
Planning Tool for Strategic Prayer

Now that you know the general area of strategic prayer in which you want to focus, and you've looked through some of the resources available, take a few minutes to make a clear and actionable plan for progress in strategic prayer. This planning tool is meant to help you focus on one way that you can increase or improve strategic prayer for the work God has entrusted to you. Even though prayer may seem rather intangible, try to think in terms of measurable progress as you consider your goals.

PLANNING

(1) Listen to the Holy Spirit:

- What is the Lord saying \ highlighting to us for this season? (Listen, share, write down.)
- How might God be inviting us to take action in light of what He is highlighting? (Write.)

(2) Move from General to Specific:

- Choose actions that cannot be hindered or blocked by things outside our control. God has a part to play—but what is OUR part? Write down each person's ideas.
- As much as possible, adjust our suggested actions to be "SMART" goals:
 - **Specific:** Is the goal clear and defined enough for a targeted response? (Think in terms of what, who, when, etc.)
 - **Measurable:** If we can't measure it, we won't be able to define whether we have achieved our goal or not.
 - **Attainable:** Are we clear about what part of the goal is ours to work on, and what can only be achieved by God? Is our goal realistic in the given timeframe?
 - **Relevant:** Does our goal clearly connect to the overall area and direction the Lord is highlighting?
 - **Time-Limited:** What is the timeframe for completing our goal? (*Consider stretches of no more than 3 months at a time, as it can be hard to maintain motivation for longer. If the goal demands more time than that, consider breaking the goal into smaller pieces and start with part one.*) After the chosen time period, we will repeat this planning process to set a "next-step" goal, a new goal, or a renewed our commitment to the goal we were pursuing.
- Clarify ONE most important goal. This will be our **ONE GOAL** for the defined timeframe.
Examples:
 - *Increase our team prayer supporters from current level to 500 people by the end of the year.*
 - *Train all existing house church leaders in intercessory prayer by the end of September.*
 - *Train 3 partner churches in praying for the lost by the end of the school year.*
 - *Include Paul's prayers for believers in 10 team prayer hours over the next month.*
- Write down our ONE GOAL.

(3) Identify our Predictors of Progress

- Ask the Lord for creative and/or practical ways in which we can make progress toward our goal. Write down each person's ideas.
- Now consider, what are 1 or 2 metrics which:
 - would indicate that we are making progress toward our goal,
 - are able to be directly influenced or acted upon by us and/or our community, and
 - can be easily measured from week to week?
- This is our "**predictor of progress**", meaning that improvement in this one metric will predictably result in progress toward our goal. (As in: if I reduce my calorie intake by 500 calories each day, this is a predictor of progress toward a weight-loss goal.)
Examples:
 - As a team, contact one U.S. church per week to cast vision and recruit prayer for our work.
 - Schedule one prayer training per week for the next 2 months.
 - Schedule 10 prayer hours for the month, assigning each hour a leader who will lead us in praying some of Paul's prayers for local believers.
- Brainstorm some ideas for metrics that might fit our goal.
- Settle on 1 or 2 predictors of progress that seem best to the Holy Spirit and our team or community. Write them down.

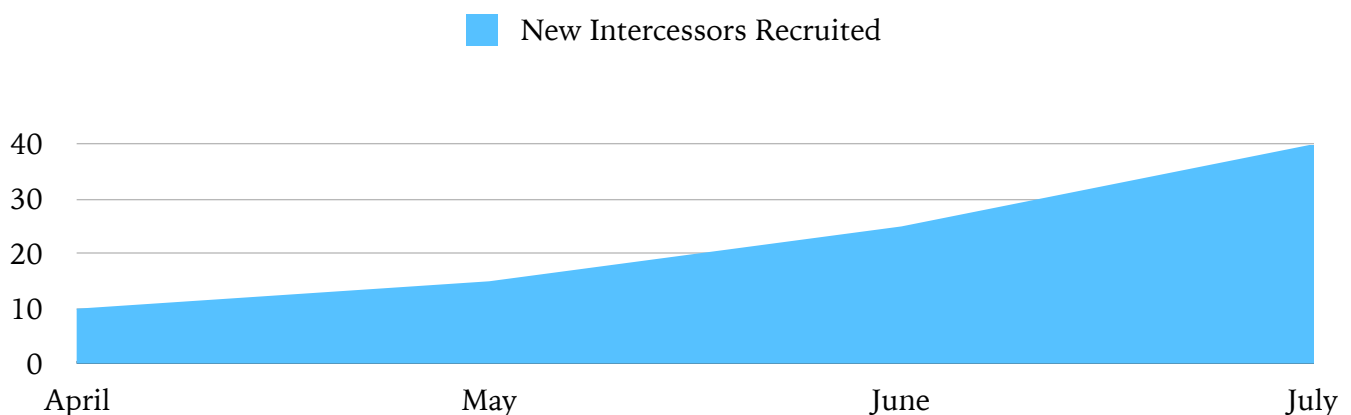
Examples:

- As a team, contact one US church per week to cast vision and recruit prayer for our work.
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(4) Create a Tracking Tool to keep track of our progress

- Our tracking tool must:
 - be created by our team or community (with consensus that this is a goal worth tracking)
 - be simple and visible
 - show progress toward our ONE GOAL by tracking our predictors of progress
- (A tracking tool could be something as simple as a graph or spreadsheet on which you mark out the next 12 weeks, and the team's total contribution to your chosen predictors of progress for each week.)

Example:



(5) Schedule Regular Check-ins

How will our team create a rhythm of regular check-ins to keep the focus on our goal? These check-ins should happen regularly (perhaps weekly), but should take no more than a few minutes. When will this happen, and who is responsible to make sure it happens?

- During these check-ins, each team member reports on the following:
 - How did I contribute toward our chosen predictor of progress in the last week?
 - (Update your tracking tool accordingly)
 - How will I contribute toward our predictor of progress in the next week?

IMPLEMENTATION

(1) Write down our **ONE GOAL** for strategic prayer in this season.

(2) Write down our top 1 or 2 **predictors of progress**.

(3) Draw a rough sketch of our **tracking tool** (and assign someone to create and maintain the simple tool you will use).

(4) **When** will we have our regular check-ins to mark progress? **Who** is responsible for this?

EVALUATION & PLANNING

At the end of the pre-determined time period, **evaluate** your consistency in the predictors of progress you have been tracking, and consider your overall **progress** toward your ONE GOAL. Remember that you can only evaluate what is in your control, not the Lord's part or His timing. Be sure to ask the **Holy Spirit's perspective** on your progress.

After honest evaluation and listening for God's perspective, **repeat** this planning process to determine your ONE GOAL for the next time period. You may set a "next-step" goal, a revised goal, or a new goal; or you may choose to renew your commitment to the ONE GOAL you have been pursuing for another specific length of time.