

Grow, Hold, Fold: Turning around faith-based organizations for the 21st century

Beth Lewis

President & CEO Emeritus, 1517 Media

Principal, Getting2Transformation

bethlewis@getting2transformation.com

All Rights Reserved

© 2019 Getting2Transformation

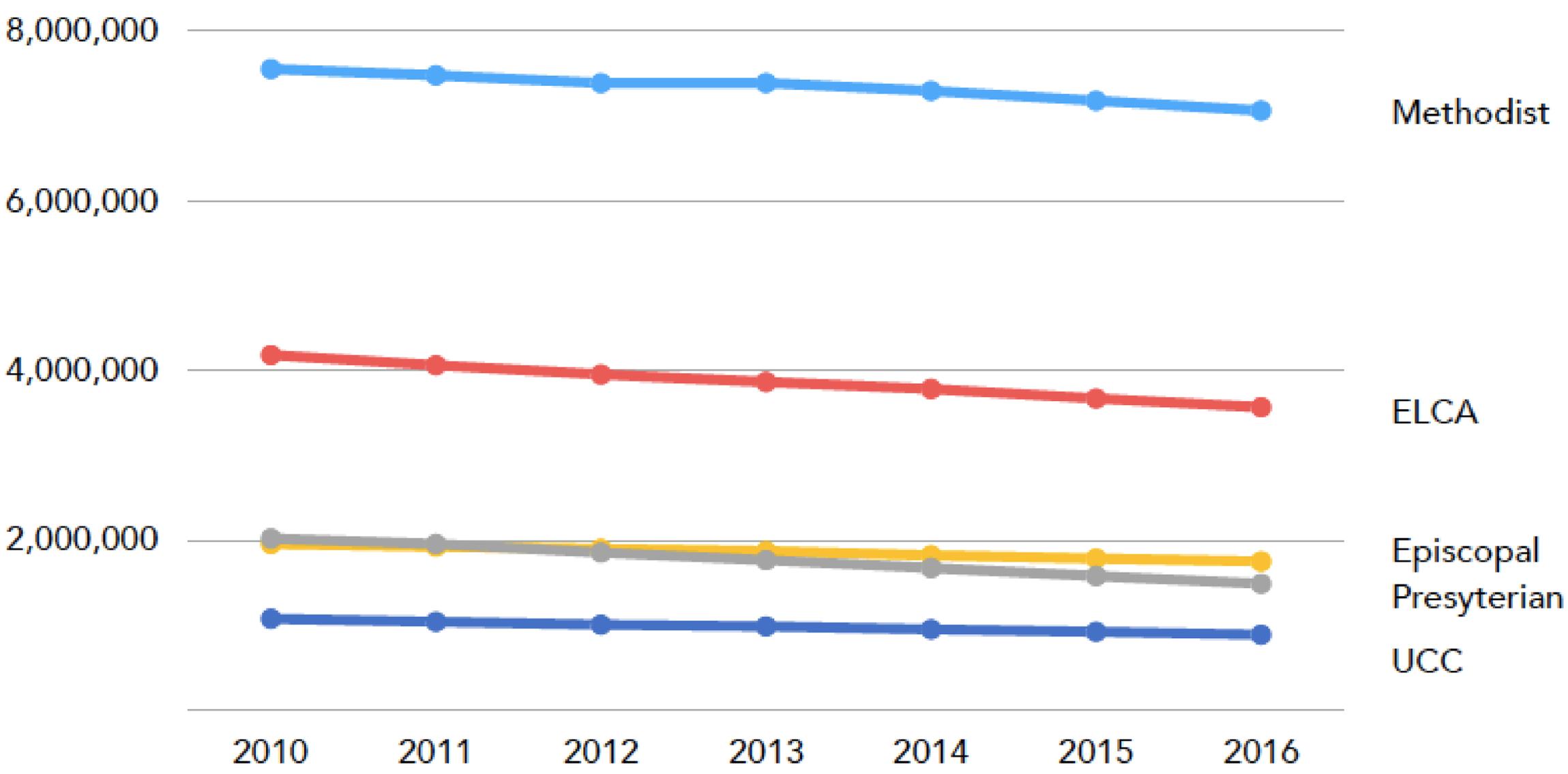
Central Challenges

Societal views on the importance of religion

Congregational trends

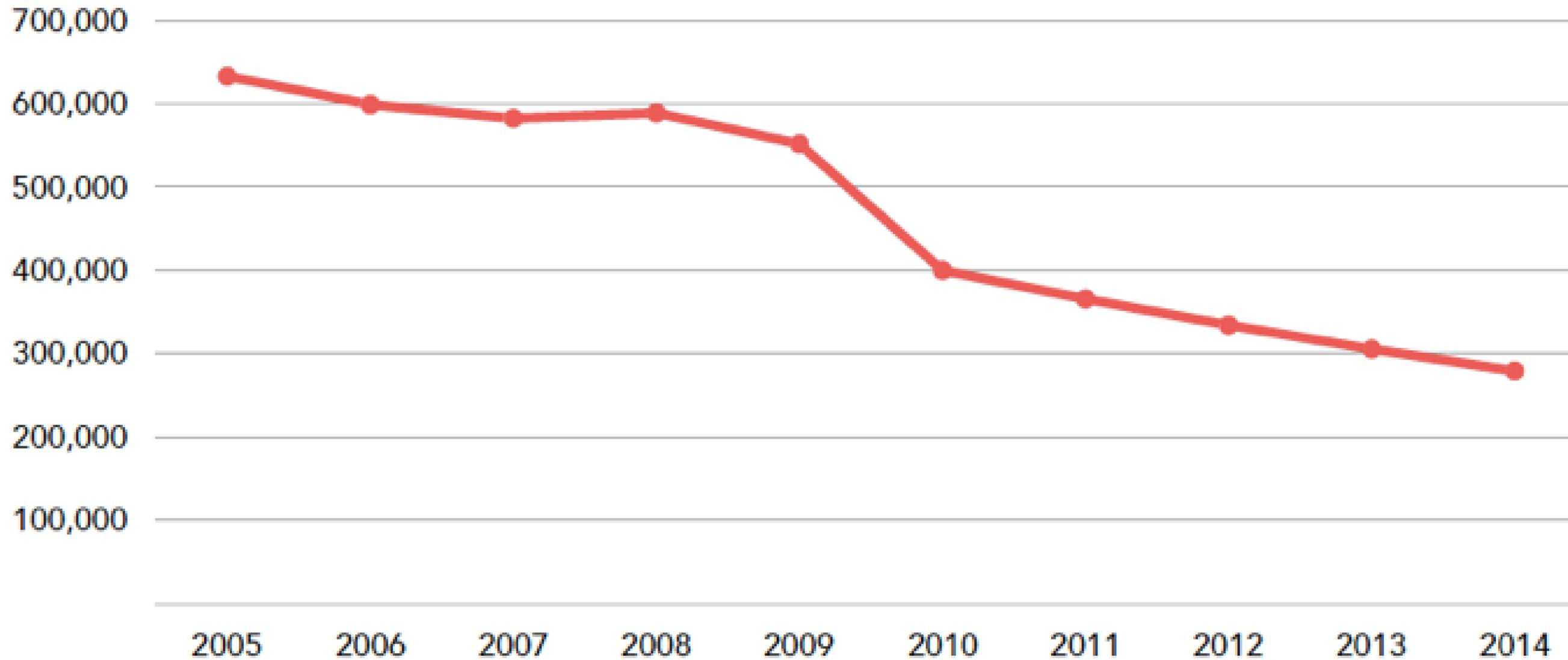
Reaching millennials, the nones & the dones

Denominational Membership Decline



Sources:
ELCA Office of
Research and Evaluation
UMC.org
PCUSA.org
EpiscopalChurch.org
UCC.org

ELCA Sunday School Attendance



↓ 56%
FROM 2005–2014

Source: ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation

Mainline Average Age is Higher than U.S. Average Age

Denomination	2014 Median Age
Christian	49
Evangelical Protestant	49
Mainline Protestant	52
Catholic	49
Full Sample	46

The U.S.
average age
is 37.7.

Note: Full sample includes other segments not shown here.
Sources: Pew Research Center, U.S. Census





Google

40 Reasons Not to Change

That'd be weird.

That meeting is not for 4 months.

That won't work here.

That expense will never be approved.

Who's going to do that?

We're all burned out.

It will ruin the carpet.

The kids will be noisy.

People won't like it.

It will be too disruptive.

I'm not sure about that.

That might be controversial.

We'll never get enough volunteers.

No one will help.

We're saving for a new roof.

So-and-so would feel hurt.

We have to think more like a business.

We don't want to be like them.

The council will have to approve that.

Already tried it.

My grandma donated those!

More poor people will show up.

How can we be sure it'll work?

Someone else is doing that.

I like it this way.

We've never done it that way.

We don't have the money.

That would disrespect worship.

I've done my time.

This is the way we do things here.

We might fail.

It might drive people away.

Our rules don't allow for that.

That's not my job.

They'd be uncomfortable.

Too much change.

Not enough time to rehearse.

We can't take on more debt.

Do you know what kind of people that will attract?

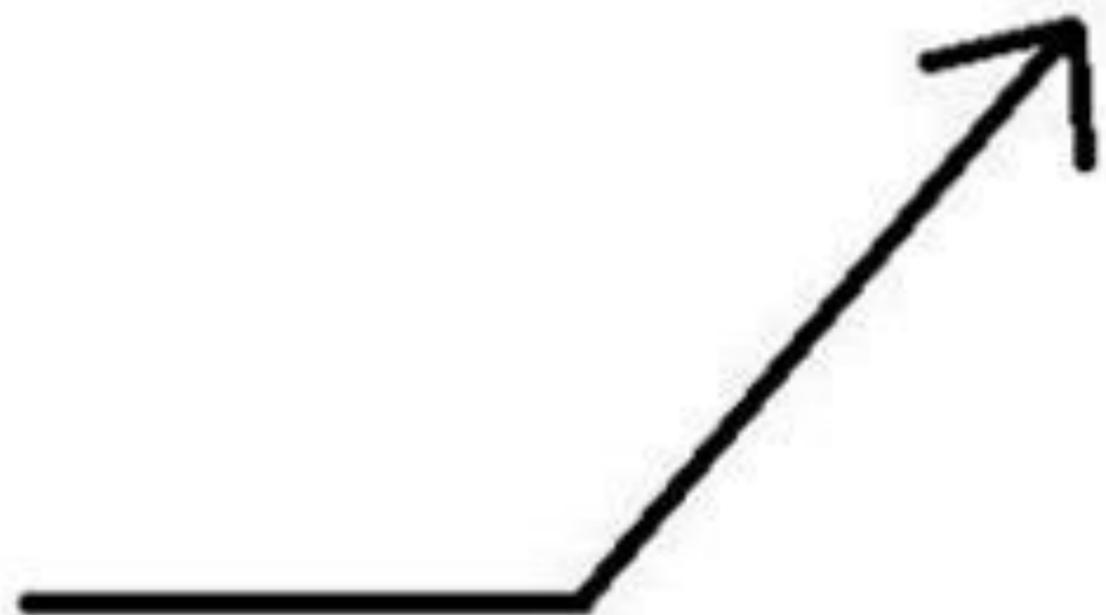
This is just a fad.

1517 Media is more stable and is creating more innovative resources for the church than at any time in the last two decades.

How did this happen?

(and how can you apply some of the things that worked for us in your ministry?)

SUCCESS



what people think it looks like

SUCCESS



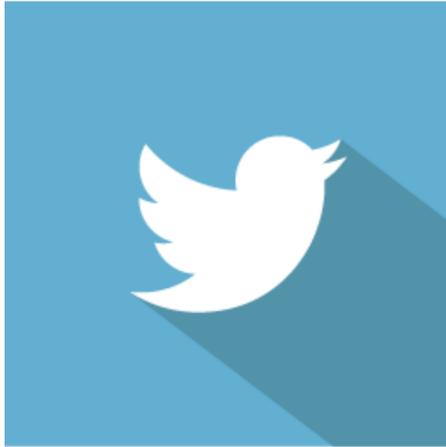
what it really looks like

Listen, test, and learn

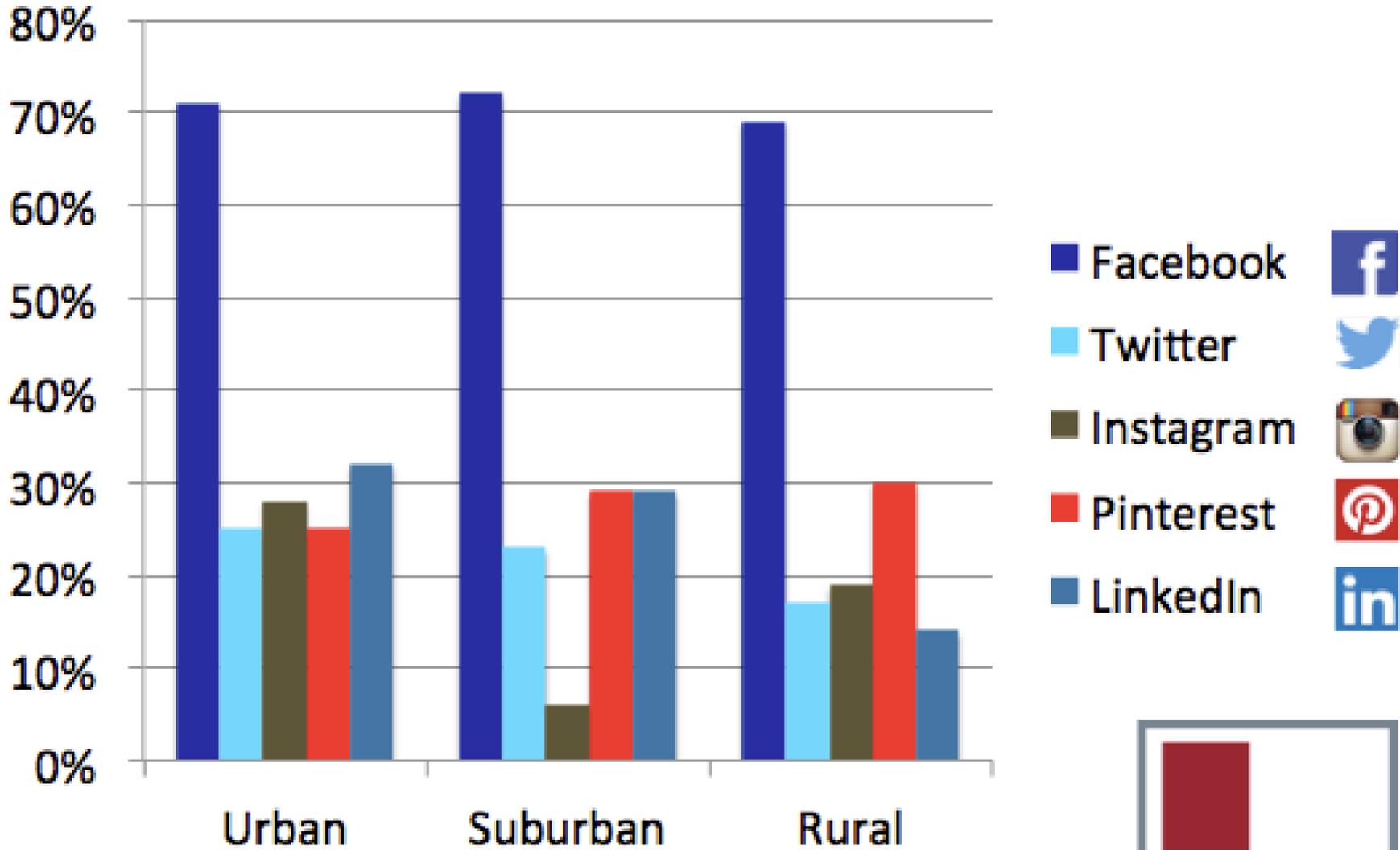
Listen



Listen



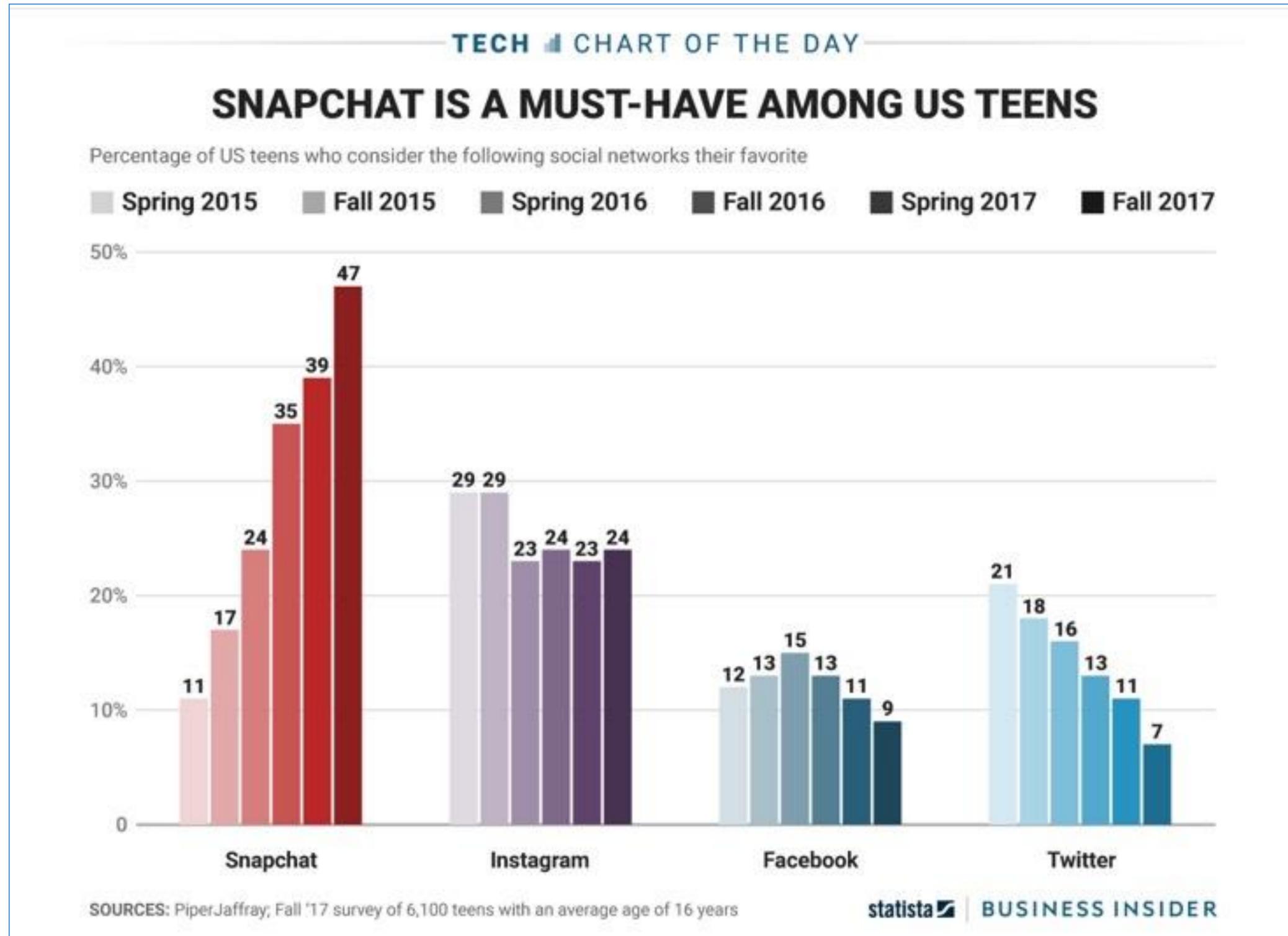
Where can I reach people in heavily populated or rural areas on social media?



Source: Pew Research Center. Social Media Update 2014. <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/01/09/social-media-update-2014>

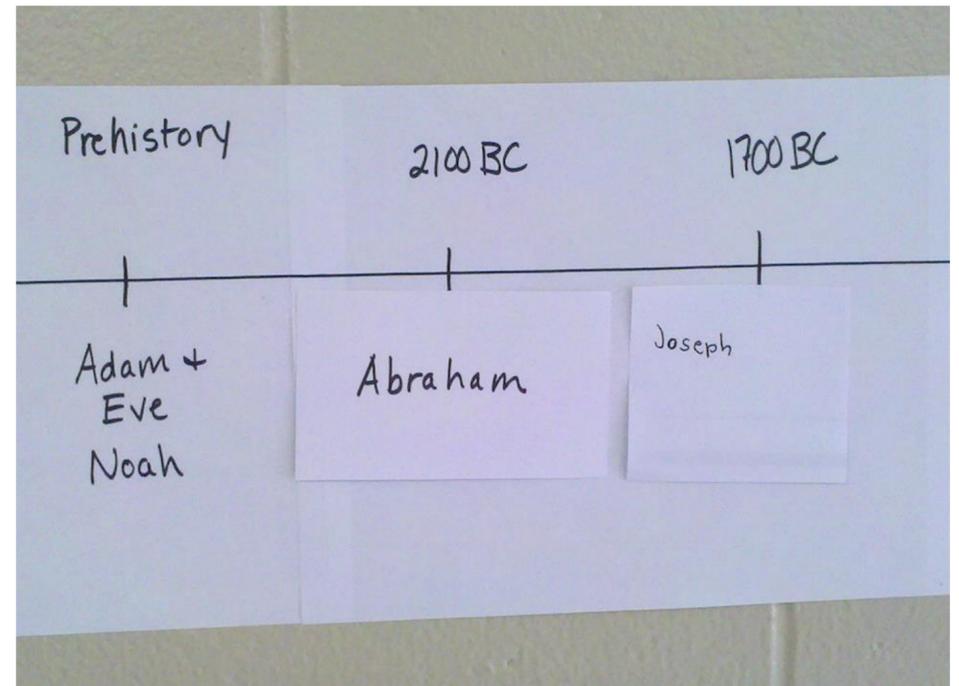


Unless you are trying to reach teens...





1st and 2nd graders
go to Room 121
with 4 + 5 year olds.
←



Test

Summer 2009: a very big test



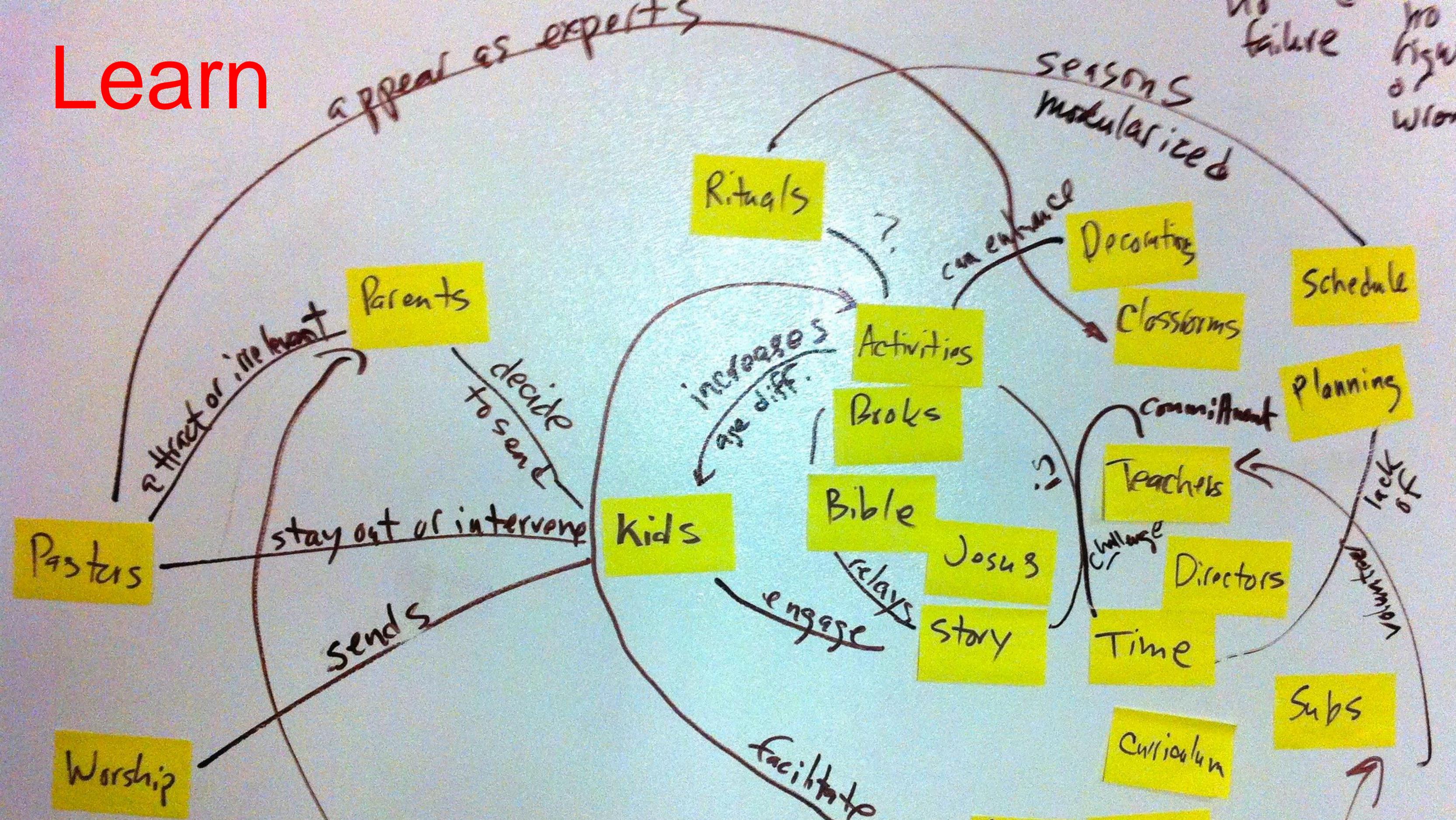


The Sparkhouse Charter

To create resources for congregations that are:

- intentionally ecumenical,
- dynamic and innovative,
- making effective use of digital technologies, and
- brought to market faster than in traditional publishing

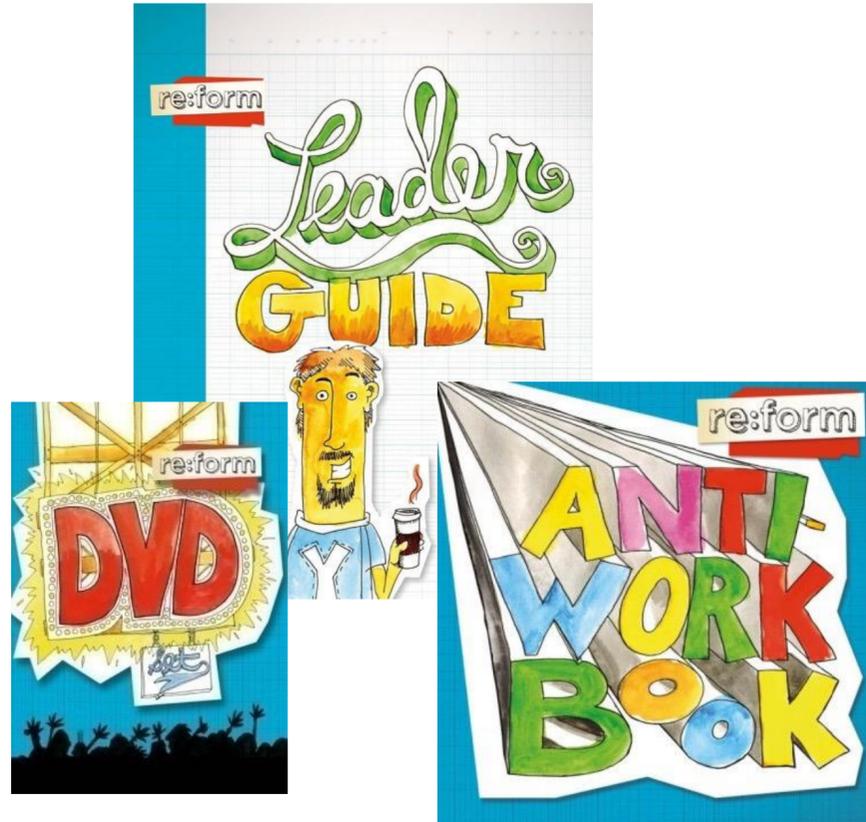
Learn



Fail early, fail often



animate



echo
THE STORY



SPARK
ACTIVATE FAITH

Whirl

holY
MOJY

CÖNNECT
QUIRKY TWEENS. BIBLE THEMES.

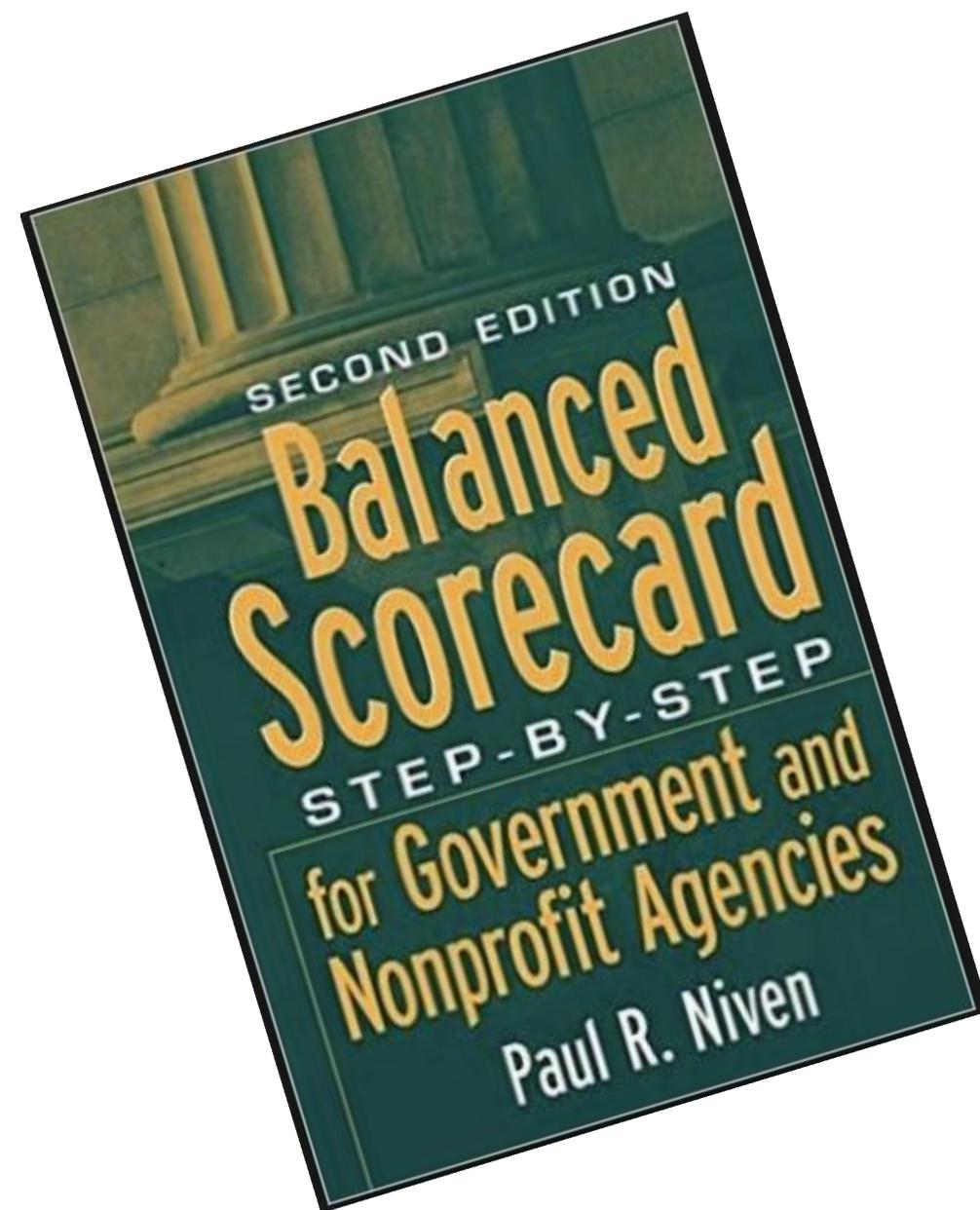
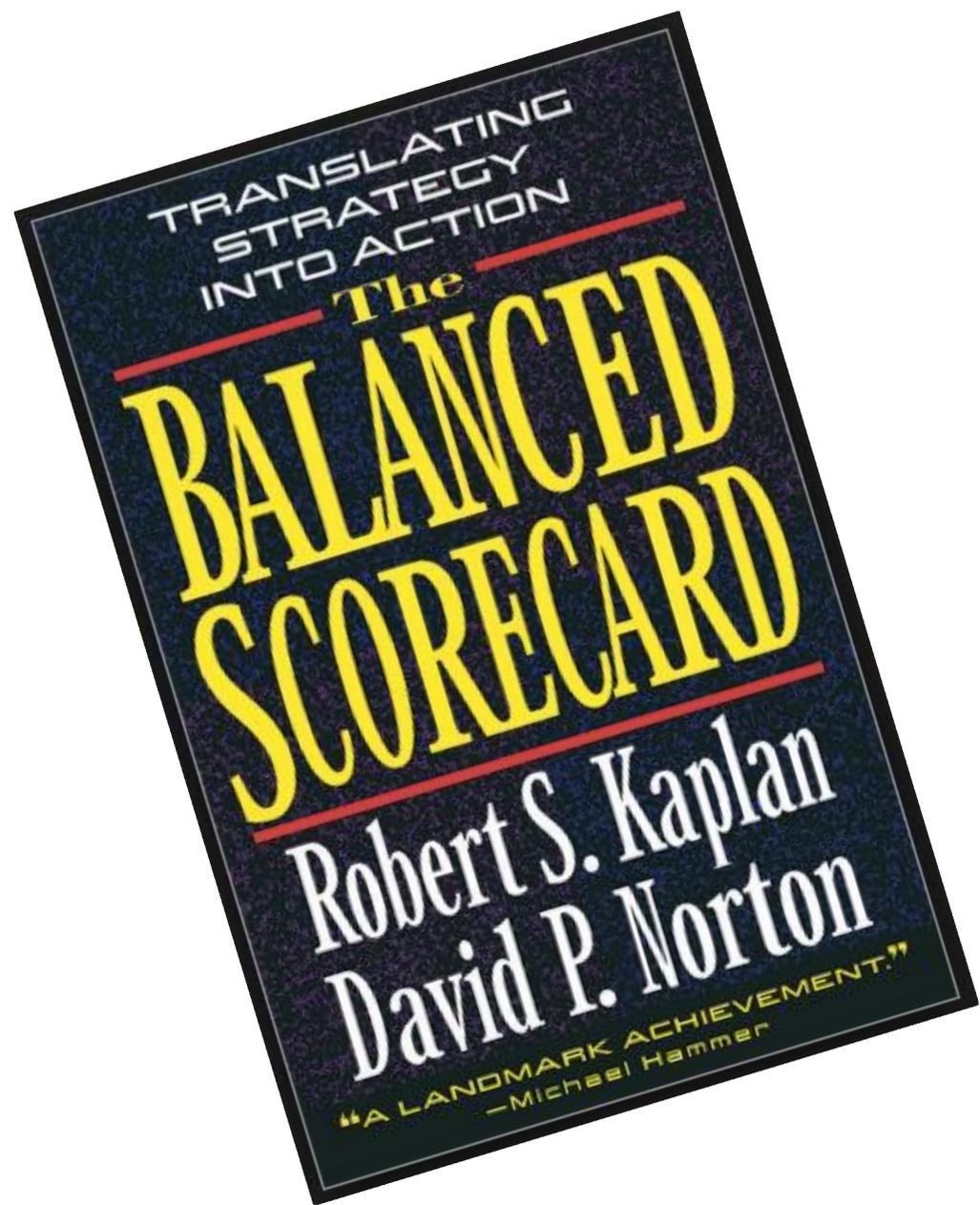




Beamingbooks.com

Communicate a clear vision





Our Aspiration

Boldly communicate
the liberating grace of God
to more diverse audiences,
in an ever-changing religious landscape,
for generations to come.

Grow, Hold, Fold

Grow, Hold, Fold

Where do we invest our gifts for growth for the future?

What do we sustain?

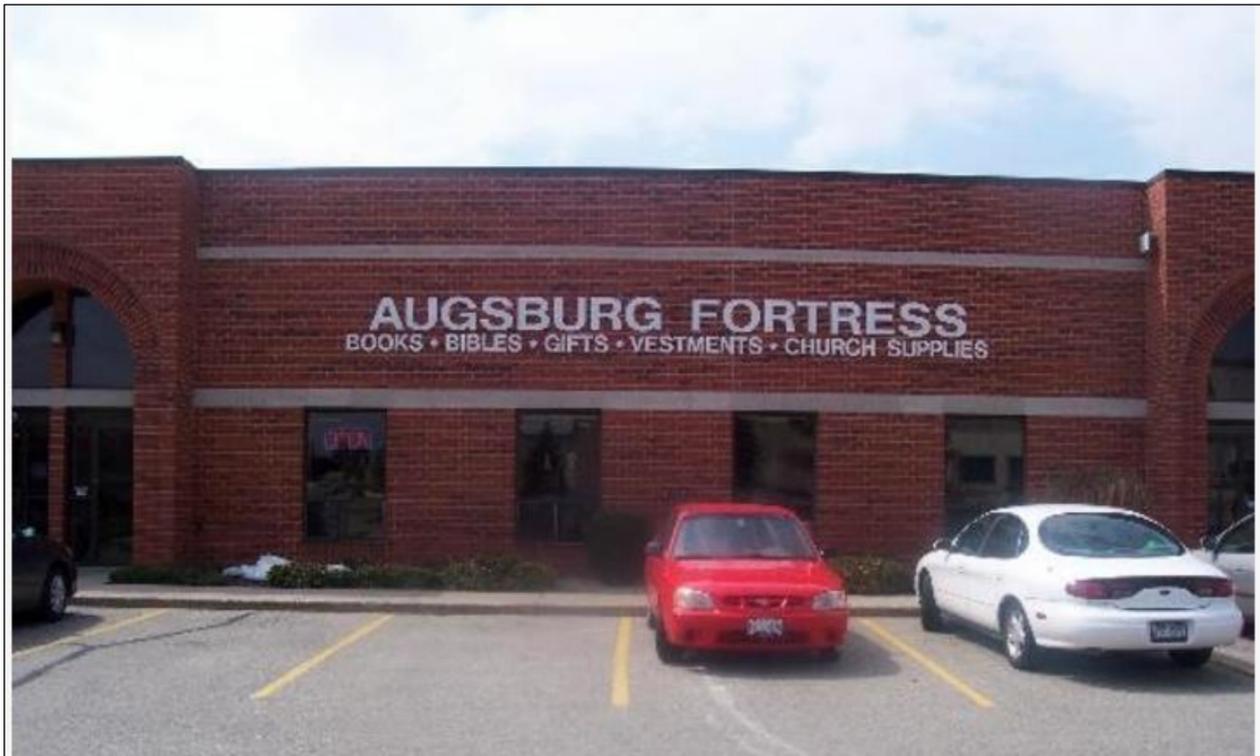
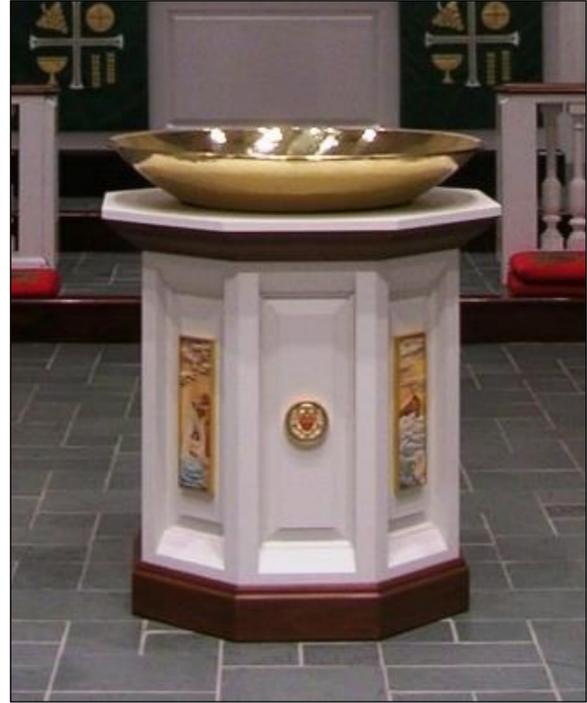
What must we **STOP** doing?

Grow, Hold, Fold

Where do we invest our gifts for growth for the future?

What do we sustain?

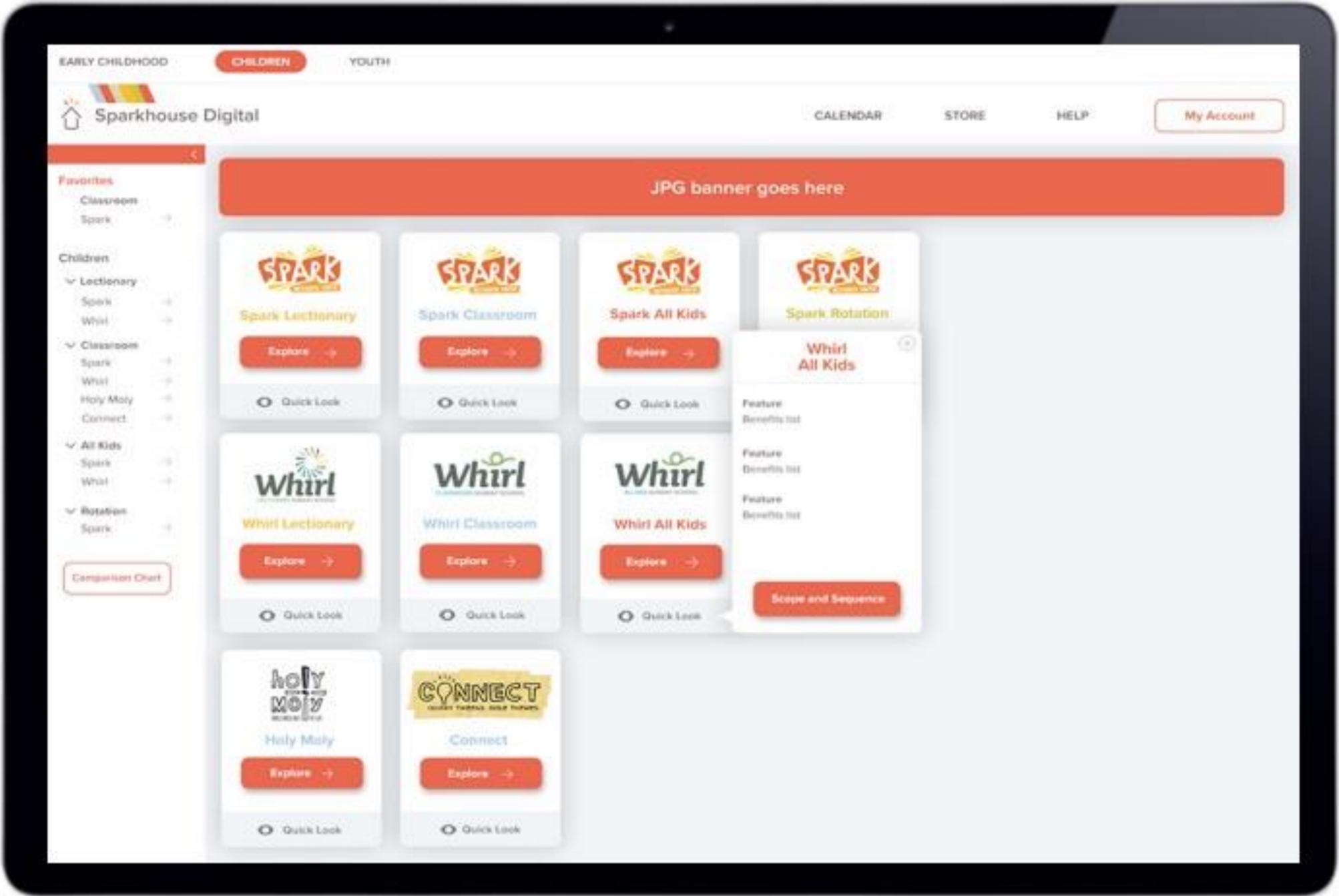
Fold





https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=wearesparkhouse

SparkhouseDigital.com

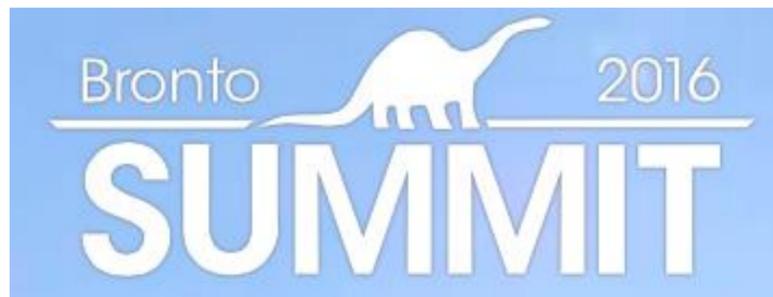
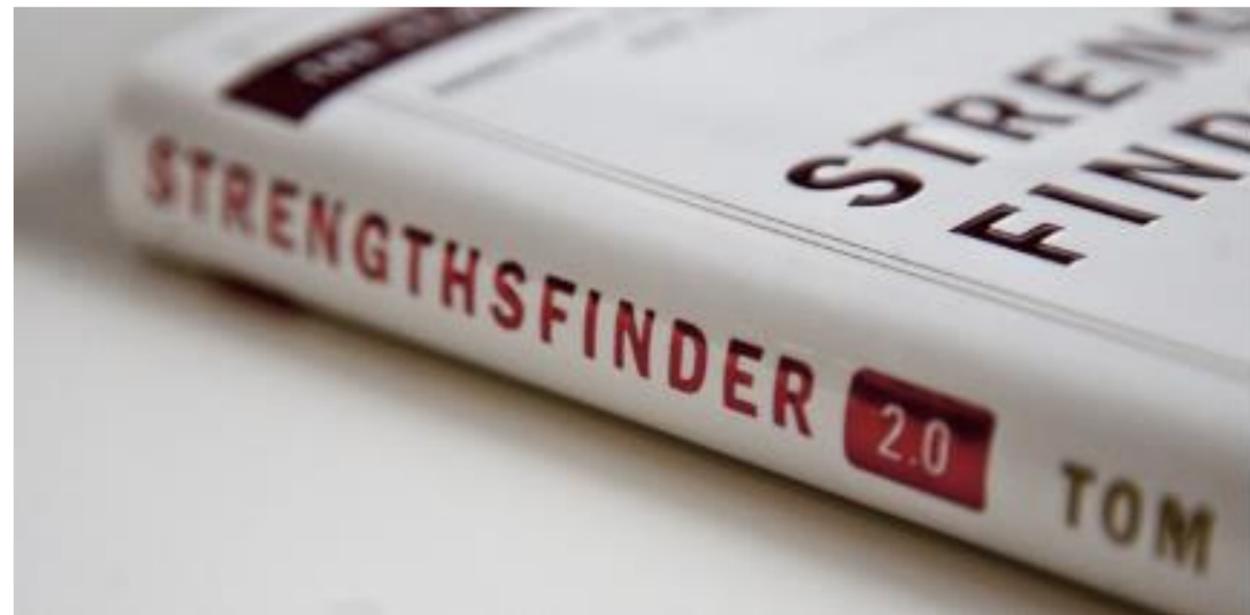


Identify, develop and retain the
best talent









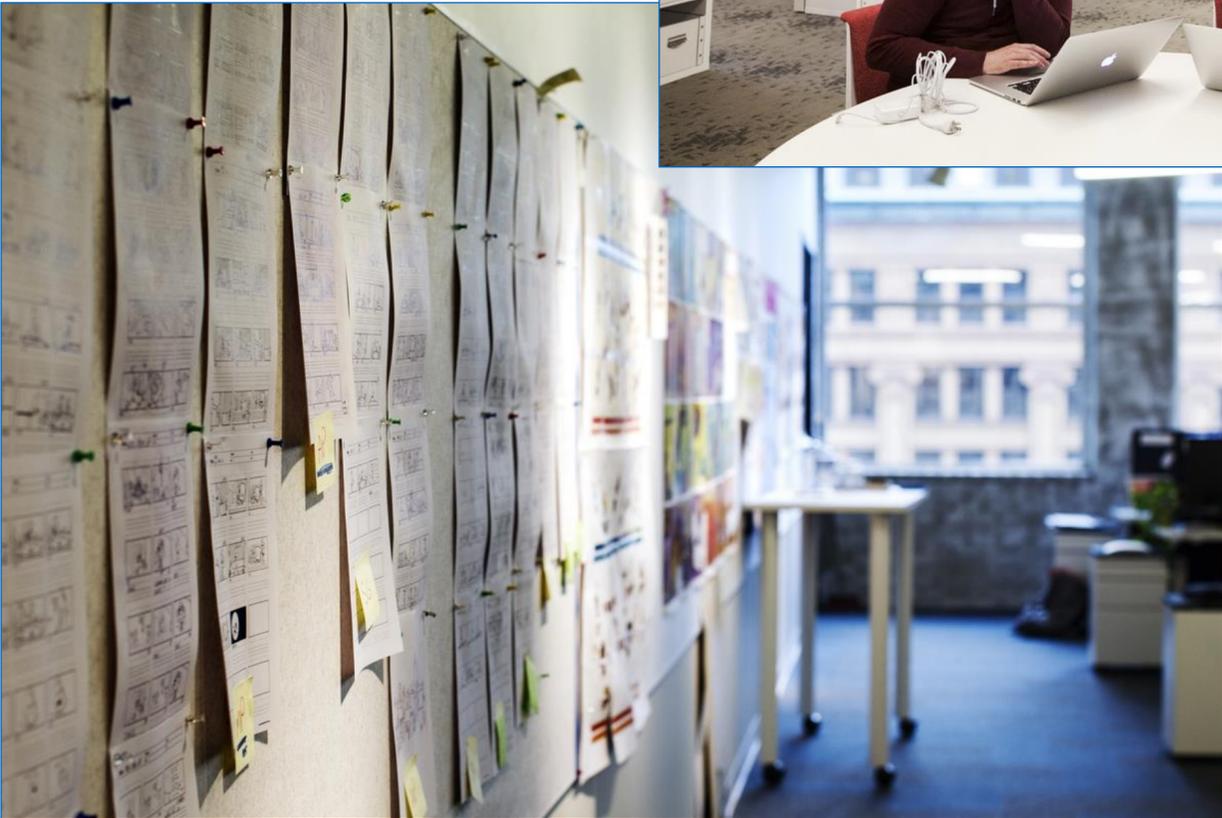
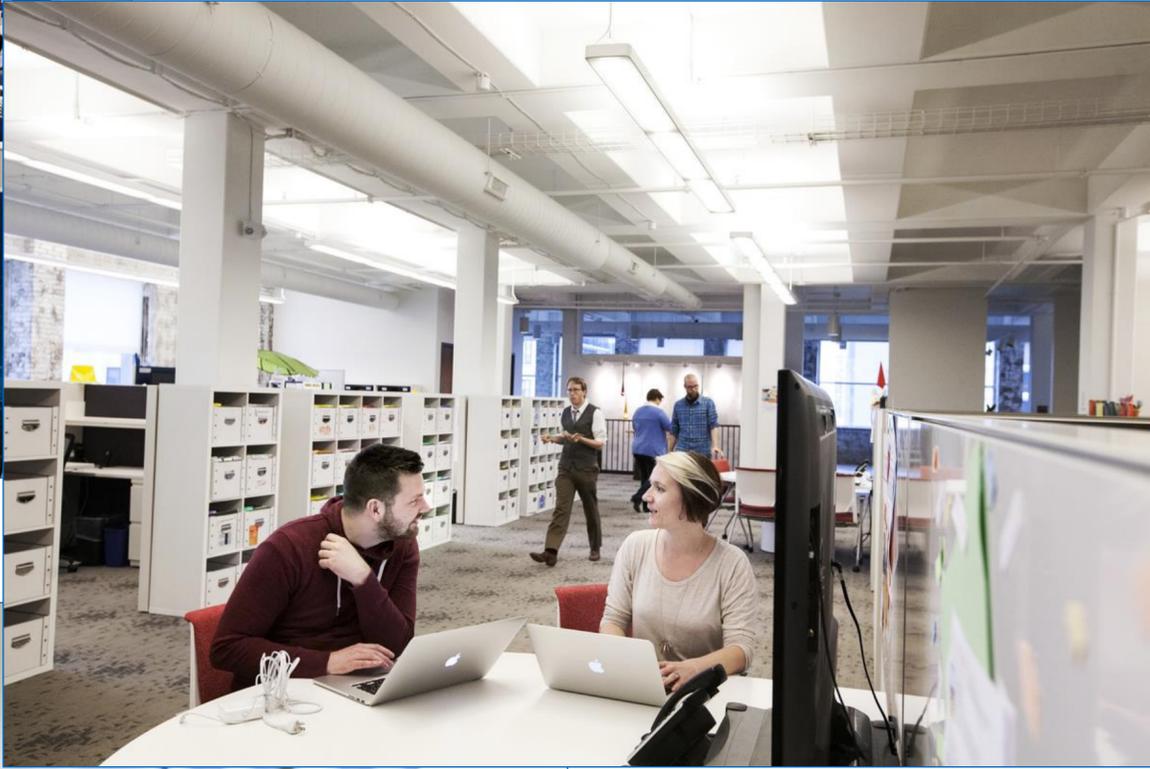


Drive out complexity





Provide creative space and
the best tools you can afford





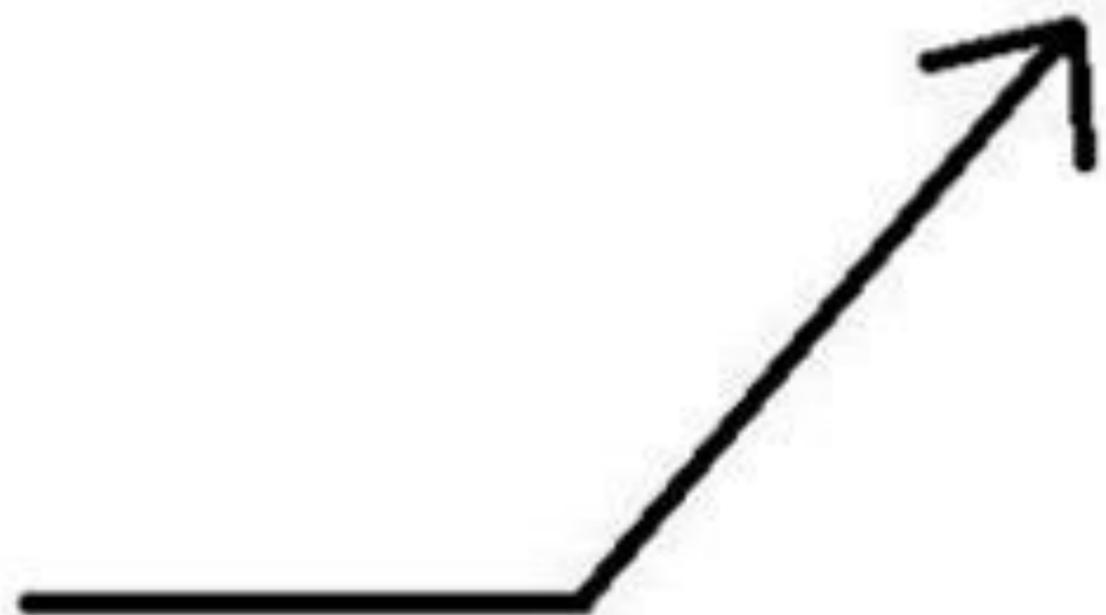
Summary: How did this happen?

- Listen, test, learn
- Communicate a clear vision
- Grow, hold, fold
- Identify and retain the best talent
- Drive out complexity
- Provide creative space and the best tools you can afford

How can you use these lessons in your ministry?

- Listen, test, learn
- Communicate a clear vision
- Grow, hold, fold
- Identify and retain the best talent
- Drive out complexity
- Provide creative space and the best tools you can afford

SUCCESS



what people think it looks like

SUCCESS



what it really looks like



Please don't hesitate to contact me
if I may assist you!

Beth Lewis

bethlewis@getting2transformation.com

www.getting2transformation.com

[@bethalewis](#)

facebook.com/beth.lewis