What Is Coaching?

Overview — Guiding Church Leaders

With all the costs involved in a new software subscription for your church, why would you even consider adding one more thing — implementation coaching? We often are asked this question, and we have an answer — one that we believe will be a game changer in your implementation of Church Community Builder.

Why is that some churches implement our software really well and others really poorly? What we found was that bad processes are never fixed by better tools. The best software in the world will never be able to adequately support really poor processes. Better tools, specifically the Church Community Builder software, will only help already good processes get even better. And not only that, they will enable you to accomplish more, in a shorter amount of time, with less work — all while costing less.

Many of our associates who work at Church Community Builder have already served in leadership in the local church — some for a large portion of their lives. We know how churches function, and we know what an overwhelming and daunting task implementing a new software solution can be amidst an already busy, thriving ministry environment. So why reinvent the wheel when someone else has already done this before and can give you input that will maximize your limited time?

While you may be able to utilize the great free resources that exist during the implementation process, we believe that our coaching is uniquely designed to help ‘guide you to a better how’. While we believe strongly that software is an effective tool in making your church operationally better, we believe there is a specific way that this plays out in your church. All churches are not created equally, and your Implementation Coach will help guide you in the process of clearly defining how you do or want to do ministry.
Five Components of Coaching

Custom Implementation Coaching will help you get the full value of the Church Community Builder software while helping guide you through the process of change that is necessary in implementing a new church management system. Our coaching team are experts that will guide you through this process of change by focusing on five main areas: project planning, software utilization, leadership coaching, process design, and change management. The following graphic summarizes the relationship that exists among these five components.
1. Project Management

As part of the initial discovery process, your Implementation Coach will help to determine what makes you unique as a church and how to best implement the Church Community Builder software. As a part of that process, your assigned coach will determine the priorities that will be most important in your implementation project. This project plan will become the foundation that guides the next six months of conversation between your church’s implementation team and the coach, and your coach will keep the project plan updated throughout the project in order to assess progress accurately. The project plan will serve as the guide to keep your team on track so that you will fully implement by the end of the six months.

To make effective use of the project plan, we find it best to have an implementation project manager on the ground at your church. This person could be the Master Administrator of the software, but could also be someone else altogether — for example, the executive pastor.
2. Software Utilization

While your Implementation Coach is well equipped to train your team on the many aspects of the software, this is not the role of our coaches. Rather, your coach will help you to utilize the software fully throughout the project. When designing processes, for example, your coach will be able to identify the best ways to utilize the software to get the best possible results. This might include answering specific questions that you may have about how the software works, but will also include self-directed learning through the use of help articles and videos that are free and available for all of our Church Community Builder church partners. In addition, if you purchase Virtual or On-site Training as a part of your initial software package, your coach will also be able to guide you about how to fully and effectively use that training, including determining the best time to schedule it. Software utilization is part of the coaching process, but it is the smallest part.
3. Leadership Coaching

When it comes to coaching church leaders, we have found a common indicator of success among our church partners — the involvement of an executive leader. This person might be the associate pastor, executive pastor, or even lead pastor. The specific role isn’t as important as their involvement at the executive level of leadership in the church. Churches that don’t have the involvement of someone fulfilling this role find that they often get ‘stuck’ because a key decision maker isn’t a part of the conversation with the coach. Therefore, it creates a middle man, and often something gets lost in the message.

When executive-level leaders are involved in the implementation project, the coach can not only get their input but also coach them specifically on how to engage staff, volunteers, and the church membership in effectively using Church Community Builder to support the vision and ministry of the church.

Beyond the executive leader, leadership coaching will allow you and your coach to look at specific leadership roles within your church and determine the best practices for those roles. For example, if the leadership role is the Small Groups Director, your coach will help you assess how the software and well-designed processes will make this individual and the entire small groups ministry more effective. Together you will determine what success looks like and strategize on how to get there. During the process, the coach will likely incorporate the other components of coaching (software utilization and process design) along with change management to guide your leaders.
4. Process Design

While there are other avenues to gain understanding of the use of the software including which button a user should push, the Implementation Coach will help you determine how to best accomplish your various ministry goals. Based upon Church Community Builder’s experience with over 4,000 partner churches as well as books, seminars, and thought leaders, your coach will help you design a process that will help you meet your ministry goals. The discussion will begin with asking about your goals, followed by the designing of a process that will best support that goal and the ministry of your church.

Questions that may be asked related to process design include things like: “Do you have a process to onboard new small group leaders?” “What is your process for following up on new guests who visit your church?” “What are the strategic steps you take to invite your church family to engage in serving both inside and outside your church?” While you may have great answers to those questions, based upon our experience with hundreds of churches, we may have some thoughts that could make an already well-thought-through process even better. We want to help guide you to an even better how.
5. Change Management

Everything discussed up to this point opens the door for change to take place in the local church. Let’s be honest — most of us don’t like change. It’s actually been said that the only person who truly likes change is the person who initiates it. And the reason this is the case is because that person has had weeks, if not months, to think through the change. Resistance to change is most often related to an individual’s fear of loss. That loss could be loss of time, loss of decision, or loss of control. Whatever the fear is, guiding your church’s leadership, staff, and volunteers through this process without causing major upheaval can be challenging. Your coach can be a great asset here.

Our coaching team has been trained to walk you and your church through this process of change. We’ve adopted a specific model that will be utilized through the entire project to guide you and your team. Your coach will help you create awareness and desire, assess knowledge and ability, and reinforce the changes throughout the implementation project. This approach to change management will permeate the other four components of coaching — project management, software utilization, leadership coaching, and process design.
One Final Note

While everything we’ve discussed in this document can be accomplished in six months, our experience has found that one additional piece consistently makes the difference between a well-implemented project and a project that exceeds expectations — **On-site Coaching**.

On-site Coaching often incorporates components of the overall project. What makes On-site Coaching unique is that your coach spends an entire day (or two or three) with your staff and implementation team, working through the components of coaching. This might mean an entire day devoted to working on one or two processes. It could also mean a day of strategizing about what the ‘better how’ looks like for your church while creating clear expectations and defining the scope of the software implementation. It could also involve an entire day of coaching on how to implement a change management model in your church that will not only positively affect this project but transform the way you approach changes in the future.

One common theme that we hear from churches who have purchased On-site Coaching is that the project immediately begins gaining significant traction following the visit from the coach. This is partially due to the fact that your team and the coach develop a strong relationship which translates into better understanding, which will have an exponentially positive impact on the remainder of the project.

Testimonials

_Honestly, coaching far exceeded our expectations. Our implementation team was very sad when we had to say goodbye to our coach. For us, coaching was way more than just showing us how to use Church Community Builder. Our coach helped us to prioritize what needed to happen, set up our system in the way that would work best for our context, and trained us in a way that empowered us to do the same with the rest of our staff and church leaders. We have been done with coaching for almost a year. However, our staff will still occasionally say things like “I wish we could ask our coach about that” or “How would our coach say we should do that?”_

—Pastor of Equipping and First Impressions

_I do not know how a church could do the implementation without a coach. Fantastic service to churches!_

—Communications Director
I have been involved in a handful of software implementations and have not had this level of coaching.

—Financial Administrator

We were pleasantly surprised by our coach’s extensive ministry experience. It was great to receive coaching from that holistic point of view.

—Administrative Assistant

Learning best practices that actually pertained directly to our specific needs was invaluable. Even though I was already familiar with the software, having someone come alongside us during implementation and be there for talking through actual scenarios was amazing!!! It was even more personalized than I expected, and it was amazing!

—Financial Administrator
Frequently Asked Questions

How is the coaching delivered?

Our coaching calls occur once a week for 45 minutes for six months. These calls are generally video based (using a web conferencing tool called Zoom). However, you can purchase on-site implementation services to increase the impact and accelerate the speed of the coaching.

Can I call my coach anytime I want?

While you can call your coach at anytime, you’re likely to get a voicemail message. Your coach is typically coaching 15–18 churches throughout the week. With that in mind, your ‘face time’ with your coach is about 45 minutes to an hour each week. Most of the remaining communication is done offline via email and group messaging.

My Data

Will Church Community Builder enter all my data for me?

No. If you purchase Data Migration, our specialists will import your data into Church Community Builder based on what you send to us. During the life of the project, your staff and volunteers are responsible for entering data and manipulating the system to meet your specific needs. The value of this is ensuring your staff and volunteers on the implementation team become local experts and do not grow dependent on the Church Community Builder staff for daily operations.

Do I still have to pay for Data Migration if I hire a coach?

Data Migration and Coaching are two separate services, so you would need to purchase Data Migration.

Does the coach help us prepare our data for migration?

Yes and no. As the church, you are responsible for getting your data out of your existing ChMS, cleaning up the records, and getting it into spreadsheet format. The coach will help with one primary function — the mapping of your existing data. The conversation will help you to determine what information should and shouldn’t be transferred into Church Community Builder and where that information should be stored in the new system.
How long before we migrate our existing data into Church Community Builder?

The timeframe for data migration varies from church to church. Your Implementation Coach will help you determine what is best based upon your unique situation. The most important question to ask is what is ‘mission critical’. We define ‘mission critical’ as items that are being fully utilized in your existing software and therefore must be built and in place in Church Community Builder before the transition is made. With that said, the most common migration timeframe is approximately six weeks after you begin working with your coach.

How long will it take to get our data together before sending it to you for migration?

This is a difficult question to answer with a standard response, because there are several factors that play into this and, therefore, the answer is different for each church. The factors that influence the timeframe include:

- How clean is your existing data? Do you have lots of duplicates? Will you need to go through your data and mark profiles as inactive?

- How easy is it to get your data out of your current ChMS? Some systems are straightforward, while others are clunky and time-consuming.

- How much data is there to map? The more data you want to bring over, the longer it will take to sort through the various information and make strategic decisions. Your coach can give you some insight into this based on your current ChMS.

The Implementation Team

You keep talking about the implementation team. Who should be included in that team?

Successful implementation requires a team of people who will work together toward our common goal, successful integration with Church Community Builder. This team generally consists of 3–6 people who are knowledgable about your current church systems and processes, committed to driving change within your ministry departments, and appropriately influential and able to make necessary changes moving forward. The most successful teams have a representative from the executive leadership team who helps guide the process of strategic decision making.
How do you help us stay on track?

We keep the implementation moving by checking in on your progress during the weekly scheduled calls. The project plan is very detailed and provides a context for schedule and progress discussions. Also, your coach will assign action items weekly to keep the project on track.

How much homework will there be?

There are a lot of factors that go into this, so it’s difficult to assess. Each person’s individual role will help determine how much work needs to be done weekly. For example, the implementation team leader and master administrator will likely have more work to do weekly than others on the team. It is safe to say that there is a significant amount of work that will need to be done weekly to successfully implement. However, those who implement well consistently report that the time savings and increased effectiveness at the end of the project are significant.

Coaching or Training?

What is the difference between coaching and training?

Training focuses more on the how-to of the software and is more informational. Coaching specializes in helping your team implement the software into your ministry and is contextual. Due to the format of coaching, your team is able to build upon what they learn each week. This results in greater retention, better understanding, and a far more effective learning experience for your people.

Is coaching used in place of training?

No. However, you may or may not need both. Your coach and/or your sales representative will help you determine which will best meet your needs throughout the project.

How do we determine the best way to train our people?

Virtual and On-site Training are available as an additional service. We’ll work out a balance between the two types of training. You will pick the topics to receive training on after discussing your specific needs with an Implementation Coach. You may even choose to change your training type from Virtual to On-site after beginning the implementation process.
What Makes Church Community Builder Coaching Unique?

How is Church Community Builder’s coaching different from what we received from our current ChMS (F1, ACS, Shelby, etc)?

Other ChMSes do offer coaching. However, we’ve found that their model of coaching is quite different from ours. What makes us unique is that we don’t just help you implement the software. We help you think through ministry objectives and processes, not only to implement the software, but also to be more effective in ministry. Our desire is to partner with you — ultimately, we care more about your ministry than we do about software.

What are the biggest differences we will see when we use this service?

There are three main benefits you will experience by purchasing Custom Implementation.

**Implementation Quality.** The Implementation Coach assists your church in understanding the structure of the software so that the data and processes are set up the best possible way the first time. This aids in usage and reporting especially. Your coach will focus on your ministry objectives first, then business process, then the software and data last.

**Implementation Speed.** Through accountability to an agreed schedule, you will experience faster progress through the steps in the plan. In addition, questions get answered by your coach before they create a bottleneck in your church.

**Time Savings.** Rather than having to learn everything on your own, the Implementation Coach supports your implementation team, helping you leverage your time and be most productive.

What are the qualifications of the Implementation Coach?

All of our Implementation Coaches have experience in ministry and are trained in the Church Community Builder software, project management, and the fundamentals of organizational change. In addition, they are able to leverage any of the other Church Community Builder associates for assistance and knowledge as required. This is not a contract with a person; it is a commitment with the company. As coaches, each individual collaborates with the other members of the team to give you the highest level of service — better than any individual alone could provide.
Everything Else

Do you cover launching, branding, public website integration, landing page functionality and design?

Helping you decide how to best launch Church Community Builder to your staff, volunteers, group leaders, and congregation is definitely part of the project. These are all unique discussions through which your coach will guide you.

While we won’t help design your branding or do this for you, we’ll talk about how to approach this topic. (We even have members of our team who are graphic designers and would be more than willing to give you feedback!)

What happens after the project is over?

Toward the end of the six months, your Implementation Coach will help you transition into Church Community Builder’s regular support model. Our knowledgeable Support Team will help answer your questions through our email support system. Our goal is to give you the best support possible, while helping turn your church’s Support Contacts into local experts on the software. The Support Team will also have access to all the implementation notes to help you and them through the transition.

What if we’re on the fence about purchasing coaching? Can we have a sample?

Sure! Ask your sales representative about a free coaching call.

Do you have any videos we could share to explain what coaching is?

As a matter of fact, we do!
