

OFFICE STAFFING TIPS

- *Learning to use an assistant.* Some pastors tell us, “I wouldn’t know what to do with an assistant.” If you’re in that boat, try two things. First, log your work activities for two or three weeks. Then list the things you are doing that an assistant could do. Second, hire an experienced office professional with the gift of administration to be your assistant, and ask your assistant to train you. (An assistant whose primary gift is serving won’t be able to do this.) Say, “If you see me doing something you should be doing, tell me to give it to you.”
- *How much to pay office staff.* Hiring an entry level worker at minimum wage makes sense for an unskilled worker who assists your core office staff, but for key positions it pays to hire the best you can afford. A skilled professional hired for 50% to 100% above the minimum wage will usually be two or three times as productive as an entry level worker. Energy level also drives productivity. A high energy multi-tasker can sometimes literally do the work of two lower energy people. You can pay such a person generously and still come out ahead.
- *Can office volunteers contribute to more-with-less staffing?* Yes, it works well to have a roster of volunteers you can call for special projects. Use volunteers for basic office coverage, however, only when they are treated as paid staff who are donating their wages. They have job descriptions and regular hours. They are just as dependable as paid staff--on time every day and taking vacation days only when they are scheduled.