**Preparing for Strategic Planning**

**The First Part of Our Planning Session was PRAY:**
We started our time with guided devotions and prayer using these five lessons we learnt from Nehemiah in chapter 1:
(1) Get The Facts (Nehemiah 1:1-3) - we spent time in prayer reflecting on the state of our lives, ministries and organisation.

(2) Go to God (Nehemiah 1:4-6a) - we spent time giving God the praise He deserves for who he is and all he does.
(3) Confess your Sins (Nehemiah 1:6b-7) - we spent time confessing any personal or corporate sins that God brought to our attention.
(4) Remember the Past (Nehemiah 1:8-10) - we spent time remembering all that God has done in the past in and through us or your ministries.
(5) Ask for Help (Nehemiah 1:11) - we spent time asking God help us experience success and favour in the coming months.

**The Second Part of our Planning Session was SURVEY:​**

Using the example of Nehemiah who went out to survey the situation (Nehemiah 2:11-16) we went on a prayer journey for 30 minutes where leaders listened to what God was saying to them about the organisation as they contemplated the following things: Buildings, Grass, Trees, Mountains, Sky and anything else they encountered. All the insights were captured on a flipchart and then each delegate reflected on the top three insights they received and they were used to create a list of key insights from the group.

**The Third Part of our Planning Session was Build**
Nehemiah 3 describes the building process that was started and the rest of our session was guided by the Patrick Lencioni book, *The Advantage*, that describes 4 disciples of a healthy organisation.

**Discipline #1: Build Team:** The first and most critical step towards a healthy organization is creating a cohesive leadership team. Without an aligned team at the top of an organization, it will never come near to reaching its full potential.

**Discipline #2: Create Clarity:** Creating alignment at the executive level is essential to building and maintaining a healthy organization. There is probably no greater frustration for employees than having to navigate the politics and confusion caused by leaders who are misaligned. Even the slightest bit of daylight between executive team members can cause an overwhelming effect on employees below. There are six simple but critical questions that need to be answered, eliminating all discrepancies among team members.

**Discipline #3: Communicate Clarity:** Once a leadership team has become cohesive and established clarity around the six critical questions, they need to communicate the answers to employees over and over and over and over and over and over and over again. Apparently, employees won’t believe a leader’s message until they’ve heard it seven times.

**Discipline #4: Reinforce Clarity:** For an organization to be healthy, organizational clarity (the six critical questions) must become embedded into the fabric of the organization. All human systems must reinforce the answers to the six critical questions in order to keep them alive and ingrained in the organization.