

5 Key Insights for Church Capital Campaigns

After 21 years of local church ministry, I'm excited to be a part of the Resourcing Team of Auxano as a Lead Navigator. Over the years, I've had the opportunity to serve on executive teams of great churches ranging in size from 300 on one campus, to 10,000+ on five campuses. One of the greatest challenges of the local church, big or small, is resourcing. Like you, I've spent a lot of time and energy raising money. In fact, I've been involved in campaign mode for all but six months of my ministry. Looking back on my campaign experiences, here are five insights that I bring with me into this new role:

1. Vision vs. Project

Titles like "Time To Build" and "Possess The Land" communicate that the focus is the project, potentially void of a clear and compelling vision that would necessitate the project. Unfortunately, in my experience, the project WAS the vision far too often.

2. "For" vs. "From"

To "Possess The Land" we need people to give money...a lot of money! We inadvertently focus on getting something "from" them, instead of developing a culture that desires something greater "for" them.

3. Transformational vs. Transactional

When the campaign ends and the project is completed, we can lack legacy of what God has done in us collectively. We end up possessing a building or land, while missing the opportunity to create a significant movement of spiritual transformation in the process.

4. Generosity vs. Money

We need money...God desires for us to grow in generosity. A church culture of generosity can only be accomplished through strategic discipleship and the movement of God. Chasing money creates a terrible culture for generosity.

5. All vs. Select

The goal of any campaign should be 100% participation. A typical campaign can focus a lot of leadership energy courting potential big givers, communicating a powerful message to the rest of the congregation. I can't tell you how many times I've witnessed a family remain seated or skip church during commitment weekend. They felt like they couldn't participate, because their "widows mite" wouldn't significantly impact the "hallelujah goal."

I've joined the Resourcing Team of Auxano, because I saw them boldly challenging what I believe has become an outdated and overpriced approach. By elevating the role of vision, leadership, and discipleship, Auxano navigates toward:

1. **Clarity First** – campaign goals are contextualized within a well-developed sense of organizational identity and direction.
2. **Process vs. Product** – campaign design is emphasized through collaboration not prescription.
3. **Leadership Development** – a holistic look at leadership development occurs before, during, and after the campaign.
4. **Discipleship Measurables** –there is no such thing as a church vision that is not first a discipleship vision.

The economic crash of 2008 brought about significant change, not only financially, but culturally as well. People have become far more discerning about the dollars they're investing, requiring a clear return of impact on that investment. Smart leaders are doing the hard work of identifying their Church Unique, clarifying and communicating their compelling vision, creating margin by simplifying programming, and growing generous disciples that are taking the Church to their own neighborhoods. I believe that we're once again getting back to what God intended His local church to be. Join the movement!

Would you like to learn more about capital campaigns for your church? [Connect with an Auxano Navigator and start a conversation with our team.](#)