

Thinkholes

Six common hazards that inhibit thoughtful leadership

Why do we get lost on the way to discovering our own DNA? Why do leaders miss the matchless thumbprint of their identity in the local expression of Christ’s body? There are six common hazards that stand out across the landscape of church life. Because all of them affect thinking, they are called them “thinkholes.” A thinkhole represents the quicksand-like dynamic where, at certain times and places, vibrant thinking gets sucked beneath the surface to suffocate and disappear from view.

The first step toward freedom is to identify the thinkholes that are holding you back. Where do you as leader tend to slip up? Where does the leadership team as a whole get bogged down? Give yourself a rating on each thinkhole between one and five in the column on the left. Assign a score from zero to five, with zero being free from that Thinkhole and five being “as deep as it gets.” Discuss your scores.

Thinkhole Summary Table:

Score 1-5	Thinkholes	How We Neglect Uniqueness	The “Thinking” Problem	Thinkhole Practice
_____	Ministry treadmill	Busyness eliminates the time for reflection	No time to think	Add more programs
_____	Competency trap	Presumption decreases the appetite for learning	No need to think	Work harder
_____	Needs-based slippery slope	Consumerism removes the need for discernment	Needs are all we think about	Make people happy
_____	Cultural whirlpool: BuzzChurch	Innovation short-circuits self awareness	Addicted to new thinking	Be cutting edge
_____	Cultural whirlpool: StuckChurch	Change outpaces the discipline for learning	Too tired to think	Glorify the past
_____	The Conference maze	Success increases the temptation to copycat	Let’s borrow their thinking	Copy what works
_____	Denominational rut	Resources disregard local uniqueness	No one helps us think	Protect theology

