

An Examination of Faith Christian Community Church

**A Project Report Presented to the
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by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Option Three project was to offer Faith Christian Community Church a system approach of Organizational Management, to achieve and maintain a fully functional organization.

The areas of concern for this organization, lack of involvement, inconsistent giving pattern, and the need for commitment to numeric growth. The organization is not continuously prudent that the operation of the church is working effectively. The lack of involvement is demonstrated for example by the membership not being consistent attending scheduled and regularly planned events. The giving pattern constantly changes which hampers how the organization operates, adjustments in budgetary planning changes to work within the financial constraints brought on by the fluctuation. Additionally, numeric growth is a concern, the organization would benefit with more active members.

The objectives for the project thesis are to make recommendations to increase member participation by ten percent within one year, increase member contributions by seven percent in one year and increase member interest in developing programs and activities that will help increase membership population within eighteen months. These objectives helped fine tune the inquiry into the organization.

The alternatives proposed to meet these objectives focus on communicating to the membership that improvements can be made to the operational function of the church. The second alternative is a request to the membership for an increase in financial giving of seven percent more than the present amount being given. The third alternative is the idea of member numeric growth, to increase membership population, The option of maintaining the Status Quo still exists.

The methods that were used to gather information for this dissertation were telephone and paper survey, and verbal questionnaire administered to fourteen people. The results were very heartening. The majority of the respondents agreed that a system change would be good for the organization. The results of the hypothesis that were posed are:

1. Eighty three percent agree that at least fifty eight percent of the membership would participate in the church.
2. Sixty six percent state that recognizing commitment to the church would increase participation.
3. One hundred percent agree that fifty one hundred dollars is currently the monthly average contribution.
4. Sixty two percent agreed that an increase of seven percent in contributions From members would improve operational functions.
5. Sixty six percent agreed that developing programs and activities will increase membership numbers.
6. Seventy nine percent agreed that numeric growth would improve organizational operations.

The recommended alternative to reach these objectives was determined by force-field analysis. It is to develop programs and activities that will increase membership population. These objectives convey the intent of the writer to offer Faith Christian Community Church a system approach of organizational management. Based on the findings of the force-field analysis, Alternative Four is the preferred alternative, which has been selected and recommended to the Senior Minister of Faith Christian Community Church.

CHAPTER I - DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM

Introduction

Faith Christian Community Church located in northwest Detroit, Michigan is a non-denominational church. People from several different denominations make up the membership. The majority of the founding members were from Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) church and the tenets of the CME church are what Faith Christian Community Church generally follows. The church is in operation to fill the spiritual and physical needs of the members and community in which it is located.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the project was to discern Faith Christian Community Church as a fully functional organization. The proposed study sought to identify areas of the organization that were impeding the development of the organization. The purpose was to offer a system approach of organizational management.

Setting of the Problem

One leading minister, the church's pastor presides over the affairs of the church. Four associate ministers aid him in several areas of ministration. There are boards of stewards and trustees that carry out the business aspect of the church and maintain the physical character of the building. Of the fifty people that are registered members, forty members, fill the offices, boards and committees of the church. Many of the members' fill more than one position.

The structure of the organization is informal, a free flow of communication occurs throughout the church. Communication about the organization's functioning is readily available and comes from the pastor and the various boards and committees. Information is presented at the church conference a business meeting, held on a monthly basis.

Faith Christian Community Church is supported by the offerings and tithes of the members. The operating expenses, salaries and other financial obligations are met from these contributions.

The problem of this organization is an overall lack of consistency. We are not continuously prudent about ensuring that the operation of the church is working effectively. Symptoms include a general lack of enthusiasm for seeing the organization functioning properly. It seems that most of the congregation relies on just a few of the members to continue keeping the church working.

History and Background of the Problem

The problems existed when the writer joined the church, which has been a period of nine years. Two major events have shaken the status quo of the organization. After having made some unsound business decisions, the congregation was forced to evacuate the building they were occupying. The other event was the purchase of the edifice now being used.

After seventeen years of worshipping in people's homes and storefront buildings, the membership was able to purchase a church building. It is very conducive to the function of the organization. Certainly the building needs improvement in some areas, but with other good qualities it was felt that the purchase of this building was an excellent choice of alternatives that were being examined.

Scope

This project will describe and detail three areas of the organization that pose organizational dysfunction. First is consistency of the membership to follow through with plans and objectives; the giving pattern of the membership; and a discussion on the drive for new members. I will not bring to this discussion much of the non-problematic areas of the church.

Such non-problematic areas of the church are the order of worship, structure of the church meetings and the timeliness of church programs. The spiritual aspect of the organization will receive little if any attention.

Importance (Significance) of the Project

The importance of this project was to focus on getting Faith Christian Community Church to be more organizationally functional. To help the organization improve awareness that the church is partly a business. Also, the importance of this project was to give detail and description to what the problems are in hope that possible solutions will be examined.

Summary

The discussion centered on the organization of Faith Christian Community Church, and the problems that are preventing the church from achieving full potential. They are: (1). Lack of involvement. (2). Giving pattern of the membership. (3). Numeric growth. The congregation seems to be relying on a few of the members to maintain the business operation of the church. The church has not been able to move forward due to unsound business decisions that have hindered its growth. The membership and discussion concerning new members was presented.

I have pointed out three areas of importance that must be addressed for this organization to function properly and have the organizational quality it desires.

Definition

<u>Term</u>	Definition
Non-denominational	<p>The Faith Christian Community Church shall be a free fellowship of Christian men, women and children dedicated to the fulfillment of Christian principles through common service for the common good. It seeks to carry out the principles of Jesus in a cooperative way in all areas of social, economic, political and spiritual life... invites all who believe in Jesus Christ, Our Savior, and desire to see the coming of His Kingdom to share in its program, which is Outlined as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The public and private worship of God.2. To bring people to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ.3. The religious education of children, youth, and adults for the building of character.4. Christian Social Services<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. To assist the poor and hungryB. Visiting the sick and shut-in.C. Providing help to the physically and mentally impaired.D. Provide counseling for those experiencing personal and spiritual difficulties.5. The development of a four -fold life: physical, social, mental and spiritual.
<u>Writer</u>	Stuart C. Dean

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A review of the literature pertinent to this discussion indicates that the problem of church memberships lack of involvement, inconsistent giving patterns and commitment to numeric church growth is not unique to this organization. In chapter two, the writer will review literature applicable to the stated problems. The discussion will detail that the literature has shown various approaches and alternatives to these concerns.

Lack of Involvement:

The lack of involvement of members was not unique to this church organization, according to P. Baard and C. Ariadas (2001),

"What accounts for this disengagement of Americans from their houses of worship? Many suggest it is the incredible level of busyness in our culture: fifty-, even sixty-hour workweeks, the extended school-day involvement of our kids, and so many competing "leisure time" activities. Others claim it is the secularization of society and the lack of family support systems that carried people in years past. We submit, however, the problem is a matter of motivation, or the lack of it, with respect to church. Even when there is a motivation to attend, give, or volunteer, too often it is not the best kind of drive. Some seem to act more out of a compulsion than an attraction, and this often leads to "burnout" (p.16).

According to D. A. Roozen & C.K. Hadaway (1993), "observed that church attendance depends more on strength of belief and less on a sense of social obligation in areas where denominational affiliation is diverse and rates of membership are low" (p.16).

To further illustrate the status quo of the organization, J. G. Linn (2001), writes:

"...weekly worship attendance is viewed by many church members as something that is good but not integral to their spiritual well-being" (p.15). Linn (2001) further states that:

"The "one hour" attitude toward worship reveals an attitude about church we need to take seriously. It bespeaks a kind of "fast-food" mentality wherein people come to church to get a quick spiritual boost with no time wasted, in and out as soon as possible" (p.35).

According to Linn (2001), "eighty percent of the people who attend church watch twenty percent do all the work. This means most of the people who show-up on Sunday do nothing but that... When the new world of North America was born, most settlers wanted no part of the church holding power over their lives as they had experienced in Europe" (pp. 36, 46).

Participation and involvement are reflective of the general character of church members (Roozen & Hadaway 1993).

"...the fact that participation takes different forms, with some being more meaningful than others for certain parishioners; some forms of participation receive greater emphasis, depending on the specific type of parish; and the many distinctly different influences on participation can be identified." (p.324).

According to L. E Schaller (1992) writes:

"Perhaps the most common characteristic of the churches that are attracting increasing numbers of people today is not where the minister is on the theological spectrum or the denominational affiliation, but on what people hear and feel during the worship experience"(p.23).

J.L. Schmalenberger (1993), states that "...we do need to be contemporary and take into account that which establishes contact with the needs of our un-churched friends and neighbors whom we might reach and minister to" (p.12).

Giving Pattern

Relevant to this discussion are the motives that drive a persons contributing to the church. R.E. Steven & D. L. Loudon (1992), states: "It would seem that the measure of a man is not so much in what he intends or says, but rather in what he does". Steven and Loudon go on to explain the motives "...obligation and fear, legal compulsion, personal glorification and profit, self-interest, a missionary need and love." (p. 115). These motives shape how an individual will give.

The motive for giving, are an individual concern, T.H. Jeavons & R. Basinger (1995), states:

..."fulfills one or more of five functions for people: (1) a "values-expressive function," which includes what we would call idealism and altruism; (2) a "socially adjustive function...to help one fit in and get along with one's reference group"; (3) an "ego-defensive function...to reduce guilt and make one more deserving of desirable [future] outcomes", (4) a "knowledge function" to gain greater understanding of something one wants to know more about; and (5) an "instrumental function", to help persons gain useful skills for career purposes..." (p. 40).

K. L. Callahan (1992) writes that "People give and contribute in the ways in which they exchange their purchasing power in everyday ordinary life." (p. 128).

A research conducted by D. R. Hoge, C.E. Zech, P. H. McNamara, M. J. Donahue (1996), shows that financial giving is dependent on a multiple of factors. Hoge. They state that

the denomination; whether strict or liberal, the income of the member; and the feeling of ownership in the church helped influence the attitude of giving. The size of the congregation was not a factor. Nor was the process of governance attributable to the giving pattern of the membership. The pattern of giving was not reflective of the policies and procedures of the denomination. The more liberal the church the more autonomy a member had in the pattern of giving. This autonomy of the liberal church members allows the pattern of giving to be inconsistent. With this inconsistency the financial budgets of liberal churches are harder to manage because of the fluctuating contributed amount. Less liberal churches; those denominations and pastors that have a stricter adherence to biblical teachings, seemed to demand more of the members. Those churches with a less democratic process, a strong trusted pastoral leader; there the level of giving was higher and more consistent.

What mattered to members, again the income of the member was not a factor, was the level of trust they had in the pastor and the leaders of the church. A. Hale (1993), writes; “Ask and you shall receive” (p.29). Although most of us have had times when our financial situation was bleak, the fact is that how much money we feel we can give depends mostly on what mood we’re in at the time we’re asked and less on objective reality. Then, Hale (1993), states; “Why will a member increase his pledge...it usually comes from learning that his financial peers are giving better than he is. There are other reasons but...this one is prime” (p.72).

Numeric Growth

Faith Christian Community Church has a strong effectual influence on the members and the community in which it serves. Sharing the mission of the organization with more of the membership and the un-churched has posed a dilemma not only to this church but too other churches as well. Church growth has resulted in shifts of membership numbers that have tended

to decline in most so called mainstream denominations in the United States. Those churches that call themselves “charismatic” have experienced an increase in membership numbers, according to an article by L. R. Inannaccone (1996),

“Studies of church growth...called attention to the unprecedented decline in the membership of America’s mainline Protestant denominations...Which begun around 1965...mainline denominations had become insufficiently strict, shedding their distinctive demands and thereby losing their capacity to create meaning and to generate commitment...none could deny the reality of the mainline’s membership declines, nor the relative success of their more conservative counterparts” (p.1).

Several factors cause to be associated with this shift of church membership numbers.

R.D. Perin, Paul Kennedy and D.E. Miller (1997), writes:

“In search of more demanding and meaningful religious experience...many people presumably left the liberal churches and turned to the more serious conservative churches. Newcomers to a church... come from any of three different sources. First, children are an important source of new members. Children can be added to the membership rolls at birth...or as teenagers. Second... what are variously referred to as reaffiliates, transfers or...switchers. Reaffiliates are new comers who have come from other “acceptable” churches or have “acceptable” religious commitments. Finally, new recruits can be proselytes or converts” (p.2).

Summary

Church growth for this organization has more to do with fulfilling individual needs than merely adding names to the rosters or people to the pews. Certainly an increase in members would have a positive effect on the problems that have been sited. H. Mather (1993) writes: “

The church has a story to tell, we want the story to be heard. The search for tools that convey the message and excite the hearer is a never-ending task” (p.7). Also, D. Cousins and L. Anderson (1990), writes: “Highly motivated people are attracted by great ideas. Where we limit vision we immediately cut off those who have the capacity to catch a broad, exciting vision for ministry” (p. 60).

CHAPTER III – OPTION SELECTION-ALTERNATIVE POLICY DECISION

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter three will discuss the selected option, Alternative Policy Decision, which is being undertaken for the thesis project.

Listed below are the options presented:

One: To intervene with design, implementation, and evaluation a solution to the stated problem.

Two: Acquiring funding from various sources to put in effect a plan for which the funds were sought.

Three: To advance recourse to procedures presently influencing the organization.

Option One and Option Two will be reviewed and examined. These options will be critiqued and reasons given for not selecting them. Option Three will be detailed.

Option One

Option One, Applied Design Intervention, was designed by Spring Arbor University for students that intend to design, implement, and evaluate a solution for a thesis project. The design and structure of the organization does not need a new plan of operation. The writer is not in position to authorize a design, implement a solution or evaluate the progress of the implementation. Therefore, Option One was not chosen for this thesis project.

Option Two

Option Two, Grant Proposal Submission, was designed by Spring Arbor University for students that intend to seek funding from various outside sources to put a plan in effect. This

organization is not seeking funds from various outside sources; therefore, this option was not selected.

Option Three

Option Three, Alternative Policy Decision, was designed by Spring Arbor University for students submitting a comprehensive report to a decision maker or board of decision-makers. The purpose of this option is to present a strong case for or against a policy or procedure that is currently practiced by the organization for which the student works or is involved.

Faith Christian Community Church allows the members to collect information that would be positive in supporting procedure modifications. From this incentive, Option Three is most productive to the policies of Faith Christian Community Church. With the selection of Option Three, the writer has the opportunity to act as a team player. This is also appropriate because the writer is devoted, involved and wants to help the organization improve operationally.

Conclusion

The Alternative Policy Decision is the optimum alternative upon which chapter three of the thesis, developing a System, which would aid the organization, is written. This choice provides the opportunity to strengthen the operational functioning and improve the quality of the organization. Option Three allows the writer to take part in the functional operation of the church by offering suggestions for improvement.

Chapter IV - DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

Introduction

The writer of this thesis is an active member of Faith Christian Community Church, which is located in Northwest Detroit, Michigan. Faith Christian Community Church provides a quality spiritual and social experience for the members and the community in which it serves.

The mission of Faith Christian Community Church is to espouse faith in and service to God. It is a church that is striving to succeed operationally so that all areas of the organization fulfill the mission. Operating less effectively does not imply that a plateau has been reached or that stagnation is implicit in the organizational process. But functioning less effectively does not produce the high standard product planned for.

The problems of Faith Christian Community Church being presented in this thesis seems to be the lack of involvement, inconsistent giving pattern, and a vacillating manner to numeric growth among the membership. This chapter will provide a statement of objectives and description of alternatives regarding these problems. An explanation for selecting these objectives and alternatives is included as part of the discussion. This will clarify and give focus to each objective and alternative. The direction of each objective and alternative is to demonstrate several methods that the organization may put to use to improve and empower the organization.

Section 1- Statement of Objectives

Introduction

The forthcoming objectives are posed for further inquiry into the organization. These objectives will ask specific questions in regards to areas of the organization that may have plateaued or are not functioning appropriately. The objectives will ask the manner and direction of the organization, and come to conclusions on the posed questions.

Objective One. Increase member's participation and involvement in operational aspects by 10% within one year.

Putting emphasis on participation and involvement is a key factor in the development of the organization and in meeting these objectives.

Since the organization is made aware that a lack of involvement and participation exists, attempts can be made in to provide alternatives.

Objective Two. Increase member's contributions to the organization by 7% within one year.

Augmenting present contributions with a 7% adjustment achieves greater value and raises the potential of fiscal management. Since the organization can be made aware of the present giving pattern an effort can be made to provide other choices.

Objective Three. Increase members' interest in developing programs and activities that increase membership numbers by 8% within 18 months. It would benefit the organization to realize numeric growth and an endeavor can be made to provide alternatives to increase member numeric growth.

Description of the Alternatives

The Description of Alternatives will detail the alternative methods of operation that would change operations from the Status Quo to a more proficient way of doing business. These alternatives will address the concerns of the organization that seem to restrain operation of the church. Four alternatives will be discussed and activities needed to put the alternative into effect will be examined.

Alternative One - Status Quo. Under current conditions the problems of Faith Christian Community Church will continue to cause the organization not to improve the business function of the church. The process of doing business will remain the same. The strain to meet the budget will continue to plague the organization; as well as the non-involvement of the membership. The number of members will continue to average at the present number, approximately 70 people. This alternative has been the model for the organization since the writer has been a member of the church, which has been 9 years.

The resources that this alternative uses are the contributions and gifts of the membership. No outside funding sources are used.

There are no advantages with the present system. Those concerns being dealt with in this project will persist to be unchanged. The disadvantages are that the operational aspects of the organization will subsist on a system that does not actualize the potential of the church. Member commitment, the giving pattern of the membership and numeric growth will continue to exhibit a none properly functioning organization.

Alternative Two- Awareness of Operational Functionality. Alternative Two is a method of imparting information to the membership and demonstrating how improvements can be made to the operational function of the church.

This alternative is an eclectic approach to the presented problems. These ideas were gathered from various authors with insight specific to church management. Linn (2001), "eighty percent of the people who attend church watch twenty percent do all the work" (p.36). Roozen & Hadaway (1993), "...the fact that participation takes different forms..." (p. 324). H. Mather (1993), "The church has a story to tell, we want the story to be heard. The search for tools that convey the message and excite the hearer is a never ending task" (p.7).

The resources needed would be of the facility, production cost of copy machine, and copy paper. The time element would be one point five (1.5) hours.

The steps required in implementing this alternative is to present to the membership that greater participation will affect the operation of the church.

The advantages of Alternative Two and the impact on the system are two fold: a membership aware that participation and involvement in greater number, the desired outcome will be met. Two, the performance of the organization will improve. The values implicit in this alternative would be efficiently meeting goals and timetables.

The feasibility of implementing this alternative is quite good. The members are open to change and most are willing to reorganize.

The disadvantage of this alternative is that participation and involvement remain at status quo levels.

Alternative Three-Increase Member Financial Contributions. This alternative is a request to the membership for an increase in financial giving of seven percent more than the present amount being given. This request is seven cents for each dollar given. For example, if a member is giving \$1.00 presently an additional seven cents is being requested. If a member is giving one hundred dollars, seven dollars is being requested. All contributions that are given during the

regular morning worship services, tithes and offerings collected for the continuance of the ministry, would be the monies bound by this request. Offerings for emergencies or monies collected impromptu would not be subject to this request.

This alternative was garnered from several sources distinctive to the funding of churches R. E. Stevens & D. L. Loudon (1992), "It would seem that the measure of a man is not so much in what he intends or says, but rather in what he does". K. L. Callahan (1992) "People give and contribute in the ways in which they exchange their purchasing power in everyday ordinary life". D. R. Hoge, C. E. Zech, P.H. McNamara, M. J. Donahue (1996)... The more liberal the church the more autonomy a member had in the pattern of giving. This autonomy of the liberal church members allow the pattern of giving to be inconsistent.

The resources needed to distribute this information would be minimal, no money transaction is required. Other resources needed would be the over-head projector/power point. The time to inform the membership would take approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes.

The plan of action is to present this alternative to the membership in the form of a request. The implementation of this alternative would be that all members participate in this seven percent entreaty. The advantages of the alternative are multiple, most importantly the financial integrity of the church.

The probability of achieving the objectives is good taking into consideration the time element of the objective and motivating the members. The impact would be the consideration and response to this request. The reaction would be mixed initially. Some members would see the benefit others apprehension. Overall the membership would be supportive. This will give the organization structure from which to operate.

The feasibility of implementing this alternative is highly probable, it introduces a method of increasing the financial strength of the church. This alternative is achievable as a method of maintaining financial integrity. The resources required will be the requested seven percent increase in giving from the members.

Alternative Four- Numeric Growth. This alternative is the concept of member numeric growth; where the number of members would increase beyond the present membership population. The idea of numeric growth comes from many sources. Among the authors that contribute to this area of church management are, D.A. Roozen and C.K. Hadaway (1993) observed that church attendance depends more on strength of belief and less on a sense of social obligation... L. E. Schaller (1992) writes: "Perhaps the most common characteristic of the churches that are attracting increasing numbers of people today... is ...on what people learn and feel during the worship experience.

One method of increasing member numbers is to get the present membership to commit to attending worship service more often. Those members that attend once a month commit to attending twice a month. Members that attend twice a month commit to attending three times a month. Those members that attend every worship service continue to be consistent in attendance.

No financial resource will be needed for this alternative. The membership is needed, they will be the means of supplying the effects of this alternative. Implementation of this alternative would be by describing to the membership an image of a more populous congregation.

The advantages to this alternative varies from helping establish a functionally operative organization to strengthening the financial foundation. The impact would be a recognizable change in line with mission goals. The values implicit would be compatible uniform operating

procedures and balanced budget. The feasibility of implementation would be attainable, focusing attention on the benefits of a more populous church. The disadvantages of this alternative are that some members may feel a sense of loss of closeness to one another or that members may not know one another, but these would only be temporary conditions. No other disadvantage is noted.

Summary

In summary the writer gave statements of objectives concerning participation and involvement, giving pattern of the membership and the numeric growth of the church. Four alternatives were discussed, Status Quo, Awareness of Operational Functionality, Increase Member Financial Contributions, and Numeric Growth. Each alternative giving specific examples to help develop Faith Christian Community Church.

Data Collection Plan, Chapter V will describe the method by which information will be gathered. A discussion of that proposed data collection plan will be presented and limitations- if any are found – of the data collection plan will be noted.

Chapter V – Data Collection Plan

Introduction

The Data Collection Plan will describe the method by which information will be gathered. Section One of this chapter will inform the reader of objectives related to the hypotheses of the thesis. Hypotheses were chosen on the basis of the writers inquiry about the organization Faith Christian Community Church. These hypotheses were determined to be applicable for use as a tool for information to be gathered and measured to decide if the objectives could be met. Those hypotheses will be listed in section II of Chapter V and the methods used to collect the data will be discussed. Section III of Chapter V discussion will focus on the Data Analysis Plan. The Data Collection Plan will consider limitations, what these could be and how they may have an effect on the outcome in Section IV of Chapter V.

The collected data will provide credence if the objectives can statistically be met. This same data may also show evidence that the objectives can not be statistically met. Hypotheses defined by the New World Dictionary of American English Third College Edition (1988) is an unproved theory ... tentatively accepted to explain certain facts or to provide a basis for further investigation ... consequently these hypothesis will provide for further investigation. Two hypotheses have been developed for each objective and further investigation is to confirm or reject the validity of the hypotheses.

Hypothesis Related to the Objective.

Objective 1. Increase member participation by ten percent within one year
by December 20, 2006.

Hypothesis One. At least fifty eight percent of the membership participate in the
church as an organization by December 20, 2006.

Hypothesis Two. A sample of members state that recognizing commitment to the church would increase member participation by ten percent (10%). By December 20, 2006

Objective Two - Increase member contributions by seven percent in one year.
By December 20, 2006

Hypothesis One - Approximately fifty one hundred dollar is currently the average monthly contribution from members as of December 20, 2005.

Hypothesis Two - An increase of seven percent in contributions from members would improve the operational function of the church. By December 20, 2006

Objective Three – Increase member interest in developing programs and activities that will help increase membership numbers of the church by eight percent within 18 months. By June 10, 2007

Hypothesis One – Developing programs and activities that will help increase membership numbers of the church.

Hypothesis Two – An increase in membership population would improve the operation of the organization. By June 10, 2007

These hypothesis are a means to finding out exactly where Faith Christian Community Church can advance the organizational facet of the church. They are aimed at finding alternatives to the present Status Quo.

Data Collection Plan:

Three different methods of collecting data were used to gather information for this project. All methods were self formulated specifically directed at obtaining responses to these

issues. The methods used were telephone survey, a yes/no verbal questionnaire, and a paper survey questionnaire. The paper survey (copy attached) questionnaire was randomly given to six church members after a Sunday morning worship service. (All responses were returned). The telephone survey was conducted with ten church members over several nights; asking three yes/no questions concerning the church organization. The verbal questionnaire asking for three yes/no responses was administered to fourteen people. All selected as random respondents after a Friday night Bible study session.

Both the telephone survey and the verbal yes/.no questionnaire used the same questions. Those questions were One, Do you think or feel that awareness of commitment to the church will increase participation and involvement? Two, Do you think or feel that an increase of seven percent in contributions per member would help Faith Christian Community Church improve the operational functions of the organization? Three, Do you think or feel that more members would improve our business outlook?

The paper survey inquired of the respondents to: One, Describe a concern you feel would benefit the church and have a lasting impact on quality. Two, Is there an area of the church (organization) that needs immediate focus? And Three, Describe any hindrances slowing the transition period.

With the paper survey, the writer assigned key words that were associative of the respondents comments. For example, if the respondent commented with the word, ‘commitment’, the writer associated this word to involvement and participation. The word, consistency, also was associated to participation. The mention of church growth related to numeric growth, and other words used in like manner. The writer categorized these responses as

yes responses and included them in the totals. These were the methods of collecting data. These methods garnered one third of the church membership population.

Data Analysis Plan:

All responses were evaluated with the use of percentages. Percentage were calculated by dividing the yes/no responses by the total number of respondents times one hundred.

A sample means will be given; sample means being the number of respondents to all three questionnaires. The sample means will used to calculate the statistical percentages. Both yes and no categories will be summed and applied against the sample means to a statistically calculated percentile to determine if the hypothesis has been correctly defined.

Limitations of the Data Collection Plan:

There are variables, which may affect the results of this survey:

1. Possibility of misunderstanding the questions.
2. Going along with the crowd-not really having an opinion but giving voice to the survey.
3. The survey questions may not have given respondents enough information to base decision on.
4. Survey questions may have been to sensitive for some members to fully acknowledge conviction.
5. The impromptu approach writer used in obtaining raw numbers without warning that the writer was asking questions.

Summary

The data collection plan described the method by which information would be gathered. Three different methods were used to collect the information needed: phone survey yes/no questionnaire, and a paper survey. The reader was informed of the objectives relating to the hypothesis of the thesis. An inquiry into Faith Christian Community Church produced the hypothesis and were determined to meet the needs for speculation. A discussion of the Data Analysis Plan was presented; along with limitations that may affect the outcome.

Chapter VI, Summary of results will follow outlining the results of the research undertaken for this project thesis.

Chapter VI - Summary of Results

Introduction

This chapter summarizes the results obtained from implementing the data collection plan of Chapter V. Relevant data is to be reported in the following pages. A restatement of the objectives showing relationship to questions from the survey/questionnaire results will be demonstrated. Three different surveys were conducted: a paper survey, a telephone survey and an audience survey.

The same questions were used for the telephone survey and the audience survey. These questions were directly related to the objectives and hypothesis for each objective. The paper survey used different questions to obtain results relating to the objectives and hypothesis for each objective. Both types of surveys and the questions contained in each were linked to a statistical model to determine whether a system could be developed to resolve organizational concerns.

All three surveys enabled the writer to obtain necessary data from one third of the church population. With the telephone survey nine members were contacted and all responded to the inquiry. The audience survey was conducted after a Friday night Bible study with fourteen members present, and all responded to the questions. The paper survey was given to four members after a Sunday morning worship service, and all surveys were returned. This chapter will concentrate on the results of those surveys.

The first objective is to increase member participation and involvement in operational aspects by 10% by December 20, 2006. Since the organization is made aware that a lack of involvement and participation exists, an attempt can be made to provide an alternative to increase involvement and participation.

Survey Results of Objective One, Hyposthesis One

Under the current system participation and involvement are lacking. The hypothesis has been correctly stated as: at least fifty eight percent of the membership would participate in the church as an organization. Statistically speaking, the hypothesis was proven true and will therefore be accepted.

Table one is a compilation of survey results for Objective One, Hyposthesis One.

Table one Follows:

Table One

	YES	NO
Actual Responses	83.3%	16.6%

Figure 6.1 is a bar graph of actual response percentages, which are contained in Table One. Figure 6.1 is shown on following page:

Figure 6.1

Survey results of Objective One, Hypothesis Two

A sample of members stated recognizing commitment to the church would increase participation by ten percent. This hypothesis is correctly defined and statistically speaking the hypothesis was proven true and will therefore be accepted.

Table Two

	Yes	No
Actual Responses	66.6%	33.3%

Figure 6.2 is a bar graph of actual response percentages, which are contained in Table Two. Figure 6.2 is shown on the following page.

Figure 6.2

Survey Results of Objective Two, Hypothesis One

Under the current system approximately fifty one hundred dollars is currently the monthly average contribution. The hypothesis has been correctly stated approximately fifty one hundred is the average current contribution. Statistically speaking the hypothesis was proven true and will therefore be accepted. Table Three is a compilation of survey results for objective two, hypothesis One. Table Three follows:

Table Three

	YES	NO
Actual Response	100%	0%

Figure 6.3 is a bar graph of the actual responses of percentages. Figure 6.3 is shown on following page.

Figure 6.3

Survey results of Objective Two, Hypothesis Two

Under the current system the financial foundation of the organization is inconsistent. The hypothesis has been correctly stated: an increase of seven percent in contributions from members would improve operational functions of the church. Statistically speaking the hypothesis was proven true and will therefore be accepted. Table Four is a compilation of survey results for Objective Two, Hypothesis Two. Table Four follows:

Table Four

	YES	NO
Actual Response	62.5%	37.5%

Figure 6.4 is a bar graph of the actual response percentages. Figure 6.4 is shown on following page.

Figure 6.4

Survey Results of Objective Three, Hypothesis One

Under the current system programs and activities have not been developed to attract numeric growth. The hypothesis has been correctly stated: developing programs and activities will increase membership numbers. The hypothesis was proven statistically correct and will therefore be accepted. Table five is a compilation of survey results for Objective Three.

Hypothesis One, Table Five follows:

Table Five

	YES	NO
Actual Response	66.6%	33.3%

Figure 6.5 is a bar graph of the actual response percentages. Figure 6.5 is shown on next page.

Figure 6.5

Survey Results of Objective Three Hypothesis Two

Under the current system membership population does not influence an improvement in the operation of the organizations. The hypothesis has been correctly stated: numeric growth would improve organizational operations. The hypothesis was proven statistically true and will therefore be accepted. Table Six is a compilation of survey results for Objective Three, Hypothesis Two. Table six follows:

Table Six

	YES	NO
Actual Responses	79.1%%	20.8%

Figure Six is a bar graph of the actual response percentages. Figure 6.6 is shown on the following page.

Figure 6.6

Conclusion

Three different types of surveys were administered to one third of the church population. The methods used were a telephone survey calling on random selected members, a paper survey given out randomly and a verbal yes/no questionnaire. These surveys were given without notice to the respondents and all inquires were collected.

Chapter VI- Summary of Results, has concentrated on data obtained from each survey segment and gave a comprehensive statistical opinion of each of the randomly selected segments obtained by the writer. All of the hypothesis have been statistically proven true and will therefore be accepted. Surveyed members made know that the concerns of the organization: lack of involvement, inconsistent giving pattern, and commitment to numeric growth, were causes of static operations. Consequently, putting in motion a model for change would allow the church to realize the potential yet not fully utilized. So accordingly, the members would be cognizant of a full operational organization. Furthermore, the view of the writer agrees with the statistically calculated data that there is a need to develop a system, which will insure a high operational standard.

Chapter VII, conclusions and recommendations will clarify the findings of these surveys, and infer outcome, while considering the limitations, from the data received,. A force field analysis of the forces for and against change, a recommendation for policy chage, and further research will be presented.

Chapter VII-Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

Chapter VII is the culmination of the dissertation, developing a system, which would alleviate the problematic areas of Faith Christian Community Church, the organization. A complete summary explaining the results of the surveys, taking into account the limitations, and giving conclusions will be presented. Examples of force field analysis for an against change will be demonstrated. A recommendation for policy change as well as a recommendation for further research is proposed.

Conclusions

As a result of the combined surveys (Appendix A & B) the writer is convinced that a system can be developed which would resolve the problem areas of the organization. The survey results supported the concept of a more congruous method of operations and suggested that a model or alternative to the present system will suitably fit.

The limitations of this project are not such that will interfere with the outcome or leave any doubt as to the beneficial effect that an alternative will have on the present system. The writer felt confident that the respondents gave good verbal and written answers to the survey questions. All survey inquiries were returned, which helped to encourage the writer to see that the members took an interest in the operation of the church. The majority of the respondents gave affirmation to the alternatives. The minority of respondents that rejected the idea of change did not seem to be bound to total Status Quo operations, and with continued encouragement will see and realize the change being undertaken will benefit them as well. Keeping the members informed and updated on the organizations mission will help to certainly minimize resistance. The long term implication of a different mode of operations is that the organization will be more

business efficient. The whole organization will work effectively. This is not a short-term plan. The objectives for this project are to: increase member participation and involvement, increase member contributions, increase member interest in numeric growth. The hypotheses are for the first objective: fifty eight percent of the membership participation in the organization, and members recognizing commitment would increase member participation. The findings for these hypotheses supported the supposition. The hypotheses for Objective Two were: approximately fifty one hundred dollars, is currently the average monthly contribution, and an increase of seven percent in contributions from members. The findings were that the monthly contributions did come in at the approximated amount and that the majority of members recognized that additional finances would improve the operation of the organization. The hypotheses for the Third Objective: developing programs and activities to increase member numbers, and an increased membership population would improve operations of the organization.

The research undertaken for this project aided in the decision making process. Information gathered from research and the surveys reinforced the writers decision as to the modification needed for a proper application. Numerous aspects of organizational management, group, team and decision making practices were examined while pursuing this under-graduate degree in Management and Organizational Development.; much of the information was employed in writing this document. Results of the force field analysis follow.

Force Field Analysis

Advantages of Alternative One-Status Quo

1. Operating procedures continue in existing state. Operations of the organization will proceed.
2. No effort required. No effort or attempt to change would be required Status Quo alternative.
3. Members will expect some scenario in giving pattern. No unexpected operational occurrences will hinder members presence.
4. Same member population. A certain friendly familiarity among members.

Disadvantages of Alternative One-Status Quo

1. Operational aspects of organization does not actualize potential of church.
2. Concerns of organization persist to be unchanged. System will subsist on unrealized potential.
3. The giving pattern remains inconsistent. Budgetary constrains and incongruous contributions impede organization growth.
4. Member population not developing slow member growth diminishes production quality.

A force-field analysis diagram of the Status Quo Alternative follows on next page.

Force-Field Analysis Alternative One-Status Quo

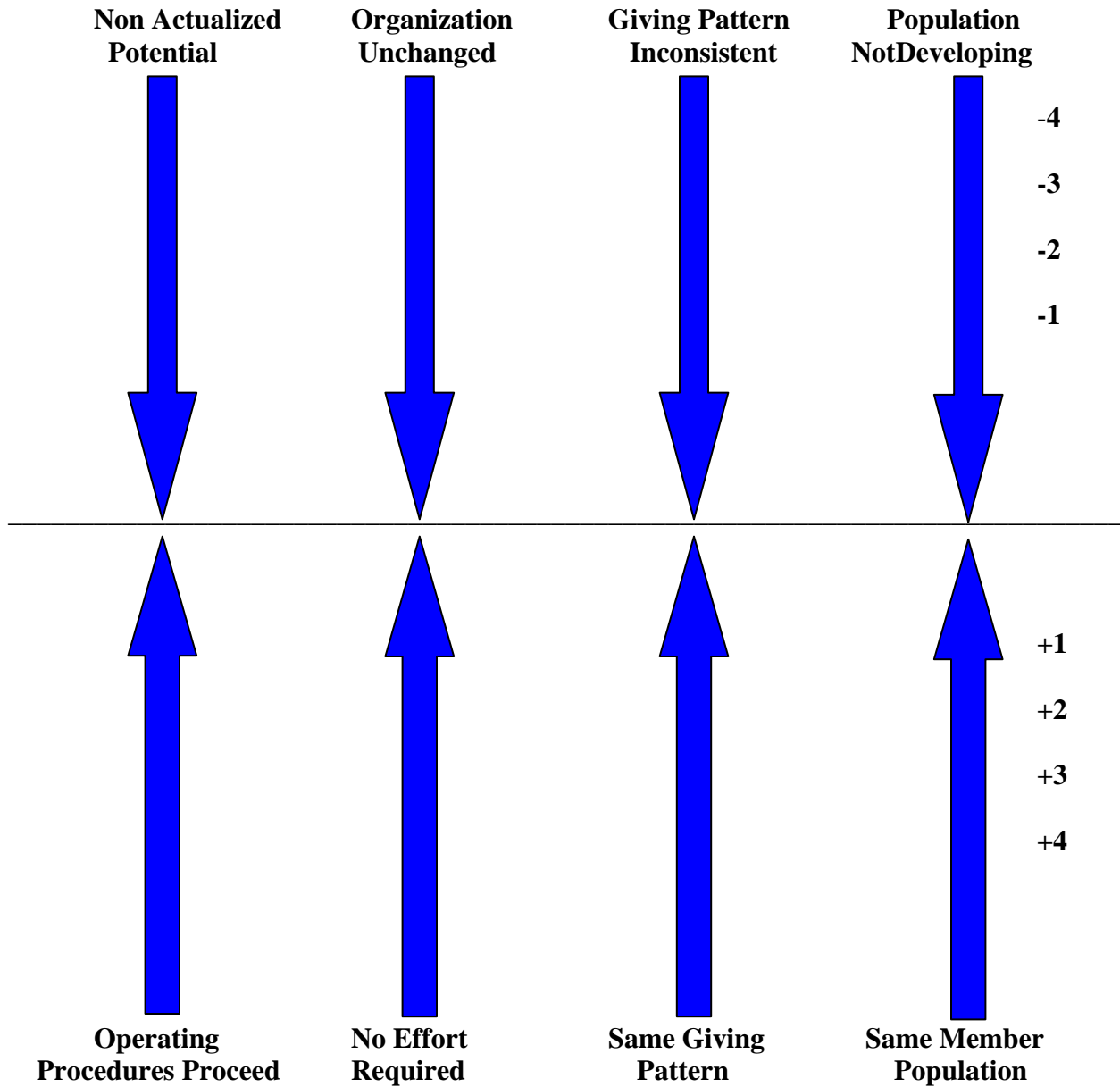


Figure 7.1

Alternative Two provides a method of communicating information to the membership to improve operational function of the church.

Advantages of Alternative Two- Awareness of Operational Functionality

1. Membership aware of participation and involvement desired outcome will be met with greater number of members. The resources required include facility, copy paper and copy machine.
2. Performance organization will improve tasks and projects will be more progressively with member commitment.
3. Will help to meet goals and time tables effectively. The more members actively participating the more consolidated the organization becomes. Implementation of this alternative is quite good.
4. Will help to assist members presently active. This will allow those members that may be doing double duty to get assistance or even relieved of a project or task.

Disadvantages of Alternative Two-Awarness of Operational Functionality.

1. Aware of operation, but no commitment to be involved or to participate.
2. Continuous encouragement of members to practice new method of operation.
To have a group of members take the most hopeful view and express the best outcome.
3. Ambivalent feelings towards a different process. Member has not made a decision whether to accept new way of doing things.

Force Field Analysis Alternative Two-Awarness of Operations

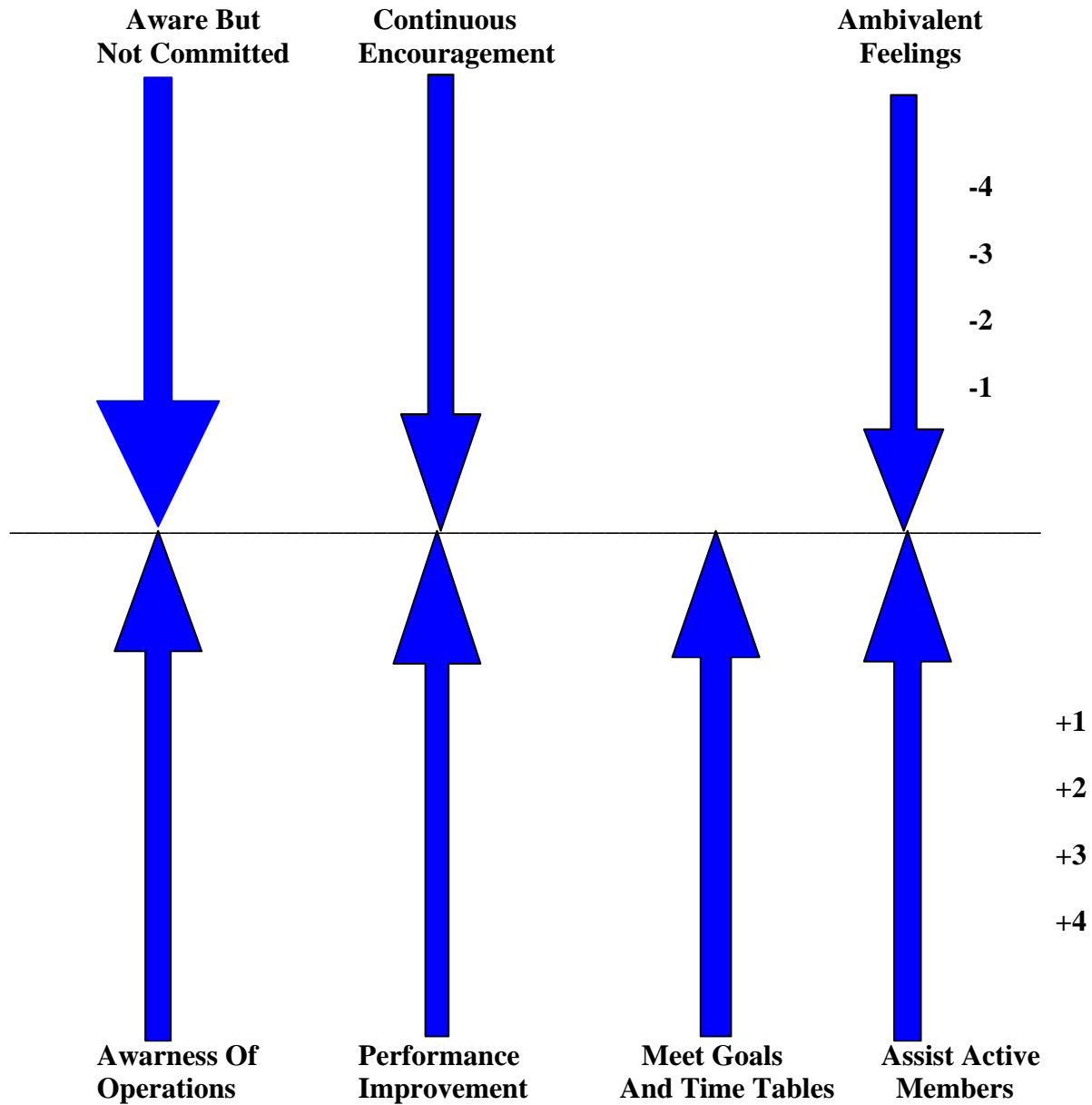


Figure 7.2

Alternative Three-Increase Members Financial Contributions is a request the membership for an increase in financial giving of seven percent more than the present amount being given.

Advantages of Alternative Three-Increase member Financial Contributions

1. Financial integrity of the church. This alternative will give the organization a more suitable structure from which to operate financial.
2. Increase the value of the organization. The organizations credit rating will improve.
3. Purchasing power will have more capability. The resources needed to continuously maintain the progression of the organization. Resources required would be the seven percent request.
4. Aid in refurbishing the physical appearance of the organization. The remodeling needs of the building would meet the target date set completion implementation is highly probable.

Disadvantages of Alternative Three- Increase member Financial Contributions

1. The view that the church is after your money. The perception exists that money is the driving force for a church.
2. Being consistent in giving. The giving pattern fluctuates and is irregular.
3. What will the member decide to do? What will the response to this request be?
4. Stop members from attending church. This request has the potential to stop members from attending church.

A force- field analysis for Alternative Three follows

Force-Field Analysis Alternative Three-Increase Contributions

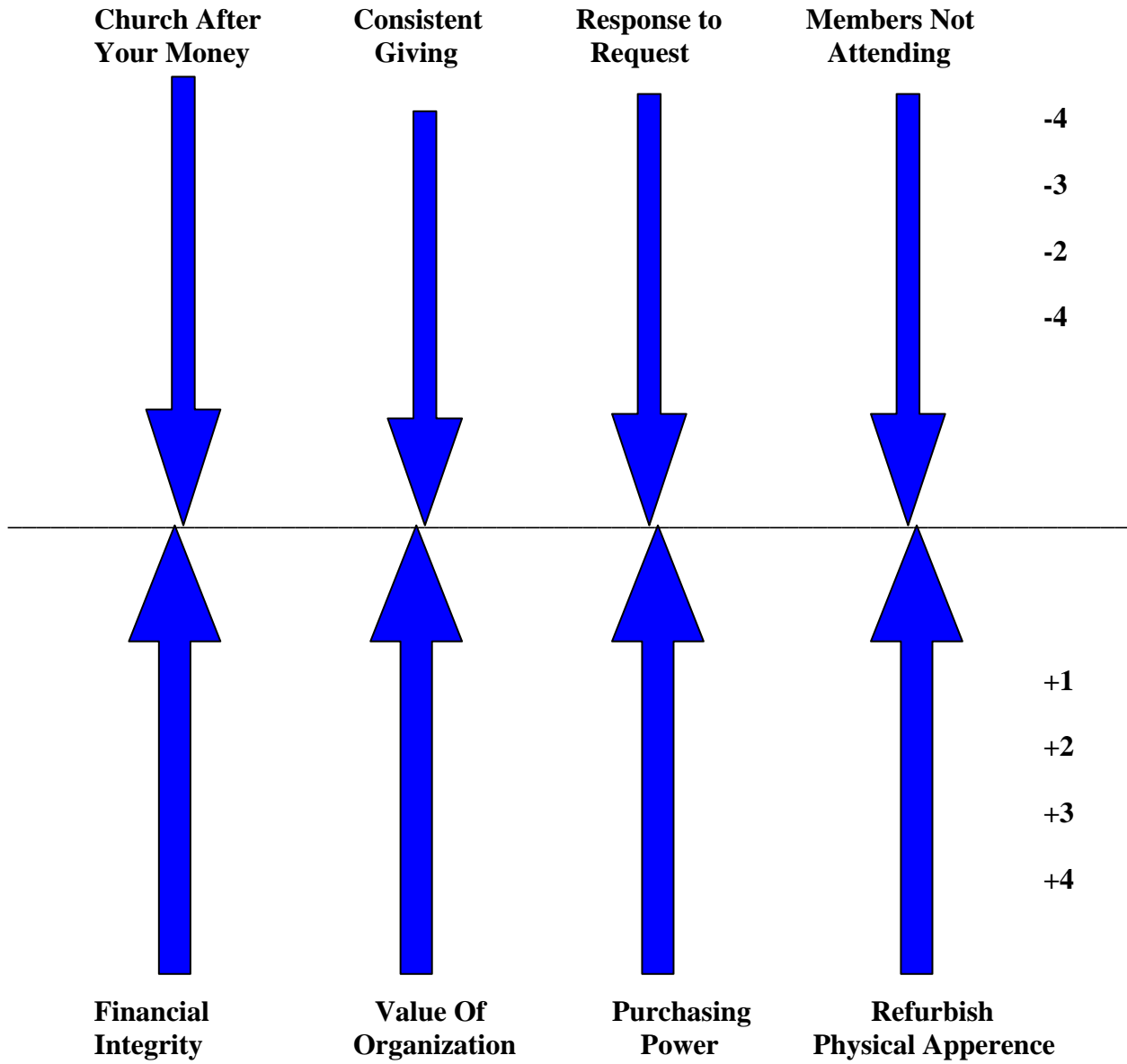


Figure 7.3

Alternative Four-Numeric Growth is the number of members increasing beyond the present membership population.

Advantages of Alternative Four - Numeric Growth

1. Programs and activities would get new energy. More individuals would bring ideas and skills to enhance the organization.
2. Finances would improve. More people would bring and contribute more money.
3. Establish a functionally operative organization. People would be available to work and fill the positions within the organization.
4. Would benefit the organization in total. More people would benefit from the experience and the organization would benefit with more people.

Implementation of this alternative is attainable and the resources needed do not include any type of credit or cash pay out.

Disadvantages of Alternative Four- Numeric Growth

1. Members may feel a sense of loss of closeness. Members may have to reacquaint or get acquainted with one another.
2. Members may feel separated from the ministerial staff. The personal touch might be missing.
3. No alternative to the present system selected. No change in operation taking place.

A force field analysis of Alternative Four- Numeric Growth follows.

Force Field Analysis Alternative Four - Numeric Growth

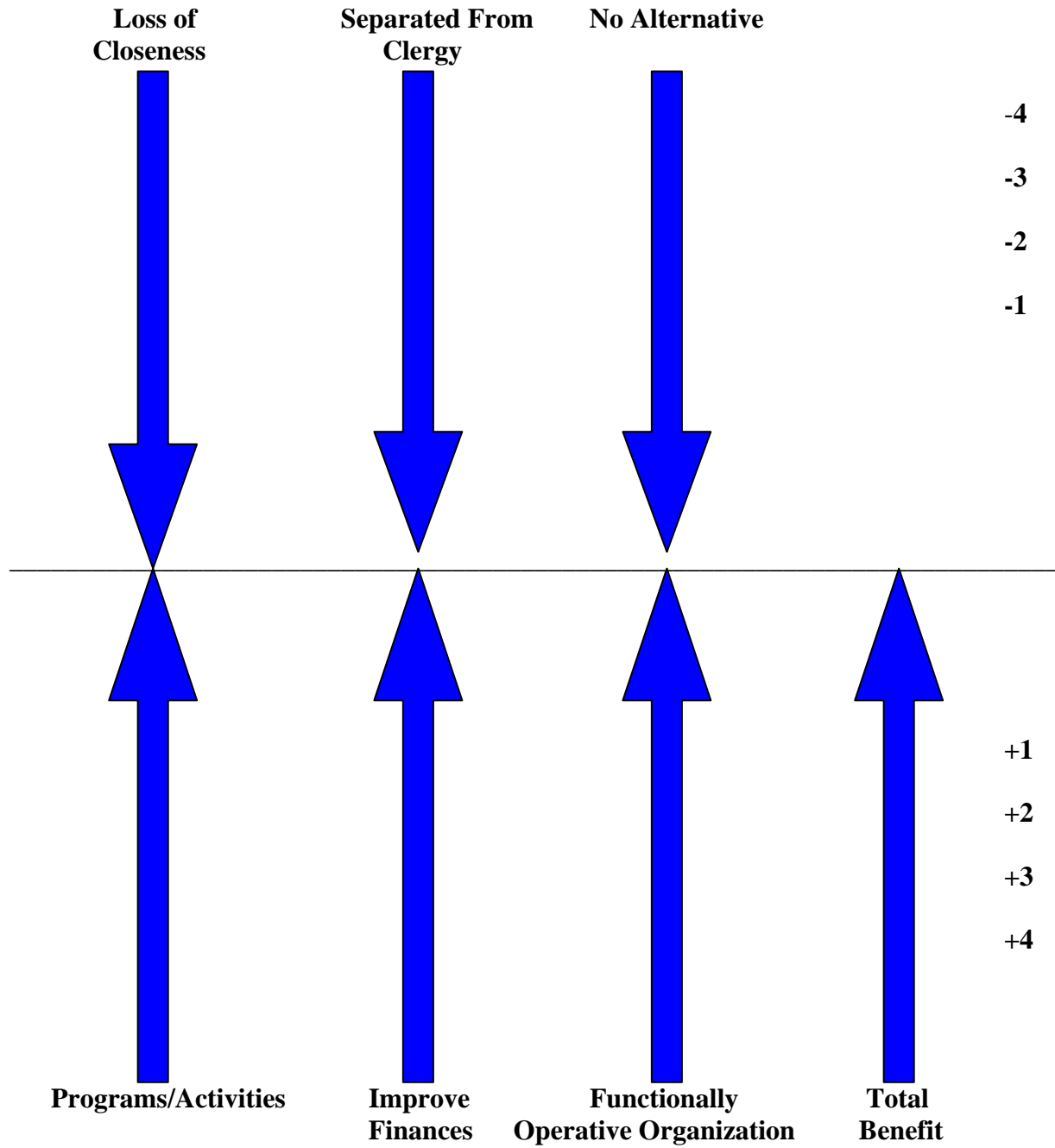


Figure 7.4

As a result of information gathered for this project thesis, the formal recommendation of the writer will be made to the Senior Minister of Faith Christian Community Church.

Policy Recommendation.

It is the opinion of the writer that a system can be developed to replace the Status Quo Model presently in use. Of the data gathered for this project thesis one alternative seems to be the best fit for the organization. My impression of the information obtained suggests that with this one alternative the considered problems of the organization can be resolved.

As was noted the Status Quo Model was not taken into consideration participation and involvement, the giving pattern, and numeric growth. The Status Quo system will not support the pursuit of progress the organization plans for, The alternative of being aware that the church needs to function properly (Alternative Two) is good that attention is given to how the organization performs and having knowledgeable and skilled people to maintain performance. Alternative Three with the requested seven percent increase in contributions would undoubtedly be good for the organization. The increase in finances would allow the organization to become solvent and increase services to members and community. Alternative Four is the alternative that is being recommended. With a more populous church the alternatives cited as improvement for the organization will all be interrelated in Alternative Four. This will produce more participation and involvement will receive more in tithes and offerings, and realize the growth potential of the church. Alternative Four is the preferred alternative and recommended to the Senior Minister of Faith Christian Community Church. This alternative will be evaluated every six months to insure that the organization is on track.

Recommendation for Further Research.

The writer suggests that continued research be undertaken in the area of church management, fund raising, and ways relevant to church numeric growth. New techniques are continually being developed that may be integrated into Faith Christian Community Church. Research that may be related to and be suggested of the areas discussed. What other churches have done and formulas or methods used will be explored. Further research for methods related to member commitment and consistency will also be examined.

As was noted, the organization is not stagnant nor has it plateaued. What is needed as the writer has observed and the findings point to is a different method of operation. The findings reflect that the membership is open to and ready for a change. The resistance that usually accompanies change is low. The information gathered contend and support a new method to address our concerns would work and the implementation of Alternative Four- Numeric Growth would be the best for the organization.

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Appendix A

Reflections

The process of doing applied research has been fun and enlightening as well as taxing and discouraging. The period of time that this writing has taken seems to have lasted longer than the short span of time that it actually was. There were times when I wondered if I would see the end of this project because of the long hours of writing and time consumption that this process has taken. Writing this project has taught me how I personally learn and what it takes for me to get a task, such as this completed. For example, I have chosen to do the writing of this project in the basement of my home so as not to be distracted by seeing what is going on outside, even on beautiful days. This has benefited me, by finding a comfortable place to have been able to do this project.

The learning process itself was the most enlightening in that it dispelled some ideas that I had of the particular church that I attend. I thought that this was the only church having the problems Faith Christian has. That is not the case. In my review of the appropriate literature I found that this church is facing the same concerns churches across the country face, which is a declining membership numbers, fluctuating financial contributions and lack of involvement. These are problems faced by the majority of the so-called main stream churches. Whereas the more charismatic churches seem to be attracting large numbers of people. Having reviewed information, I have better insight into and ideas concerning how to resolve those issues this organization struggles with. I was greatly pleased that the majority of the members are in favor of improving the operational outlook of the church and open to replacing the present system of operation. I really did not know how much resistance to change I would get. But resistance was low

and I feel confident that those that did not agree to one or the other alternative to the Status Quo will be - if my recommendation of this plan is implemented - pleased that the organization is operating at a higher level of efficiency.

As the process of putting this thesis together went along several roadblocks occurred and seeming difficulties were encountered. One real roadblock was the time element involved to properly treat this project. One weekend, for example that I had planned to spend some good quality time with this, the main sewer going out of my house backed up and I had to have a plumber come in and auger the pipe out so that my basement would not flood. That took hours. The same weekend that all that happened, my wife's vehicle was on the fritz and I spent time chauffeuring her to the destinations she needed to get to. Other times the roadblock was that the words would not flow or some of the ideas took time to shape to come to the page. I thought that I might have difficulties finding literature for church management and any information related to the problems discussed in this dissertation. I found an ample amount of material to peruse and was surprised that so much information is available about this subject.

I went into the process of writing this dissertation with the idea that the church is partly a business operation, and that the church should operate like a business. The literature I read clarified my thinking on that. This information related that if the church is a business, the main purpose for the church is not being expressed, but that a business interest is. The church has organizational operations that may reflect a business enterprise, but the 'product' is not of a business nature. This all was an unexpected outcome. I had the idea that since so much money was involved, the furtherance of the organization was hinged on making sure enough money was available to operate. My

concept of the church being a business enterprise no longer is an area of great concern for me because the real purpose for Faith Christian Community Church is to express the mission for which it is primarily organized. Though my concern still exists for a better functioning organization, and as recommended I feel more members would enliven and enrich the organization. Of the many possible practices to use, one method to increase membership population is to get those members presently attending Sunday morning worship service once a month to come twice a month, members that attend three times a month. Those members that attend each Sunday to continue the consistency. In this fashion the average morning worship service attendance will increase, and increase will be recognized financially, and programs and activities will see an increase in response.

No problems were noted or encountered that needed solving. I was able to find all of the materials needed, information, respondents of surveys, and relatively good direction in writing this dissertation. At a few times I felt, do I have enough to write or express, are my ideas going to fill the required number of pages? It seems that the more familiar I became with the subject, and with the encouragement of my Site Contact I was better equipped to clearly define and communicate the intent of this project.

In conclusion the initial realization of what I had gotten myself is to did not happen until I was well into the Fifth Module of the Program. I wondered aloud, if I was sure I know what I was doing? Writing this project has superseded all other activities and has taken resolute determination to spend the time to complete this task and has given me a greater sense of patience, and knowledge that I can stretch for this kind of experience and go beyond the limits that were present at the time I started on this journey. This entire program has been good for me. I have attended several different schools and universities

and never was close to finishing. I am able to complete this program at Spring Arbor University. This school helped me to identify myself through the profiles that were taken in the initial modules. I recognized several traits about myself that encouraged me to be me. For instance, that I am an extrovert and an outgoing individual. That I learn by doing, and I am an expressive person. I did not have labels for my traits, but it is good to know me better. I liked that the subjects and classes were one module at a time, not like the traditional schools five to six classes and subjects per semester. I was constantly busy at Spring Arbor University but did not feel over whelmed taking one subject at a time, Except when I had to take a weekend class at Spring Arbor along with my ongoing classes. That was a bit much. I was stretched but was successful with those classes.

The whole experience of the MOD (Management Organizational Development) program and project thesis affected my person life in that it produced a change in my outlook on how to solve problems, demonstrating to me the importance of being open to alternative ideas to replace or modify a process. The project thesis itself taught me how to take a concern and delve into it by asking questions by getting opinions of those with some authority, and by making a decision on the best course of action and resolve.

The MOD program opened avenues of thinking and showed me a new set of available tools and resources that I can use in both my personal life and in the organization I discussed in this project. The Statistics Module was interesting and exciting. The methods, presented during that module allowed me to learn for example, how to measure responses to an inquiry.

Time management has been the most learned outcome of this MOD program. Prioritizing my time has been the most immediate number one item that I have learned.

Some things that may be on my to do list get shifted lower in importance of order, so that the most pressing items get the attention and treatment. Some things that used to hold importance for me no longer do, and I am not so hurried in my approach to daily life. All of what I have learned through this program I have tried to assimilate into my life. I have gained more self-esteem and confidence having experienced Spring Arbor University.

I received personal satisfaction from my writing instructor Mr. McTyre, who after reading the life learning paper required for the course, told me that I am a good writer. That has helped me many times throughout my time at Spring Arbor University. There were times when I would question what I had written and or given an opinion on and I was not sure if I had communicated the idea fully. But after getting encouragement from a writing instructor I felt great personal satisfaction. I feel I am on a higher level, one that I had been pursuing over a long period of time. One reason of many I attended Spring Arbor University was that my wife attended and graduated from Spring Arbor and I experienced the school through her eyes. Her experience was positive and I noticed in her that she had attained a different level. I told her more than a few times jokingly, that she was not going to leave me.

If given the opportunity to go through the process again I would first get some months (plural) rest before making a decision as weighty as this. It was a good experience, I would not trade the learning, insights, and any of the other benefits Spring Arbor afforded me. There were times I felt exhilarated because of the new learning and information I received. I met some interesting people, which allowed me to come in contact with a diverse group, and hear their views and opinions. But to do all of this over again? That has to remain unanswered for now.

Appendix B

Telephone/Audience Survey

Please Answer Yes or No

1. Do you feel/or think that awareness of commitment to the church will increase participation?
2. Do you feel/or think that an increase of seven percent in contributions per member would help Faith Christian Community Church improve the operational functions of the Church?
3. Do you feel or think that more members would improve our business outlook?

Appendix C

Questionnaire Survey

Organizations are formed for the purpose of taking raw materials from the environment (input), producing something of these raw materials, and putting the product of these raw materials back into the environment (output). Faith Christian Community Church is in transition, strengthening its' organizational structure.

Viewing Faith Christian Church from an organizational perspective, taking into account that organizations are organic in nature. Organic means that the people shape how an organization functions. People with feelings, values, and opinions.

Describe a concern you feel would benefit the church and have a lasting impact on quality.

Is there any area of the church (organization) that needs immediate focus?

Describe any hindrances slowing the transition period.

Commitment Survey Results

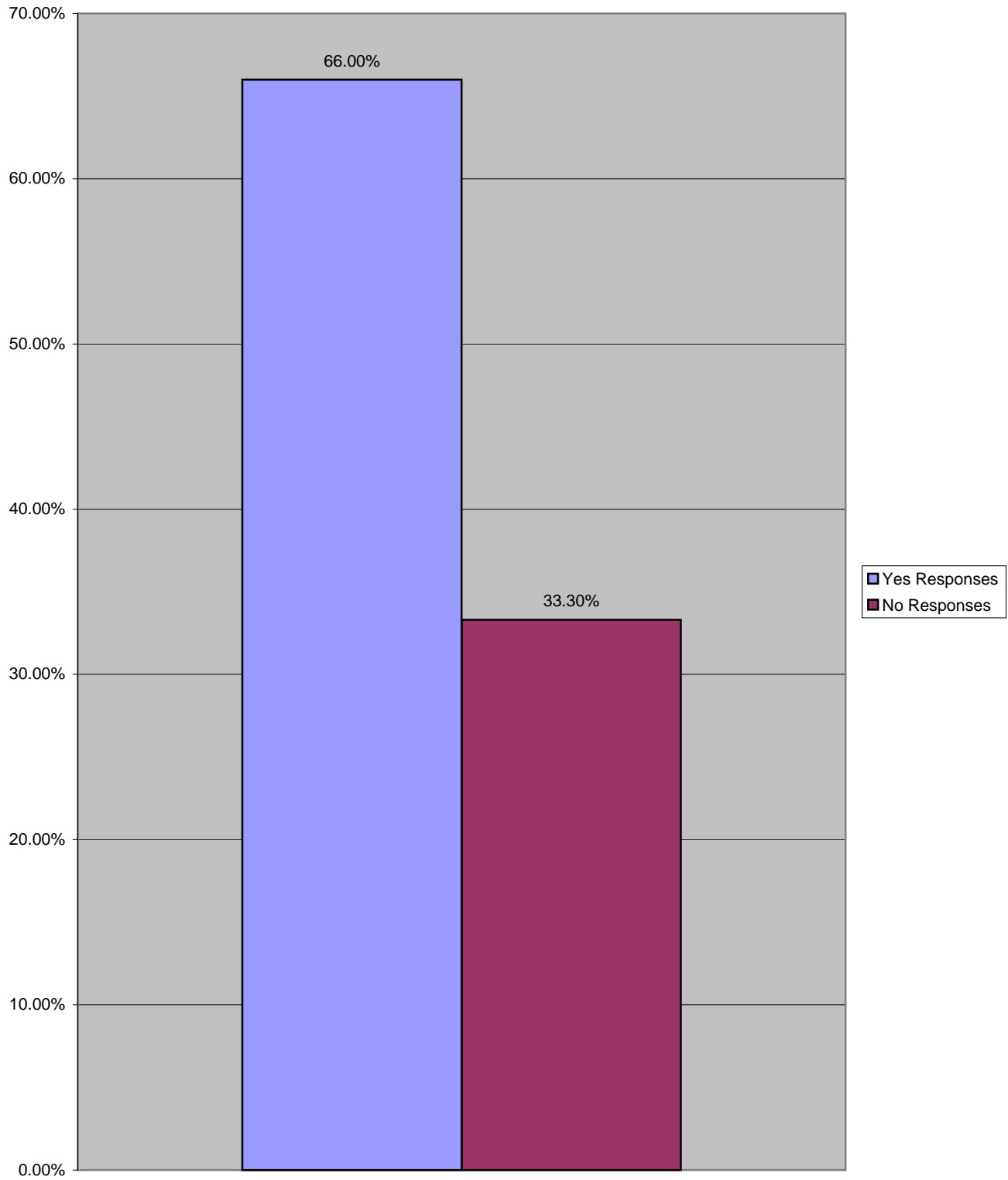


Figure 6.2

Contributions Survey Results

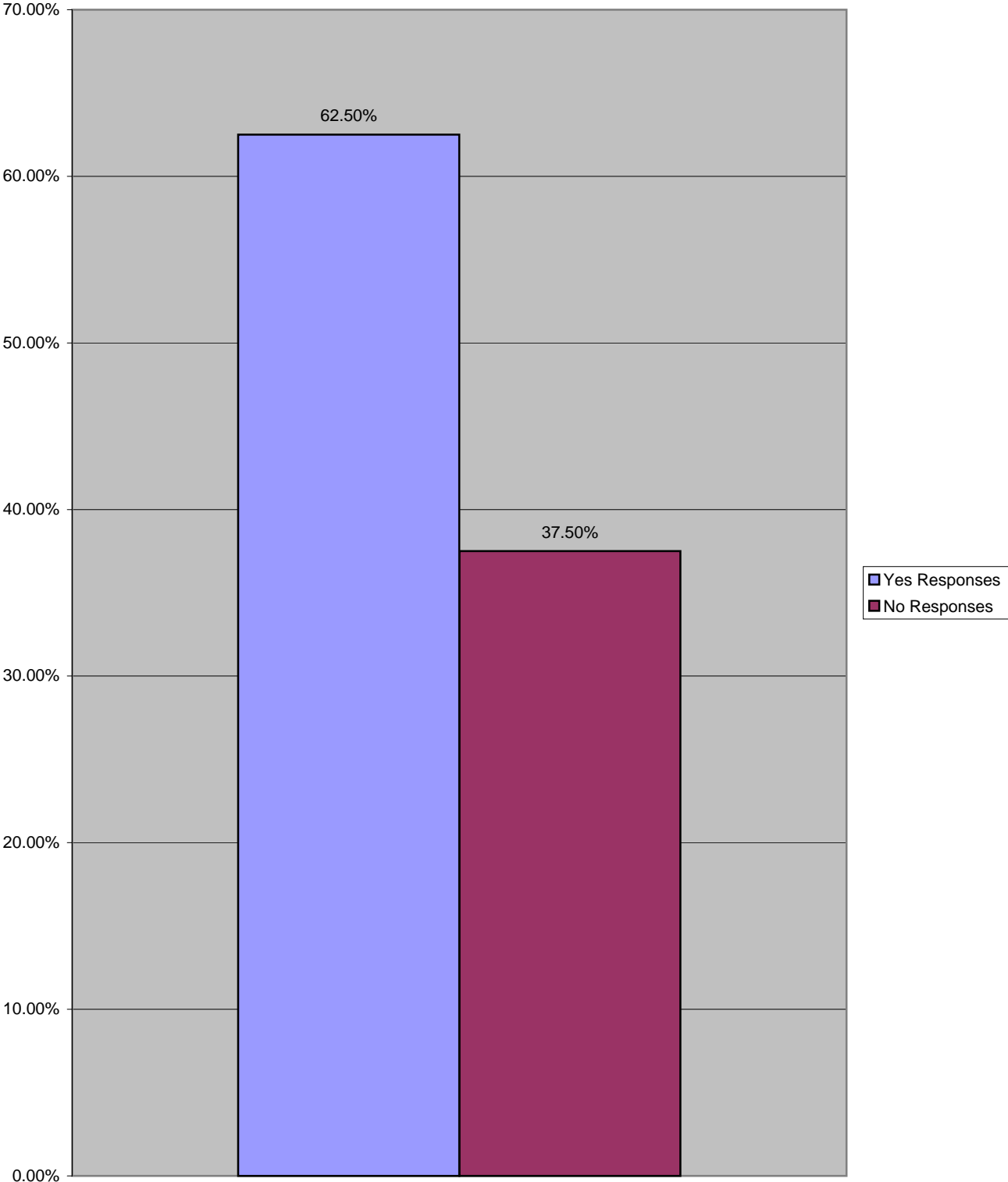


Figure 6.4

Current Contributions Survey

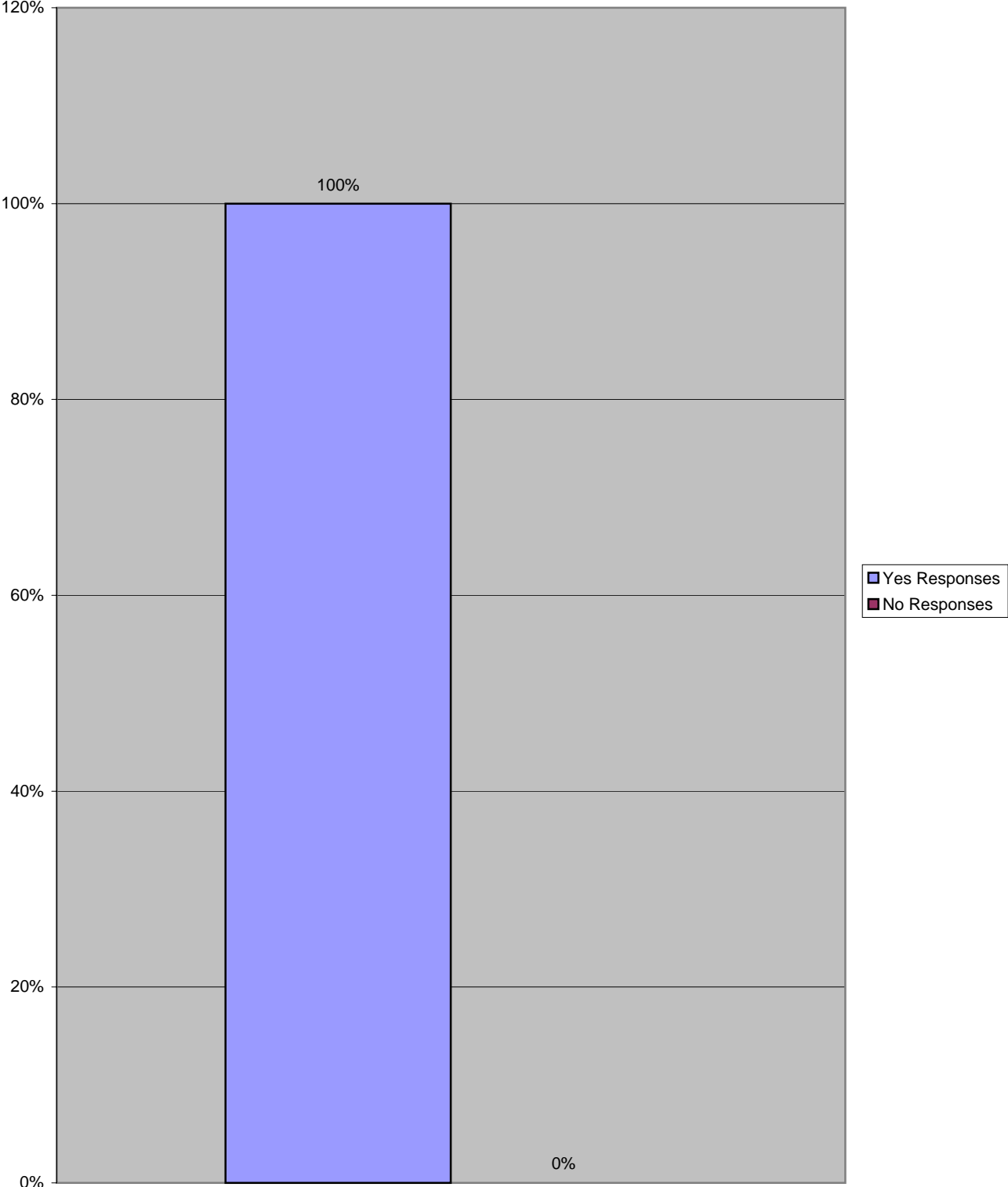


Figure 6.3

Membership/Operations Survey Results

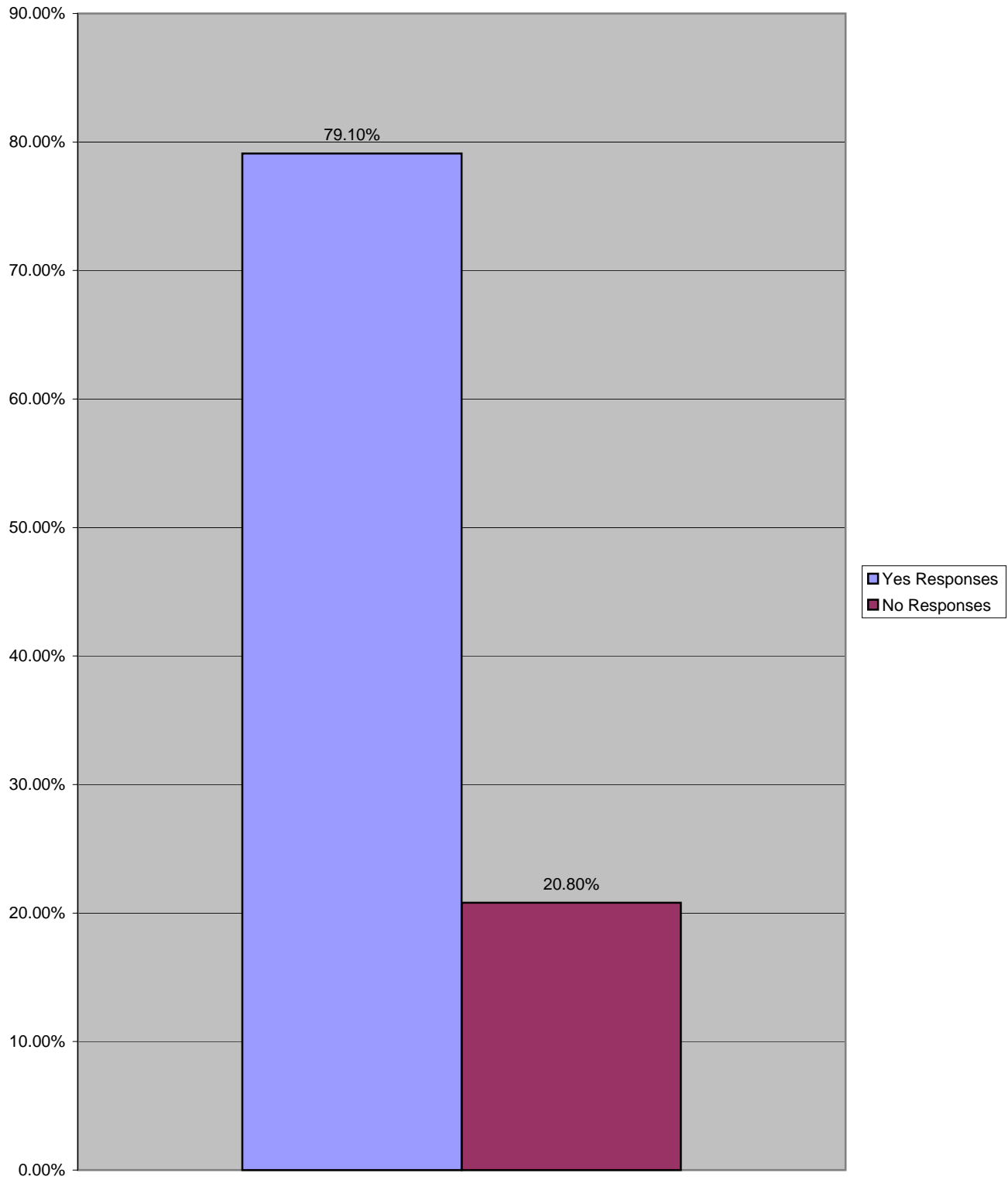


Figure 6.6

Numeric Growth Survey Results

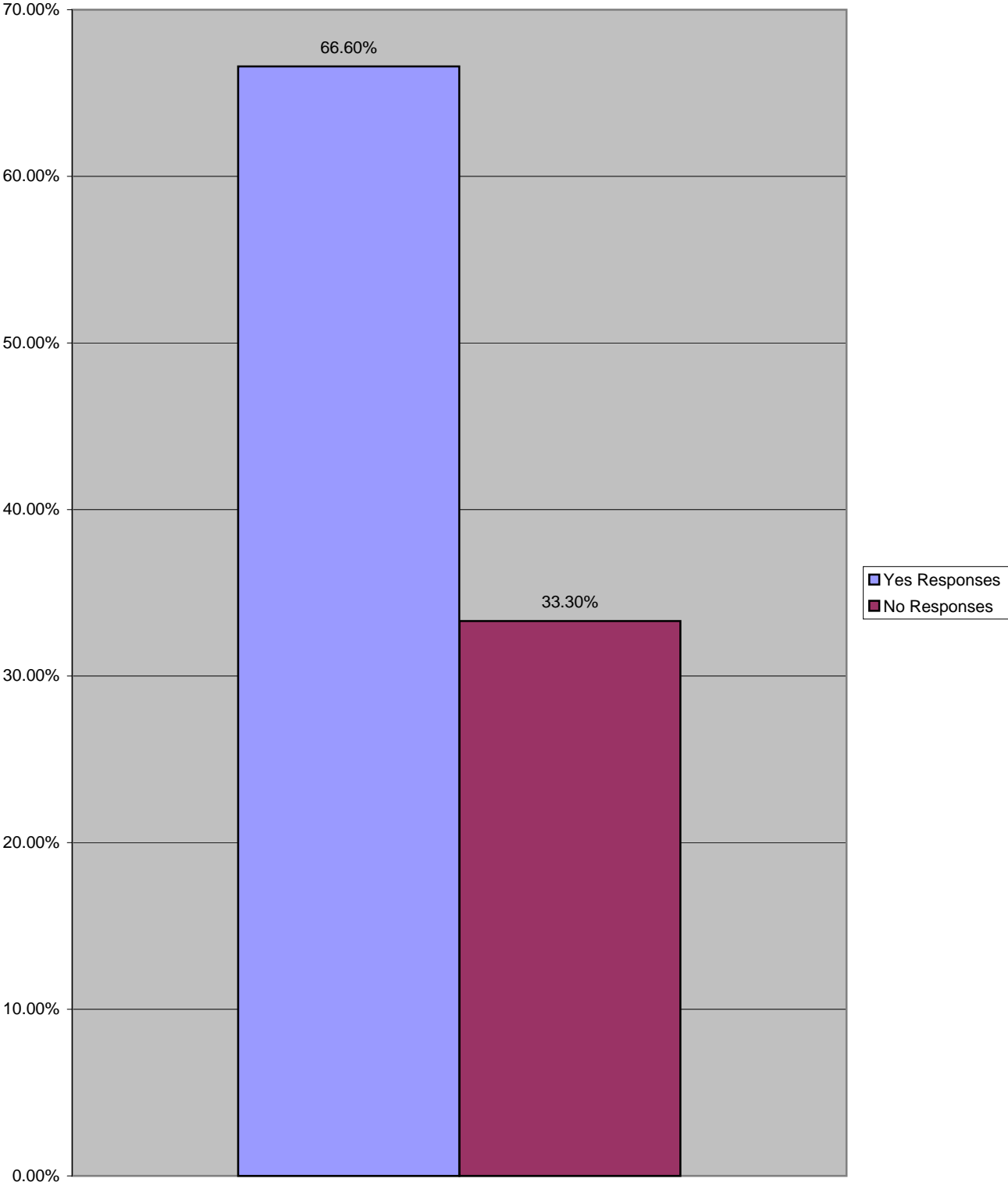


Figure 6.5

Results of Participation/Involvement Survey

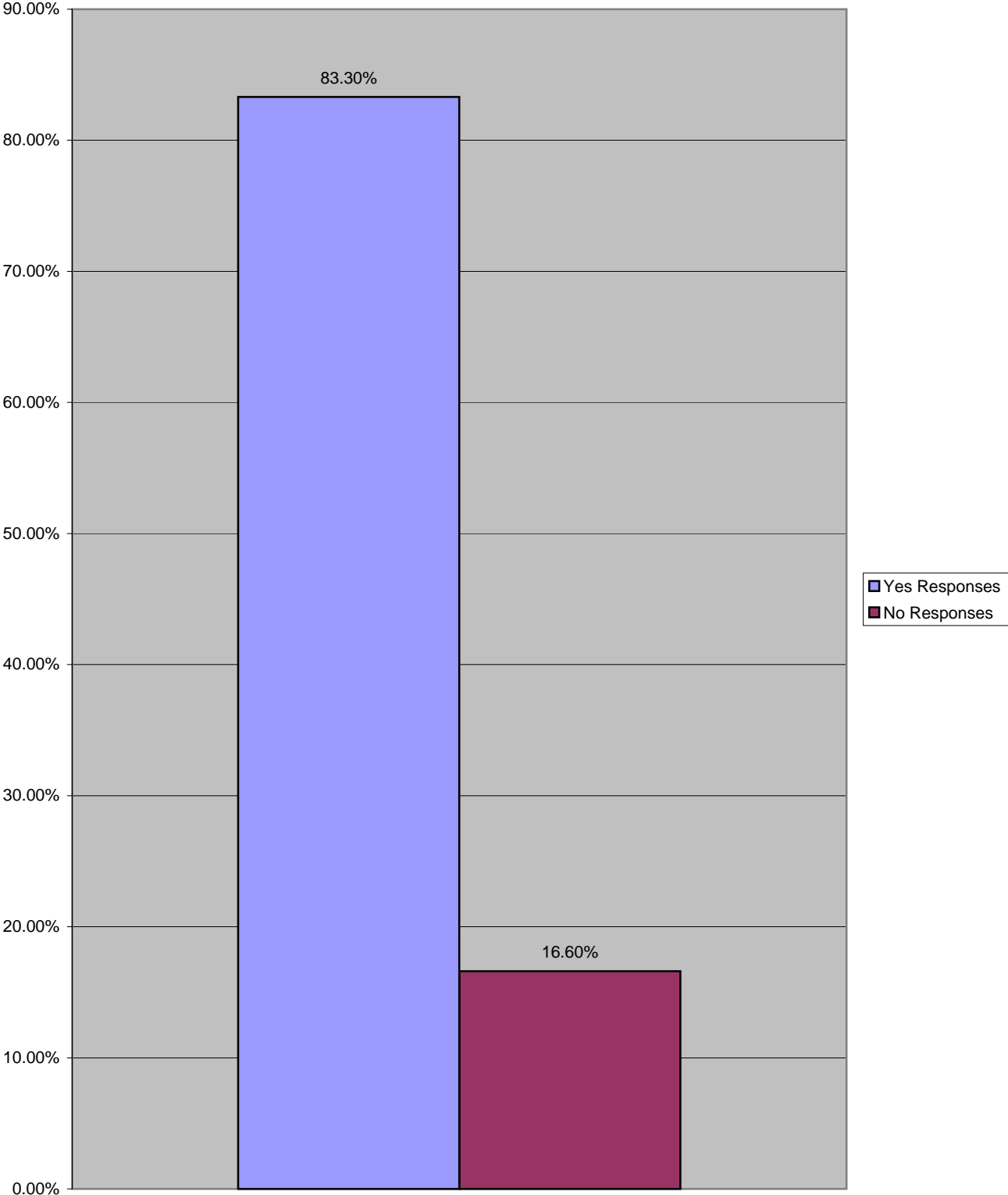


Figure 6.1