

The Tightrope of Ministry: 5 Balancing Tips

So much to do; so little time. Ministry can be a balancing act! You stand quaking on the tightrope platform, knowing you must get to the other side, but the tightrope looks tiny, and the ground looks miles away. In the same way, you consider the tasks that need to be done to manage ministry. Apprehension sets in, and your feet feel frozen in lead. How can you balance people and tasks so you (and your ministry) begin to move across the tightrope?

Use the right tools. As you walk across the tightrope, you want to carry the right pole. If you choose one that's too light, heavy, long, or short, you'll struggle to maintain balance. It's the same in ministry. You want to choose tools that help you maintain balance—not throw you *off* balance. Some people love organization but can get so caught up in it that the organization itself takes priority over the goal of getting stuff done. Some people loathe organization; color-coding ranks right below scrubbing the toilet with a toothbrush. But you'll only survive a short time without some organization in your ministry.

Be realistic. If you're not a color-coding, keep-everything-organized person, it's probably not wise to spend one full work week creating a filing system so detailed you'll never use it...let alone even remember what your rationale for the organization was when you created it! Stretch yourself, but don't overextend yourself. Remember, organization is a tool to help you be more productive.

Be strategic. Avoid waiting until the last minute. Schedule mandatory projects to be completed several days in advance.

Build strong relationships. Consistently schedule time for people. Relationships take effort and energy. Interactions can be draining, frustrating, and disheartening. They can also be encouraging and inspiring. In reality, relationships are all these things. Focus on making your relationships strong. As you're moving across the tightrope of ministry, you want to know those around you. You'll have relationships of many levels of depth, and that's good! Some will be your most trusted advisers. Others will watch from the crowd and cheer you on (or boo you from time to time). Some will be part of your preparation or part of your celebration. Trust God to guide you as you build relationships with each of the people he places in your ministry.

Trust the safety net. Your ministry isn't really *your* ministry. It's God's. It's tempting to take control. We feel responsible, proud, and guilty when things go well or not so well. But we're not called to complete a ministry. We're called to be obedient to what God has planned for us. Your journey across the tightrope is simply one piece of his plan. It might look and feel like you're on your own on that high tightrope of ministry, but he's invested in it, and he's placed a strong safety net below you.

So pick up the best tools and connect with the people around you. Be flexible. Trust the safety net, take a deep breath in prayer, and take one step at a time.