

Shared Ministry:
Putting (and Keeping!) All the Cards on the Table

Manual



Welcome

Welcome to “Shared Ministry: Putting (and Keeping!) All the Cards on the Table.” We hope that you will enjoy this learning tool as you explore the rewarding exploration, design, and implementation of shared ministry in your congregation and with your sister congregations. We also hope that through this learning tool your skills will be enhanced in meaningful (even enjoyable!) ways. The Shared Ministry Deck came about through our visits with various congregations, pastors, and Districts in our LCMS family. Through these resources we became acquainted (or re-acquainted) with the various aspects of shared ministry; and were we impressed, maybe even a bit overwhelmed! We came to realize that this topic has its own important **vocabulary**. We also learned that there are a variety of **skills** that are essential in this endeavor. We further came to realize that there is a certain **“process”** to this business - that there are many parts, many steps, and important nuances regarding this process. Finally, we came to learn through these resources and our own conversations with one another that shared ministry also relies upon certain “intangibles” that beg for utilization throughout the shared ministry process or at specific junctions in that rather challenging process. These “intangibles” are actually quite tangible (and significant!), but they appear here, there, and everywhere, in a somewhat **“wild”** fashion. These four dimensions basically captured the “content” for us as we learned: vocabulary; skills; process; and that “wild” aspect of the endeavor.

As we continued to brainstorm how these four clusters of concepts could be best taught and naturally assimilated by a person or a team, we chose to utilize a familiar “game” format - the card deck. We borrowed from the traditional 52-card deck of playing cards and the traditional four suits - and the jokers! Our thought was to design a “Shared Ministry” card deck with 52 initial cards, two jokers, and additional (“to be filled in by you” cards, we have, as you will soon see, decided to call the) “discovery cards.”

Every card deck needs a game or *various* games for using the card deck, so we have included in this Manual some Shared Ministry Deck game idea starters for you to consider - a few “games” (learning activities) that can help you learn and then apply the exciting concepts that the experiences and experts have conveyed to us.

We hope you enjoy the Shared Ministry Deck, and that it sparks many, many creative possibilities as with confidence in our Gracious Lord you continue to tell everyone what He has done.

Please share your insights with us as you learn and apply the Shared Ministry Deck. We promise to continue to learn with you and from you!

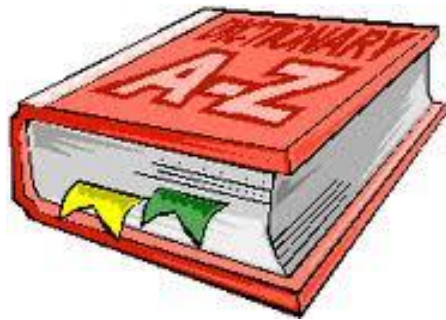
Introduction to the Suits

Although the Shared Ministry Deck consists of four suits (and two jokers!), the four suits are anything but “stand alone” suits. In a sense, these suits, as distinct as they may be labeled, **do** relate to one another in very important ways. Each suit serves to complement the others. The Deck works as a unit. Although there are the distinct suits, these suits (and the respective cards in each suit) “crossover” to the other suits to a certain extent and help to emphasize the importance of all the other suits and all the other cards. You will come to see this for yourself as you gain familiarity with the Deck. See each card for itself; see each suit for itself; see the Jokers for themselves; but, above all, keep the whole Deck in mind. “Put all the cards on the table,” and explore the wonderful connections between suits and between all the cards. As the old adage goes, “Don’t lose the forest for the trees.”

Having said that, let’s take a quick tour through each suit in the Deck.

The Vocabulary

Suit



The Vocabulary Suit teaches several key words, phrases, and concepts that are essential in the grant writing endeavor. Some words may sound familiar to you; others will be brand new. Even those words that may sound familiar will likely have a unique nuance when it comes to shared ministry. As you become familiar with each concept you will quickly see for yourself how each concept undergirds those cards you will meet in the other suits.

CARDS IN THE VOCABULARY SUIT

- *Knowledge Translation
 - *Leadership
 - *Listening
 - *Shared Ministry
- *Shared Ministry Models: Cathedral Model
- *Shared Ministry Models: Circuit Rider
- *Shared Ministry Models: Connect with Tech
 - *Shared Ministry Models: Dual Parish
- *Shared Ministry Models: Helping Hands
- *Shared Ministry Models: Multi-Site Mergers
- *Shared Ministry Models: Regional (3+)
- *Shared Ministry Models: The Hybrid
 - *Sustainability

The Skill Suit



The Skill Suit introduces you to several basic competencies that are essential in the shared ministry process. These cards will help you develop the prowess that will be put to work on the journey that awaits you. Each card describes a pertinent skill and offers suggestions that can help you further enhance this skill. You will quickly discover how each skill card matches up with those cards in other suits, especially those cards in the process suit.

CARDS IN THE SKILL SUIT

- *Act in Informed Ways
- *Big Rocks First: Prioritization
- *Carefully Consider the “Cons”
- *Carefully Consider the “Pros”
- *Choose Your Words...Wisely!
 - *Delegate
- *Impetus to Ministry Expansion
- *Know Your Stakeholders
- *Lay the Solid Foundation
- *Multiple Administrative and Financial Options
 - *Set Goals
- *Simultaneously Attend to Shared Ministry Health and Congregational Health
 - *The Centrality of the Gospel

The Process

The Process

Suit



The Process Suit introduces you to several stages and steps in the shared ministry endeavor. As you will soon come to realize, shared ministry is not a “one step and done” undertaking. There are many, many phases to navigate... and to enjoy! Note how the Vocabulary Suit builds your understanding of these cards, and how the Skill Suit helps you navigate back and forth throughout the shared ministry adventure.

CARDS IN THE PROCESS SUIT

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| *Acknowledge Obstacles | *Graciously Accept “Not Yet” |
| *Beware of Fatalistic Thinking and Naysayers | *Identify Needs |
| *Build Capacity | *Monitor Your Decision-Making |
| *Build Trusting Relationships | *The Learning Team |
| *Proximity-Based and Affinity-Based Collaborations | *Watch Your Pace |
| *Develop Your Mission Statement | *Work and Think Creatively |
| *Evaluate | |

The Wild Card

Suit



The Wild Card Suit acquaints you with several “safety tips” that will come in handy as you continue to use your vocabulary, enhance your skills, and work your way through the shared ministry process. Many of these practical insights can be utilized at any and at every phase of your work. Keep these in mind, and “play” these cards frequently – as an individual and as a team.

CARDS IN THE WILD CARD SUIT

- | | |
|--|--|
| *Become Acquainted with the History of Shared Ministry | *Pastoral Staffing in Shared Ministry |
| *Be Proactive | |
| *Carpe Diem: Write It Down! | *Show Appreciation to Your Team |
| *Don't Fall in Love with Your First Idea | *Temerity |
| *Let It Brew | *Tenacity |
| *Mentor: Get One; Become One | *Think Theologically |
| *Overthinking | *Uncover New Resources and Relationships |

The Jokers



Of what use are “Jokers”? Obviously, jokers “joke” – they provide some necessary comic relief, they poke fun, they parody, they exaggerate, they entertain... But as you come to know and effectively learn to play the Jokers in the Deck, you will see that these cards can also be used to bring forth insights, to help you look at ideas in a new way, and to put the whammy on groupthink. The Joker cards can help coax you and your shared ministry team to further explore ideas that may at first sound “ridiculous” or perhaps “a little silly,” but these can become ideas that may help you take your proposed endeavor where no one has gone before. A little levity can go a long way. Try it and you will see!

The “Discovery Cards”

The 52 cards (and the two Jokers) are only a start in your shared ministry ventures. Countless other cards could (and will be!) authored. New vocabulary, additional skills, and further steps in your process will be identified - by you! Even fresh “Wild Card” ideas will bubble up to the surface and beg for their place in your expanded Shared Ministry Deck. It’s all about ongoing *discovery* - your own ongoing discoveries and also those of your team members. The blank “Discovery Cards” that accompany each suit in the Deck will not be blank for long. You, as the author of these additional cards, will capture your new insights here, and on even more cards. Add to the 52 start-up cards we have provided for you by capturing your fresh “card ideas” on these Discovery Cards. The 52 start-up cards are only that - a start. Your discoveries will supplement the 52 cards we have provided, and your discoveries will take you to new heights and visions. Put on your thinking cap and keep that pen handy. You’re a discoverer, and also an author!

Possible Ways to Use the Shared Ministry Deck

Like any other deck of cards, the Shared Ministry Deck is also intended to be used in a variety of ways - some to be suggested here, but other “games” you will discover for yourself down the road. Consider a few of the following:

*Sort the cards into two stacks: stack #1 - “my strengths”; stack #2 - “my work areas.” What does your sorting reveal about you? Beginning with your “strengths,” develop specific learning activities that can strengthen you even more. Next, examine your “work areas” (those items that are in need of a little remediation). Develop learning activities that can enhance your respective work areas and help them become strengths. “Rome wasn’t built in a day,” so be sure and prioritize the cards in your two stacks. Take things slowly, but surely.

*Use the Deck with your team. As you anticipate what lies ahead for yourself in crafting your project proposal, use the cards to identify potential challenges you will encounter. As your team challenges are noted, discuss how each challenge can be addressed, by whom, by when, etc.

*Secure a mentor, someone who is acquainted with you and maybe even with shared ministry. Ask your mentor to “quiz” you on the cards, much like the old flashcards many of us utilized in learning math or spelling. Did you know the cards as thoroughly as you thought you did? Can you explain each card? Your mentor can help you learn more - about yourself, your team, and the Shared Ministry Deck. And in the process, you can help your mentor grow, too!

*Play “Go, Fish” with the Shared Ministry Deck. You remember how to play this familiar card game, don’t you? In this case, deal several cards (five or six) to each team member. Place the remaining cards of the Deck face down on the table. Next, beginning with the person on the dealer’s left or right ask each team

member (one at a time) to call out the card from their hand for which they are seeking a match. A “match” is a “match” if you can conceptually/practically connect a card held in your hand to the card the other player has announced. If you can make case for a “good match” (“good” is to be decided by the consensus of the other players at the table) between one of your cards and the card that has been called out, give the person your “matching card.” If you cannot make a match to that card, sorry, “Go, fish!” Pick up the top card from the deck and add it to the cards you already hold. Maybe you will have better luck when the next player’s card is announced. Make that match - convincingly! The first player who runs out of cards wins.

*Use the Shared Ministry Deck as an ice-breaker for your team as you prepare to begin to conceptualize your proposal. Deal a few cards to each member of your team until all cards have been dealt. Next, go around the circle, asking each team member to read and share their insights on one card in their hand. Go around the group a second, a third, or even a fourth time until all cards have been “put on the table.” What did you learn about your team members? About yourself? About their experiences and insights? What a great way to get things rolling.

*Use the Shared Ministry Deck to assign team roles. Maybe add some spice to this exercise by conducting a “Fantasy Draft” whereby each team member gets the chance to “draft” a few cards they would like to manage in the upcoming project proposal process.

*Use the Shared Ministry Deck in a classroom, with your staff members, or with your Church Council. Deal out some cards from each suit, discuss the cards, the suits, or even the entire Deck if you have the time. In this way you can introduce your audience to the world of shared ministry. This may also be a winsome way (and perhaps a less threatening way) to help them gain insights, skills, and knowledge for what lies ahead for them, your agency, your class, your profession, etc.

*Play “Shared Ministry Deck Solitaire.” Remove the two Jokers and set them aside - you will not need them for this game. Shuffle the remaining cards in the Deck. Deal the cards as you would if this were a traditional game of solitaire, creating several stacks. Take four of the cards remaining in your hand and place them face-up alongside of one another at the top of your table or desk. Now it gets interesting! Instead of trying to line up the cards by “Ace, King, Queen...” your assignment is to line up the cards in other ways, e.g., as steps in your activities, as “connected” concepts, etc. Who says you can only order cards in one way? With the Deck, there are a number of ways to organize, prioritize, and connect! Think “outside of the box.” The object of the game (just as in traditional Solitaire) is to move cards from the stacks at the bottom to one of four stacks you are creating at the top of your table or desk. Make sense? With the Deck you move cards to the top stacks only if you can “connect” the cards to one another (e.g., as connected steps, conceptual relationships, etc.). If you cannot make a connection, do not despair! Simply continue to work your way through the remaining cards in your hand just as you would in traditional Solitaire. Think! Connect! See the patterns that emerge! Work your way through the cards until such time as “no more connections” seem to materialize before your eyes. Have fun. (If you want to “spruce up” this game, ask a friend on your shared ministry team to look over your shoulder as you play Deck Solitaire. The word “solitaire” does not mean that you have to play by yourself. Get in a group and

strategize together! See if others can make connections that you may have missed. Learn from them, as they learn from you.)

*Play “Shared Ministry Deck Charades.” In a manner similar to the traditional game of Charades, participants select a card, and then “act out” the card until others in the game correctly call out the card title. Put a timing factor into this game (e.g., 60 seconds maximum), and see if you can “beat the clock”! How creative can you be in presenting the Deck cards? You can do it!

Roger von Oech, a true master of card playing and the author of the *“Creative Whack Pack,”* has offered many clever ways to utilize his “Whack Pack.” Consider utilizing a few of his ideas as you explore the Shared Ministry Deck. Some of our favorite von Oech insights are these:

*“Three Day Agenda”: “Go through your deck and select five cards you’d like to do in the next three days. Place these cards in a prominent place such as your desk, refrigerator, or dashboard. As you perform each activity, return its card to the deck.”

*“Group Brainwhacking”: “Select a topic. Deal out five cards to each player. The person to the left of the dealer plays a card and tells how the message on the card pertains to the topic. After he makes his comments, anyone else may contribute ideas relating to that card. Then the next person lays down a card. Continue around the table.”

*“Creative License at Meetings”: “At the beginning of a meeting, deal out five cards to each participant. The cards give each person a creative license to make a point relating to that card. Now work through the meeting agenda. A participant may play a card at any time if he or she feels that its message will help the meeting.” (An optional assignment to the group can be: “We will not adjourn until all the cards have been played!” Yikes!)

Have Fun Learning, and Stay in Touch with Us

Well, this should get you started with the Shared Ministry Deck. We hope you enjoy using this tool, expanding upon this tool, and making connections between this tool and other resources and experiences you will encounter on your great adventure of faith. Be sure and “put all the cards on the table.” Each Deck card can help you learn and grow. Once you put all the cards on the table, keep them there (perhaps physically on the table, or as an ongoing part of your project’s agenda, or in your memory, or...) so you can visit them often. Continue to assimilate their respective insights as the weeks go by.

Please share your insights with us. Stay in touch and help us learn and grow as your partners in the blessed Gospel of Our Lord and Savior.