

Post- Innovations Weekend

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where did this Innovations Report come from?
 - a. This is a report that came from the Innovations Weekend we held recently at the church.
 - b. It is based on work done with your pastor, your church leaders, and a weekend spent with the people of your church (see below).
2. Who wrote the Innovations Report?
 - a. A team put together by the NLI coordinator came together to listen and discern what your church was ready to do to go to the 'next level' of God's calling on your community.
 - b. Generally, the team consists of the NLI team members who work in revitalization and leadership development, other pastors who have been through the process, conference leaders in vital congregations, your district superintendent, and your church's assigned mentor.
3. Why did they suggest these particular Innovations?
 - a. The Weekend Innovations Team came with no pre-conceived ideas of what would work for your church. We listened very carefully to the leadership interviews, focus groups with newcomers and young adults, your youth group, and at an all-day retreat with anyone who wanted to attend. As we listened, we looked for patterns in the ways the Holy Spirit is moving at your church, and we put those in the report.
 - b. In addition, your church did a self-study, a survey on discipleship, and was visited by mystery worshippers – we studied those reports as well.
4. Why are some of the Innovations so specific?
 - a. You would be surprised how specific some of the dreams and hopes of your leaders, newcomers, youth and congregation members can be! When we repeatedly heard the same ideas, we shared them as an Innovation.
 - b. One of the ways to delay the change process is to spend significant time and energy in making smaller decisions. Specific innovations with some specific instructions are a way to help move forward and more directly to trying a new thing. These are often used to help overcome 'stuck places' in a church that can move toward greater innovations.
 - c. Specific innovations will often be offered on a trial basis and not as a permanent change so the congregation can test out the innovations and find out what works and what doesn't work.
5. Why are some of the Innovations not so specific?
 - a. In some areas, it becomes clear that there is an adaptive challenge, which is one that requires new learning and study. There are some solutions and resolutions that the District and your mentor can help train for, but there are still issues that need to be worked through. In those cases, we asked that teams be formed, goals given, and deadlines worked towards to make sure the congregation is working on an issue, even if the exact resolution isn't yet clear.
 - b. Because your NLI mentor was part of the weekend and writing team, they often have some ideas to explore with your pastor and leadership but not a firm answer. The less specific innovations give the church and the mentor room to explore and develop what is needed next.
6. What is an Addendum (some Reports have these, some do not)

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- a. An Addendum is something that the Weekend Innovations Team sees very clearly is part of the next level movement for the church, but did not hear as much from the congregation on the need for this as an Innovation. Addendums are a suggestion from the team, with some specificity as to how the congregation might embrace this suggestion in the future.
 - b. When you vote, this is merely a strong suggestion, not an Innovation you vote to implement.
 7. What if I don't understand one of the Innovations?
 - a. Please ask questions! We would be happy to explain what we are asking and where we discerned the innovation.
 - b. We are suggesting to the Pastor and NLI team that they collect questions before the town halls and the WIT team can have the answers back in time for the town halls, so everyone can hear the answers.
 8. What if we want to do something sooner or later than the timelines in the report?
 - a. The timelines exist to help with accountability and prioritization. We have already had churches speed up the timelines for innovations that suddenly became clearly a priority – as long as the preliminary work of the innovation is done, that is a perfectly wonderful change!
 - b. However, we will be in contact with the pastor and the NLI team about the timelines that are not being met. Often this is because of things beyond the control of the team, or is part of the ongoing struggles a church may have with alignment or volunteer or leadership recruitment. When timelines are missed, the District and Mentor will seek to help get things back on track.
 9. What happens next?
 - a. Please attend one of the scheduled town halls mentioned in the report to discuss and ask questions.
 - b. Then attend the church conference on the date in the report to vote on the Innovations Report.
 10. Can I vote for one or two of the Innovations and against the rest? Or just vote against one Innovation?
 - a. At the church conference, the only vote will be to accept the Innovations Report and proceed forward to implementation, or to reject the Report and end the Next Level Innovations process. The vote must be 70% of those members present in the room.
 - b. The reason for the all or nothing vote is that we have both pointed out some easier fixes that need to become prioritized because they remain undone, AND we have challenged the congregation to some goals that are more of a stretch. Most groups of people would choose to do the easy pieces and put off doing the more challenging ones, so we have linked them all together because we believe they are part of a process of the whole toward a next level for the church.
 11. Who can vote at the Called Church Conference to vote on the Innovations Report?
 - a. Members of the church in attendance. Proxies are not allowed.
 12. What if there is a less than 70% vote?
 - a. The NLI process ends, the mentor and District teams are redeployed to those churches continuing in the NLI process.
 13. What if we approve the Innovations?
 - a. The work begins! Teams will be formed, training, coaching and mentoring will begin, and the first deadlines approach to help keep everyone on task and accountable. Your church is off to the Next Level!