry can't *be* and *do* everything. Allow your small groups and/or Sunday School Classes to function well in some of the areas of fellowship, discipleship and ministry.

Pray, plan and strategize how you can be most effective as a ministry. And take every opportunity you can to invite women's groups within your church to take responsibility for and/or be involved in the projects and events your women's ministry is planning.

> **Here's an example: Got a banquet coming up? Ask your women's small groups to be in charge of…**

- Decorating and hosting the tables
- Bringing the desserts for an event
- Assigning a mentor to each table
- Serving as the Guest Service team to welcome everyone
- Serving on the clean up crew
- Organizing and serving on the “After-Event Follow Up” team

Don’t try to replace what the other ministries in the church are doing. Diversification will expand your ability to reach more women for Christ and minister to the ones who already know Him.

8 Be Intentionally & Relentlessly Missional

Did you know that God has placed you and your church right where it is on purpose and for a purpose? Have you ever thought of yourself, your church, or your women’s ministry as missionaries?

Each Christian and each church should live on mission. That means to intentionally and relentlessly look for ways you, your church, and your women’s ministry can get involved in your community and make a difference beyond the four walls of the church.

Spearhead events and ministries that help your church escape the Christian bubble and *be* the church in your community. Involve those within your church who have relationships with other associations/organizations/neighborhoods/etc… outside the church and be intentionally missional.

As women, God has entrusted us with a powerful discipleship and evangelistic tool found in Titus 2 called mentoring. Reach women for Christ by reaching out in your community and being intentionally missional.

If you want to reach the next generation, begin by reaching the moms who are raising them. Visit TheMOMInitiative.com to find out more about how to make mentoring missional.

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Use Acts 1:8 as your guide and be sure you have your bases covered as a ministry… your Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the end of the earth. **This is your calling, sweet sister. Do it well!**

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

9 Embrace Your Calling

Esther wasn't the only woman who was born for such a time as this. You were too! And this is your time and your generation and your opportunity to change the world.

Catherine of Siena once said, *"Be all God created you to be and you will set the world on fire."*

When you embrace your calling to serve - to lead - to make a difference for the cause of Christ, you will have the God-given confidence to step fully into exactly what it is God wants you to do.

Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by your calling. But on the other hand, don't allow your calling to create a sense of pride.

God has gifted, called, and given you the opportunities to embrace the sacred calling that is uniquely and specifically yours. Don't allow insecurity to stop you. Don't allow pride to prevent you from glorifying God or from serving humbly in your calling.

Embrace your calling and run the race set before you knowing it will not always be easy. In fact, more often than not, it will be impossible.

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Ministry that you can make happen will be ministry that gives only the results that you can give. BUT, ministry that only God can make happen will give the results that only God can give.

And trust me! You want God's results, not your own.

10 Guard Your Personal Fellowship with God Above All Else

More than your call to serve God is your call to know Him. Ministry is a beautiful calling, but there are several risks that are intrinsic to what you are called to do.

- You can allow your service to the Lord to become a substitute for your relationship with Him. That's why you have to guard your fellowship with God above all else.

- You can allow your service to the Lord to become so familiar that it becomes more like a job and not a ministry that God allows you to do for His glory.

- You can get so busy doing ministry that you don't spend time in the Word and in prayer like you used to. Your ministry should come from an overflow of your relationship with the Lord…not as a substitute for it.

- You can begin to feel frustrated and overwhelmed when others don't have your same passion. Remember, God's calling is individual. Other's won't be as excited as you are about what He has called you to do. Your calling is to lead, to inspire passion, commitment, service, and growth.

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You've been called to this sacred calling of ministry, sweet sister! God knew exactly what He was doing when He called you. He knew your strengths and weaknesses. He knew all about your deepest fears and even your past failures. He know about the personal battles that constantly cause conflict in your heart.

So give it everything you've got! Pray and serve hard! Trust God's direction and remember that His 'No" is just as much a reflection of His love as His "Yes."

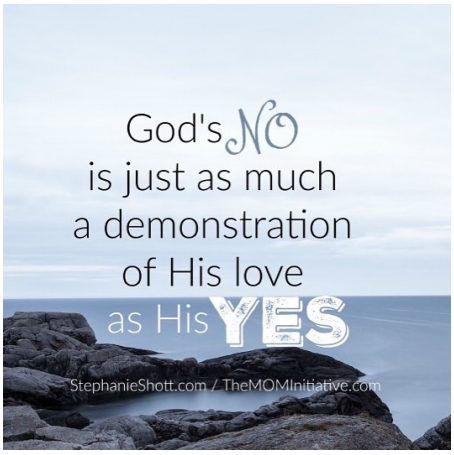
And don't forget… **Size doesn't validate ministry, obedience does.**

I hope these 10 important ingredients to developing an effective women's ministry will help you in your ministry journey!

Remember, we are here for you to help you in any way we can. We make ourselves available to help women's ministry leaders through free ministry consultations and personal meetings.

If you'd like to contact us to help in any way, please click this link and we will get right back with you.

Oh…and psssst…Here are a few more important things to remember:



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