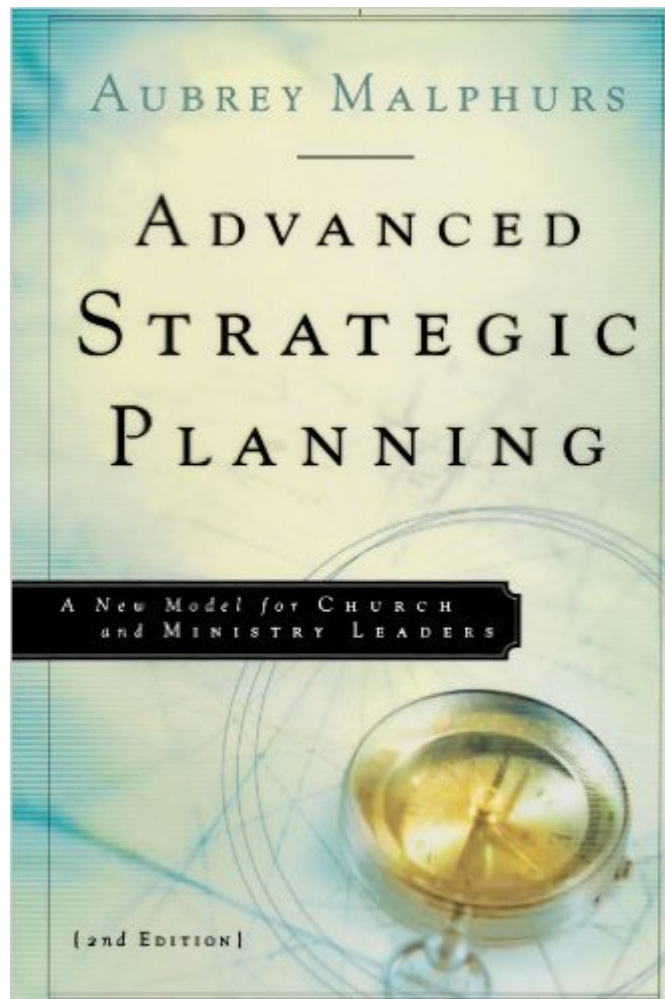


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# Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model For Church And Ministry Leaders



## Synopsis

First published in 1999, *Advanced Strategic Planning* explained why planning was so important to carrying out the church's mission. Now in its second edition, this practical resource offers- a nine-step strategic thinking and acting model - useful ideas for developing a strategy - diagrams to help illustrate concepts - a new chapter on spiritual formation This updated edition places a stronger emphasis on discipling and clarifies answers to nine fundamental ministry questions. The methods in this book are proven to work, having already helped many churches articulate their vision and implement their mission.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Malphurs asserted that the typical church in North America is aimlessly adrift (9). Such aimlessness is the result of churches and their leaders failing to do the hard work of thinking through their mission and developing the strategies necessary to accomplish that mission. Three reasons primarily account for the lack of strategic planning: lack of understanding of the need, unfamiliarity with the process, and the deemphasizing of strategic planning within the business community. Historically, strategic planning in the business world adhered to a static model; that is, planning assumed business forces would not change significantly enough to alter the strategic plan. The reality was different from the assumptions and company plans ended up lying on a shelf unused. Malphurs desired to provide church leaders with a concise and workable model for strategic planning. His model comprised a seven-step process that takes into account the many forces

influencing the ecclesiastical world. Malphurs accomplished his objective in a well-organized book free from the techno babble often found in similar works. **Critical Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses** The book's title is somewhat overstated. **Advanced Strategic Planning** is really the basics of strategic planning. Malphurs's principles are very elementary. An advanced book would assume some level of prior understanding of the process. Instead, Malphurs gave his readers a detailed primer on the subject. That said, Malphurs did an excellent job of succinctly outlining the planning process. He began with a discussion of the church and leadership's readiness to commit to the strategic planning process followed by ways to stimulate creative and strategic thinking.

Aubrey Malphurs, author of many books on parish leadership and strategy, is a professor of Pastoral Ministries at Dallas Theological Seminary and is also the president of the Malphurs Group (a training and consulting firm for churches). "Advanced Strategic Planning" is a book that seeks to assist a congregation to move from a stage of stagnation and plateaued growth to a period of change and revitalization. Malphurs's introduction lays out his belief that all institutions essentially operate on a bell curve (aka "sigmoid curve" or "s-curve"), that an institution begins and experiences rapid growth in virtually all dimensions, then begins establishing routines, the routines entrench themselves and become a source of comfort to those in the organization, then the institution declines and dies. Malphurs argues that institutions (and especially the church) should, as soon as they recognize plateau, should re-invent or re-structure themselves to experience a new period of significant growth. This necessitates the re-invention and re-structuring of countless aspects of church life and organization. "Advanced Strategic Planning" takes a church through the change process in a step-by-step manner. Throughout the book, Malphurs draws upon his wealth of experience as a pastor, interim pastor, professor, and consultant to take a church through the strategic revitalization process. He addresses many pitfalls and stagnation traps, reasserts the importance of following through on the process, and pastorally encourages the church leaders to carry on. He stresses the distinctions between values, missions, and functions in a helpful way. Most valuable for this reader, he spends much time defining and showing the importance of communicating a vision.

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