

Simplified Accountability Structure

The 2016 Book of Discipline authorized modification to the organizational structure (paragraph 247.2). The Simplified Accountable Structure (SAS) model based on the Mission Possible book has been adopted by the UMC for churches transitioning to a simplified structure with accountability. Adoption of the SAS model enables the Leadership Board to focus on the mission – “To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” (Matthew 28:19 – The Great Commission)

Overview Features of the SAS Model

1. The Leadership Board is responsible for leadership and governance. All administrative committee responsibilities and functions are vested in one combined Leadership Board. Each member of the 9-member board wears the four hats of – SPRC, Trustees, Finance and Administrative Council.
2. The SAS model focuses the Leadership Board on mission and governance vs. management and maintenance. Four responsibilities of governance:
 - a. Stewardship – Tending to the fiduciary responsibilities and alignment of God’s people and resources.
 - b. Generative – Discerning God’s dream and working to set the congregation’s next steps.
 - c. Strategic – Leveraging the resources to be aligned with congregational priorities
 - d. Accountable Leadership – Setting a culture of well-aligned impact-focused ministry.
3. Leadership Covenant – A leadership covenant is adopted and signed by each Leadership Board member outlining their authority and responsibilities as board members and their agreement as to how they will behave and interact with one another. This provides permission to hold one another accountable.
4. Guiding Principles – The Leadership Board sets Guiding Principles and does not manage the day-to-day operations or ministries of the church. Guiding Principles provide permission to those given responsibility and authority who have accepted accountability, thus avoiding the requirement to discuss management issues at board meetings.
5. The Leadership Board Agenda Changes as follows –
 - a. The first third of the meeting is spent in spiritual formation and leadership development.
 - b. The next third of the meeting tends to the missional accountability by the review of new people and goal review and accountability.
 - c. Common items such as minutes, financial statements and other reports are sent out in advance and reviewed in advance and can be approved without discussion unless a board member has an issue they need to discuss. These items can be approved as a group in a consent item on the agenda rather than voted on separately. This keeps the Leadership Board out of the weeds of management.
 - d. Generative and Strategic – With this change of agenda, the Leadership Board has the opportunity to do the important work of keeping their finger on the pulse of the mission field’s context and culture to make sure the congregation is responsive and still reaching new people for Christ.
 - e. Communication – What did we decide, who does it need to be communicated to, who is going to communicate it, and when will it be communicated?
6. The SAS model releases more people for the most important work in the church – the ministry teams – by releasing them from administrative committees and meetings.
7. SAS allows churches to operate in a more nimble, flexible, and timely structure conducive to modern times.
8. This is a very quick and basic overview of SAS and not intended to be a complete explanation. For more information, view the following introductory video and order the Mission Possible book from Amazon.

<https://youtu.be/A6BCBQT0Jok>

https://www.amazon.com/Mission-Possible-Structure-Missional-Effectiveness/dp/1950899284/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1