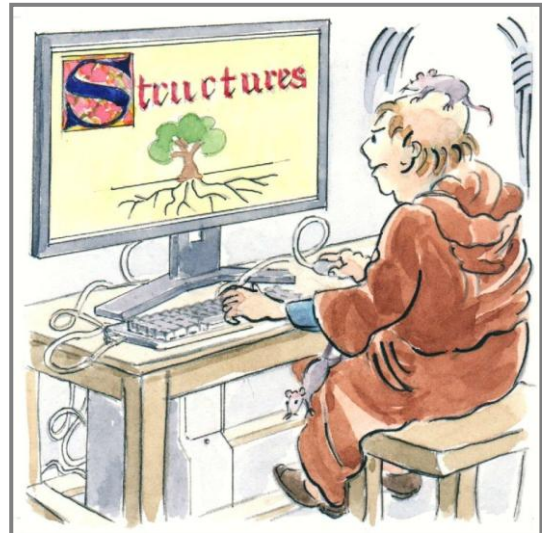




Appointing an Operations Manager

A summary of Article A38

A38a Articles series: Administration

The article was first published on my website in August 2016 and last updated in November 2025. This short summary – mostly just headings – is copyright © John Truscott. As with the full article you may make up to 30 copies without charge provided no part of the heading or text is altered or omitted.

A growing number of churches are appointing Operations Managers. What is this appointment and does it only apply to larger churches?

You can access the article in the Resources section of my website, on the Articles page, then A38. The link is: <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Articles>.

The concept of operations

The world is growing more complex and legal compliance now demands a growing number of policies. This is true for churches too. But pressure on people in the workplace is increasing and patterns of volunteering are changing. Presentation standards now demand sophisticated IT skills. Welcome to the world of operations!

So who should undertake this in churches?

- Ministers? – only if an Executive Pastor
- Administrators? – but this is a different role
- Volunteers? – but it often needs time commitment and energy

A Church Administrator manages an office and daily routine.

A Senior Administrator may have some operational responsibilities too.

An Operations Manager is the focus of this article – may be part-time.

A Director of Operations will apply to an administrative team in a larger church.

The purpose of such appointments is leadership

There are five key ideas to anchor the concept of such a post.

- 1 Planning: to turn the vision into reality
- 2 Change; to enable continual change for effectiveness
- 3 Management: to manage people well
- 4 Co-ordination: to co-ordinate all aspects of organisation
- 5 Release: to release the pastoral staff for church growth

This means that an Operations Manager is a member of the 'senior' staff team and in attendance at all trustees meetings (eg. PCC).

They have key relationships to develop with

- The Senior Minister
- The pastoral staff team
- Key volunteer leadership posts
- The Treasurer
- Key committees

The post-holder

The person profile needs to describe a Christian leader (OR assumed). Typical requirements include:

Christian character and gifting

Mature Christian – evidence of calling – godly character – servant heart – experience of leadership – able to work Sundays to some extent

Qualifications and education

Degree-level, possibly MBA, possibly theological training

Experience

Commercial or non-profit experience, church experience, used to charity legislation

Skills

Leadership, team, people-management, change, organisational skills, strategic thinking, etc.

Tensions inherent in this role

- The application of professional management training within the theological entity of a local church
- Being highly organised while allowing a considerable measure of flexibility
- Working with a senior staff who may not understand operations

- Having high standards but working with people who are available
- Keeping clear of administrative detail but 'mucking in' when required
- Being a leader and a servant

Practical details

- Employment – PCC
- Job titles – Operations Manager, Head of Operations, Church Manager, Business Manager
- Part-time or full time
- Remuneration – varies hugely as some have early retirement pensions. Most £30 to £35k.
- Sunday worship – may be a part-work day
- Work boundaries – some need to be in place
- Selection – needs to be professional
- Ongoing personal development – needs to be built in

Eighteen possible areas of responsibility

- 1 Administration / office – usually with an Administrator in post
- 2 Church services – responsibility for all operational elements
- 3 Commercial – projects, playgroups, coffee shops
- 4 Comms: internal – print, web, text, social media
- 5 Comms: external – signboards, banners, distribution literature, website
- 6 Decision-making systems and structure – overseeing governance structures
- 7 Financial management – budget controls, management accounts, risk, insurance
- 8 HR – recruitment and selection of staff, training, staff handbook, volunteers
- 9 IT/AI strategy – effective use of IT and AI solutions, CMS, web design, social media
- 10 Management: staff – line management
- 11 Management: volunteers – mobilisation, gift discovery
- 12 Networking – other churches, national church bodies, Local Council, Police, community
- 13 Plant – oversight of all plant

- 14 Policies – compliance with all legislation for policies
- 15 Projects – building projects, major events
- 16 Risk management – managing risk wisely
- 17 Strategic plan – developing the plan from the given vision and monitoring it
- 18 Systems – people joining, leaving, managing volunteers

The full article is available at <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Articles-index> then A38. For appointing a Church Administrator see Article A42, *What do Church Administrators do?* and Training Notes TN40, *Appointing an Administrator*.

John's resources are marked for filing categories of Leadership, Management, Structures, Planning, Communication, Administration. File A38a under Structures with a link to Administration.

John Truscott, 24 High Grove, St Albans, AL3 5SU

Tel: 01727 568325 Email: john@john-truscott.co.uk Web: <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk>