

# How to Try

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A better way for mission  
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*Director, TryTank*

# Overview

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- An overview of TryTank
- The Framework
- How to Try – Step 1: Research
- How to Try – Step 2: Ideate
- How to Try – Step 3: Execution

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Today we'll cover Step 1

Saturday we'll cover steps 2 and 3

**What is a  
TryTank?**

**We're a  
joint  
venture.**



VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY



THE  
GENERAL  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
of the Episcopal Church

# But **what** is it?

- Is it a “think tank”?
- Is it the “way to save the church”?
- Is it a “silver bullet”?
- Rather it’s...



...it's a place  
where we can ask

WHAT IF? WHAT  
WHAT WHAT IF? IF?  
IF? WHAT IF?



# Innovation in the church.

## Current church model

- 1- think of an idea
- 2- pray about it
- 3- write it out
- 4- form a committee
- 5- hold listening sessions
- 6- write a paper
- 7- go to a conference
- 8- do theological reflection
- 9- talk about it in the diocese
- 10- discern some more
- 11- bring to vestry
- 12- bring to vestry again
- 13- try it





# TryTank model

TryTank

1 - try it



# That's what we are...

- An opportunity to ask “what if?”
- A chance to dedicate time and resources to this work.
- The R&D part of our church.



# But our experiments speak best...

- Right now **25** of them
- “This experiment is intending to...”
  - ...Grow the church
  - ...Develop my own spirituality
  - ...Find a new way of doing something in the church
- Let’s take a look at some...



# Alexa Prayer Skill

Creating a prayer leader out of  
Alexa to help people pray at home.



<https://www.trytank.org/alexa.html>

# Apple News Feed

Make it easier for people to engage with scripture during the week, during their normal life by creating a source that can supply content into their Apple Newsfeed.



# Connected Congregation

Using available technology that allows for fun and incredibly easy points of contact between the congregation and its members leading to more engagement with the church and higher attendance.



# Digital Collection Plate

Grow the plate collection at congregations by making it as easy and fast as possible for people to give in other forms than cash.



<https://bit.ly/2LW8gAE>

# Latino Ministry in a Box

Using multi-site technology to create a Spanish-speaking congregation taking small steps.



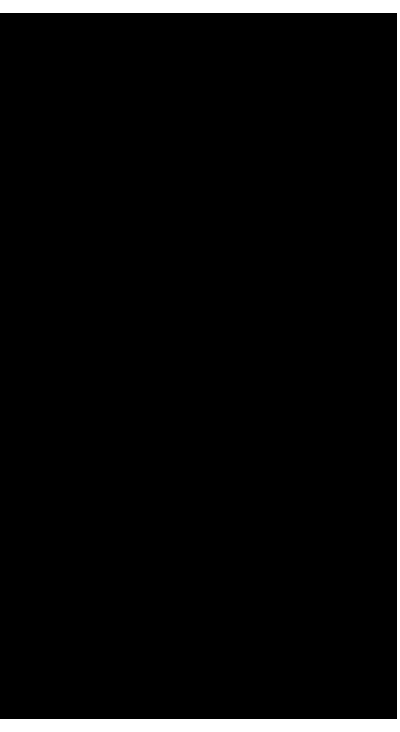


A word cloud shaped like a heart, featuring various words related to church and community. The most prominent words are 'people', 'love', 'time', 'church', 'yes', 'just', 'think', 'things', 'congregation', 'mean', 'one', 'lot', 'okay', 'person', 'much', 'come', 'really', 'now', 'stuff', 'week', 'sort', 'need', 'P. Riggs', 'small', 'say', 'Hoy', 'growing', 'building', 'kind', 'something', 'Sunday', 'different', 'probably', 'Interesting', 'Epiphany', 'work', 'way', 'got', 'said', 'staff', 'place', 'great', 'morning', 'together', 'good', 'can', 'back', 'want', 'gel', 'culture', 'priest', 'money', 'always', 'said', 'around'.

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# Theology Explainer Videos

Create a library of whiteboard videos that explain theological concepts in 2 minutes. The videos will be hosted on YouTube, the 2nd largest search engine in the world.



<https://youtu.be/WeVPOL4oeAs>

# Spin Church

Taking the basics of a regular Soul Cycle group fitness class and making it full-out about Jesus and then sharing a liturgical meal after.



# Spin Church

- We know<sup>\*\*\*</sup> That 26,799 people saw the Facebook ads,
- Those people are 86% women and 14% men,
- They saw those ads a total of 160,671 times,
- And that 1,176 of those people took action from those ads.
- That's a click-through rate of 1.40 which is more than 3x the Facebook benchmark for "well-performing" campaigns.
- However, only 9 people signed up to attend Spin Church over the campaign, and
- None went to the class.



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# Before all the work

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It is important to remember that  
this is about Jesus and spreading  
of the gospel.





There is a  
framework:  
Jobs Theory



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEFAHIuIWw4>



## Of note from the video:

McDonald's figures out who liked the milkshake...

...created a profile of those persons

...got feed back from those persons

...improved the shake on those dimensions of performance

...and that had no impact on sales

Sound  
familiar?

-if only we had a better choir

-if we had more programs

-if only...

Jobs Theory is a better way.

# Jobs theory as applied to church

People don't really just go to church.  
They "hire" church to do a job.

It could be a **social** job

It could be **emotional** job

It could be **functional** job

# In other words

-most people want a "successful" Sunday (what needs are and judged by desired outcomes)

-they will make decisions all day long on who to "hire to do jobs" on Sunday to make them successful days (have their needs met)

-they are using metrics to measure their success of a Sunday; people are loyal to getting the job done and will switch to new solutions to make that happen (20% better wins)

# The church framework is this:

What are the jobs your community is “hiring” for on Sundays?

Including, what is your community hiring other churches to do?

What are the needs they are hoping to meet?

Where else are they meeting those needs?

Who else has those needs?

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# How to Try Step 1: Research

How do we  
find out?  
Research!

1- OBSERVE

2- INTERVIEW

3- VALIDATE



# Observe

People's behavior

Document the journey from the observable

Looking to find out what jobs are being done

You are an investigator/journalist

Come up with some theories

# Interview – basics

About 45 to 60 minutes

Casual conversation over coffee

Language and how people talk  
about things

There are no wrong answers

# Interview – basics

Shoot for 30 (especially newcomers)

Do it as a team (styles)

Practice with yourself

Practice with your team

# Interview

Decision chain that led them to church on Sunday

Like a documentary filmmaker “set the scene”

What were other options vs. church?

Why did they select church? Why not something else?

What jobs is church doing for them?

# Interview

Again like a documentary

Look for “emotional” points

Dig deeper in emotional points

Look for decisions made. What caused them?

Take “headline” notes during

Interview  
(another  
approach)

Why?

Why?

Why?

Why?

Why?

# Interview – Post Interview

Jot down notes in detail right after.

What were the needs that the person mentioned.

What jobs did they mention or did you gather?

Any trends emerging? Do they match your theory?

Keep in mind: it could be hundreds of jobs in a diverse group of people.

# Validate

With the list you can do a questionnaire  
(online is best for easy processing)

“On a scale of 1 to 5”

Share it with all in your church and see what  
emerges

Share it with those interviewed and see  
what emerges

You will have the TOP jobs people are  
looking for in a church



# Validate

THEN, of the top jobs, ask which  
your church does well

You will see where you can do  
better

You will see opportunities

That makes you ready for Step 2

Remember

Get others  
involved and  
make sure  
stakeholders  
buy in.

# How To Try

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This is the end of Part 1  
Saturday is Part 2 covering steps 2 and 3

Thank you.



Welcome back!



Recap about  
Step 1:  
Research

1- OBSERVE

2- INTERVIEW

3- VALIDATE

Now you  
know...

...what jobs people have

...what jobs you do

...opportunities

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# How to Try Step 2: Ideate

Always begin  
with prayer

This is when the Holy  
Spirit can be with you.

Invite the Divine to inspire  
you to spread the Gospel.

Trust that God will be with  
you in this work.

Ideate

Now that you know the jobs  
to get done, you can do ideas

“We go west.”

“We go to Los Angeles.”

# Brainstorm

Be open

No bad ideas

Dream big!

Remember: some jobs can be combined into one ministry

# Mission Canvas

<b>(1) JOB/NEED</b> <i>Top needs.</i>	<b>(3) RESPONSE</b>		<b>(4) ELEVATOR PITCH</b> <i>Single, clear, compelling message that states why you are different and worth attention.</i>		<b>(9) PARTNERS</b> <i>Who's going to help do this?</i>	<b>(2) STAKEHOLDERS</b> <i>List constituents and beneficiaries.</i>
<b>EXISTING ALTERNATIVES</b> <i>List how the job/need is met now.</i>	<b>(8) KEY METRICS</b> <i>Metrics for analysis.</i>		<b>HIGH LEVEL CONCEPT</b> <i>Like X for Y analogy.</i>		<b>(5) PATH</b> <i>Path to beneficiaries.</i>	
<b>(7) EXPENSES</b> <i>What's a hard expense.</i>			<b>(6) FUNDING SOURCES</b> <i>How will you pay the expenses.</i>			

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# Mission Canvas Parts

1- Job / Need

2- Stakeholders

3- Response

4- Elevator pitch

5- Path

# Mission Canvas Parts

6- Funding sources

7- Expenses

8- Key metrics

9- Partners



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# Mission Canvas

15 minutes to fill out

Order is suggested only

OK to skip for a moment, but  
come back to it.

Do one for each idea.

## Remember

Get others involved  
and make sure  
stakeholders buy in.

Decide which idea or  
ideas you can honestly  
and faithfully do.

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# How to Try Step 3: Execution

# MVP - Minimum Viable Prototype

Using the Mission Canvas

Must be able to measure what  
you'll measure for success

Strip away from the completed  
project until you cant.

# Try!

“Good enough” is good enough

What is the very next step to take?

It's ok to gauge interest using Facebook/Google ads

Refine, update mission canvas as you go and reality hits

Try again

# Evaluate

Is it what you thought?

Is it what you want to do?

It's ok if it didn't work

Is it something worth doing?

Roll out! (or not!)



Remember

Get others  
involved and  
make sure  
stakeholders  
buy in.

You know how,  
it's time to try.



Sign up for the  
newsletter at  
[TryTank.org](https://trytank.org)

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Thank you.

