

THE LEADING EDGE

The electronic newsletter of the AGTS D.Min. Program in Pentecostal Leadership
Shaping servant leaders to change the world in the power of the Spirit
April 2002

IN THIS ISSUE:

D.Min. Project Symposium: You Are Invited
D.Min. E-group: Off and Running
"Quotable": Relevance
LeaderLife: Information Age Shock Treatments
D.Min. Impact Players: Teaching Ministry
Data Dump: Online Leadership Articles
Links to the Future: Survey of Young Adult Spirituality
We Recommend: *Upgrade-A Magazine* for Relevant Leaders
Talk To Us: Feedback

ARCHIVES & IDEAS

Past issues of the Leading Edge are archived at: http://agts.edu/dmin/leading_edge/index.html
Email your ideas for future issues to: dfegler@agseminary.edu

D.MIN. PROJECT SYMPOSIUM: YOU ARE INVITED

The 2002 graduates of the D.Min. program will present the findings of their project research on Friday, May 3 at 12:30pm in the William Seymour Chapel at AGTS. This unique field research includes topics such as team-building, small group ministry, and church health. Through its project research the D.Min. program is building a stock of information that will help leaders everywhere to guide their ministries. This research will be available globally on the internet at www.proquest.com. You are cordially invited to join us for this outstanding event.

D.MIN. E-GROUP: OFF AND RUNNING

Our D.Min. e-group has 106 members! The first month of conversation focused on some "best practices" and a lot of discussion on small group ministry. I'm now asking for contributions on the best leadership reading you've done in the last few months.

QUOTABLE: RELEVANCE

"To resist change is to remain relevant to a world that no longer exists."
--Gerard Kelly, *RetroFuture*

LEADERLIFE: INFORMATION AGE SCHOCK TREATMENT

Sometimes a shock is just what a leader needs to push her to the next level. I received three recently, all related to the management of information. Since this is a large part of what Christian leaders do, the lessons learned may help you to push on too. It's all about being honest and making changes. *Growth usually stops when the honesty runs out.*

Shock Received #1--CommunicationMania: Recently Kevin (one of our superb technical people) told me that I currently send 5200 emails per year, not counting the Leading Edge. I couldn't believe it. This is communication mania! Surely there is a support group somewhere for those

with similar afflictions. I think they call it the Internet.

Lie Exposed #1: The principle of opportunity costs does not apply to me. More communication is always better. Email is "free".

Learning Applied #1: Strengths turn into weaknesses. As a communication person by background, I found myself using this electronic channel just because it was there. If each email took 2 minutes, I spent 10,400 minutes, or 173 hours just writing them last year (that's 5 working weeks!). My time is never "free". Thus, I need to use email more intentionally to accomplish specific goals.

Shock Received #2-ComputerMania: I was without my laptop for a day and a half recently while some software upgrades were being installed (perhaps so I could send even more email). I was surprised to find myself feeling angry about this for the first couple of hours. Since my laptop is the major tool of my trade, having it missing left a huge gap in my work and life.

Lie Exposed #2: The law of the hammer does not apply to me. More technology is always better. Almost nothing of value can happen without a computer.

Learning Applied #2: Because my laptop is so useful, I had almost begun to think of myself as an extension of my computer, a cyborg! Without a laptop the kingdom of God would grind to a halt! However, after a couple hours in a zero-computer environment, I was filled with a strange sense of peace and relaxation. I was free! I read. I talked with team mates. I planned and dreamed. It hit me: Jesus did not have a laptop. Maybe this is why.

Shock Received #3-InfoMania: During an extended period of research I was unable to keep up with my email. When I did return to it, 257 unprocessed messages were waiting for me. I felt tremendous pressure, even though virtually none of them were personal, and struggled for several days over how to handle this mountain of contacts.

Lie Exposed #3: The law of diminishing returns does not apply to me. More information is always better. If I can only know enough, I'll be OK.

Learning Applied #3: Information had become my master instead of my servant. Most of my 257 message backlog consisted of email newsletters or newspapers designed to keep me totally informed about everything from the latest in technology (see Shock #2) to leadership trends and ideas. Instead of putting me "ahead of the curve", they were an endless treadmill of reading and filing. From now on, I will narrow the focus of my research, to concentrate on my specialties.

Major Recommendation: As an individual or a staff, try a "technology and information fast" day on a bi-monthly basis. The T & I fast is the equivalent to the spiritual discipline of solitude. Limit yourself only to reading (hardcopy books), talking with others (even if by phone), and hand-written notes. No computer. No internet. No email. No PowerPoint. No IM.

I found during my computer-less day that I was able to conduct business without interruption, but in a much more peaceful mode. Until that day I had no idea how much energy all this hardware was draining from me. You will be surprised how creative you become, how rested you feel, and how focused you will be when all that technical "help" is removed and all that "cutting edge" information isn't on your mind. Perhaps you will even hear from God.

Earl

Earl Creps, Ph.D., D.Min.
D.Min. Program Director, AGTS

D.MIN. IMPACT PLAYERS: TEACHING MINISTRY

One benefit of the D.Min. is that it provides the credentials for teaching in practical theology on the undergraduate and graduate level. Even though we hold only our second commencement in May, six AGTS Continuing Education courses will be taught this year by our D.Min. graduates!

DATA DUMP: ONLINE LEADERSHIP ARTICLES

Full text online leadership articles.

http://www.religion-online.org/cgi-bin/researchd.dll/listcatitems?cat_id=54

A listing of full-text articles from Religion Online recommended by Thomas Fisher of Ministry Health. Covers everything from leadership to missiology. A useful anthology on leadership issues, as well as a handy "forward" to your team. Free.

LINKS TO THE FUTURE: WEB RESOURCES

Discipleship Journal online survey of young adult spirituality.

http://www.navpress.com/dj_issue_ad.asp#survey

Free, downloadable, unedited results from *Discipleship Journal's* online survey of twentysomethings on issues of spirituality, plus links to related resources. A huge stockpile of first-hand information on young adult spirituality. A rich source for understanding this generation. Not great science, but great illustrations. Questions asked included:

- What are your spiritual practices?
<http://www.navpress.com/download/pdf/djsurvey01/DJsrv-Spiritual%20Practices.pdf>
- How do you relate to God? <http://www.navpress.com/download/pdf/djsurvey01/DJsrv-Relate%20to%20God.pdf>
- When you encounter a new idea, how do you decide if it's true?
<http://www.navpress.com/download/pdf/djsurvey01/DJsrv-Encounter%20New%20Idea.pdf>
- What do you think people most often misunderstand about you? What do you wish they knew instead? <http://www.navpress.com/download/pdf/djsurvey01/DJsrv-Misunderstand.pdf>
- What do you wish the Christian church offered?
<http://www.navpress.com/download/pdf/djsurvey01/DJsrv-Christianity%20Offered.pdf>
- What would you like from a spiritual mentor?
<http://www.navpress.com/download/pdf/djsurvey01/DJsrv-Spiritual%20Mentor.pdf>

Newly updated! Emerging Culture/Emerging Church Resource List

http://agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/bibliographies/creps_bibliography/index.html

The *Resource List* is a free pdf download containing approximately 1200 resources (with an annotated web section) on emerging culture/church issues. One of many resources available free on my page.

WE RECOMMEND: UPGRADE

Upgrade: The Magazine for Relevant Leaders

This is one of the best kept secrets in the Assemblies of God. *Upgrade* is produced by Chi Alpha (the AG ministry to secular campuses www.reachtheu.com <http://www.reachtheu.com>) and as a training tool for campus leaders. But it is much more. *Upgrade* is a first-rate magazine for *any* Christian leader. The articles provide hands-on training on the issues that matter (e.g., conflict resolution, team life, communication), and the section on web resources is the class of the leagues. It is also free. You can subscribe emailing by your request and contact information to Trina Russell at trussell@ag.org <mailto:trussell@ag.org>.

TALK TO US:

Phone: 1-800-467-AGTS Fax: (417) 268-1047

Mail: AGTS, 1435 N. Glenstone Ave., Springfield, MO 65802

Web: <http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>

Dr. Earl Creps-Program Director ecreps@agseminary.edu

Deborah Fegler--Department Secretary dfegler@agseminary.edu

Dr. Stephen Lim-Project Coordinator slim@agseminary.edu

Cheryl Taylor-Program Coordinator ctaylor@agseminary.edu

To unsubscribe: email us at dfegler@agseminary.edu

Please feel free to forward to a friend.

THE LEADING EDGE—cutting a path from today to tomorrow