DON'T QUIT

The best things in ministry come over time

SAMPLE
We hope you enjoy this complimentary sample of *Don’t Quit: The Best Things in Ministry Come Over Time*, by Jessica Bealer and Gina McClain.

This sample contains the introduction, a portion of the first chapter, and other details about the book.

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For my dad who trusted me with my first ministry opportunity, my mom who lets me talk, vent, and dream, and my husband whose love and support motivates me daily.

Jessica

For my grandfathers who demonstrated what a lifetime of faith looks like, my parents who believed in me far more than I believed in myself, and my husband who has always been my biggest cheerleader. You didn’t quit, so I won’t either.

Gina
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As we brainstormed this book and its development—from the chapter ideas to the main points to the key takeaways—every conversation had a key individual in mind. You.

As ministry leaders, we are passionate about what we do and why we do it. And we’ve had the privilege of interacting with thousands of leaders like you who share that same passion.

Yet during our years in ministry, we’ve observed a trend across the landscape of leadership. Great leaders deciding to step away from their calling.

It seems like every time you refresh your social media feed, a student ministry or children’s ministry leader is making an announcement that they’ve decided they just don’t want to continue in church ministry. Next to their smiling avatar is the 140-character announcement with a blog link to more. It usually starts with a heading like, “God is moving our family!”

All the comments and replies to these posts celebrate what God is doing as another ministry leader uproots their influence, their skills, and their relationships to reinvest them elsewhere.

Here’s the deal. We don’t want to begrudge anyone who is following God’s lead. We truly believe there are times when He moves you from here to there for a purpose. It’s up to you to discern what He’s doing and follow.

But we would suggest that more often a leader leaves under the banner of “God led me out,” when the reality is they simply bumped into some challenges they can’t seem to overcome.
Despite how much we wish it could be true, the raw passion that drove us into ministry may not be enough to keep us on track. There are far too many walls and ceilings we bump into. And if we lack the skills to navigate them, we find ourselves derailed, demotivated, and deeply frustrated. Soon, we start looking at other opportunities where the grass looks a lot greener. As this marinates in our minds, every unsuccessful outcome, dropped ball, or negative interaction is filtered through one question, “Am I still ‘called’ to be here? Or is God ‘calling’ me out?”

The driving motivation behind this project is the core belief that if God placed you in this role, then He has designed your skill set. He desires to move others closer to Him through you. He desires to develop others’ potential through you. He has invited you to partner with Him in an amazing work.

But are you ready for that work?

Partnering with God in the work He is doing in others requires a teachable, malleable heart. It requires you to be willing to confront your own blind spots, open yourself to training and accountability, and humble yourself enough to be coachable.

This is the cost of leadership. Are you ready to pay it?

In the pages of this book, we unpack some of the common challenges leaders face in the realm of students, children’s, and next gen ministry. When handled poorly, these challenges can take you out of the ministry game. This project is a success only if it helps leaders to stay longer, dig deeper, and reap greater rewards than they ever imagined possible.

_Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen_ (Ephesians 3:20 NIV).
INTRODUCTION

WRESTLING WITH SUCCESS
In the span of six minutes, you could walk to get the mail, warm up leftovers for dinner, listen to a song, fold a load of towels, restock the copier with paper, or make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Then again, you could also defeat an Olympic legend and be the first American to take the gold medal in women’s freestyle wrestling. That’s exactly what Helen Maroulis decided to do with her six minutes at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio.

The day that happened, I was standing in the common area at work with 75 of my coworkers, watching and screaming at a massive television screen as we did our part to ensure Helen’s victory from 5,000 miles away. I remember I was holding a pink Starbucks cake pop my husband had surprised me with. Helen was something to behold. From the first moment of the match to the last, she executed her skill to proficient perfection and defeated Yoshida in a decisive four to one victory. I hadn’t even finished my cake pop.

I’m not a huge fan of women’s wrestling. I don’t know all the rules or the terminology. What drew me in that day was that Helen was one of ours—not only an American, but also a follower of Jesus. She had been training in Denver, and watching Elevation Church sermons from afar, worshiping with us online. She was one of us, the closest that most of us would ever get to experiencing athletic greatness. She was an Olympian.

A few weeks after her win, Helen came to church. I have to be honest, I geeked out a bit when she let me hold her gold medal. It was pretty cool. Yet even more astonishing than the gold medal was her story.
Helen started wrestling at age seven when her little brother joined a wrestling team and didn’t have a partner. She stood in as his “dummy,” but quickly realized her own love of the sport. Fast-forward nearly two decades to when Helen stood at the top of the Olympic podium. She got there by defeating Saori Yoshida, who held three Olympic gold medals and thirteen World Championship titles. She had taken down her own personal Goliath.

It wasn’t fate, coincidence, or luck that propelled Helen to the top. It was willpower and faith. She believed if she made and executed a plan, found her identity in Christ, and worked harder than everyone around her, she could defeat the wrestling giant. She lived on chicken, spinach, avocado, and peanut butter. She worked on her technique and conditioning for nearly four hours a day, every day, and poured over years of film watching Yoshida’s matches. She stayed hungry and humble.

In her first interview following her historic win, Helen was asked what she told herself before the match. She said, “Christ is in me, I am enough.” What a bold statement. I was somewhat jealous of her confidence, envious of the enormity of her trust in Jesus. It wasn’t until a few days after I met Helen that I began to realize her story was my story too.

I don’t spend four hours a day in the gym, and I can assure you my diet is far more varied, but I do have a plan for the ministry I lead. I am committed to seeing that plan come to fruition, and I refuse to let idleness, ignorance, distraction, or doubt divert the call on my life. Christ is in me, I am enough. And the same is true for you.

The initiative you’ve shown by picking up this book tells of your commitment. I believe that the best is yet to come for you and your ministry, and I guarantee a life in ministry will be one of the most fulfilling journeys of your life. But this isn’t a bait and switch. If you’re just getting started, have been in this for a short time, or if you want to begin this coming Monday, there are a few things you should know before the starting pistol sounds.
There will be days you want to quit. I say it all the time, and I’ll probably say it more than a few times in this book: ministry is messy. Our Savior is in the business of broken, hurting, confused, lonely, and insecure people. Parents doubt themselves—why wouldn’t they doubt you? Volunteers’ priorities will not always align with your own. Fellow staff members will both intentionally and unintentionally hurt your feelings. You’ll want to quit every Monday morning. Decide now that you’ll stick with it. If you wait until the heat of the moment to decide what to do, you’ll always make the wrong decision. Commit now to enduring the tough days.

There will come a time when you’ll want to barter the risk of greatness for the security of goodness. You’ll find success. If you show up consistently and do what’s been asked of you, I can guarantee you’ll have wins along the way. But are a few small wins enough? Your ministry is either growing or dying. I often hear ministry leaders say, “We’ve just been in this season for a while,” or “We’re not growing in number, but we’re growing in depth.” I cringe when I hear sentiments like these. Jesus told His disciples, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20a NIV). Yes, Jesus wants us to grow deeper in our faith. But it’s not a coincidence He first spoke of sharing God’s message with the world. If you want to go and make disciples, you are going to have to take some risks along the way. You will fail. People will be frustrated because you made a mistake. At times, you will question your calling, but don’t sacrifice your mission for the security of the easily maintained. Take a risk and watch God move.

You are your biggest opponent. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve beat myself up for a mistake made, a situation mishandled, or a promise forgotten. I can’t tell you because the number is astronomically high. You will always have opposition, whether from a peer, an opinionated parent, a restraining budget, or the confines of church culture and tradition. You’ll have enough obstacles along the way. Don’t create additional ones by allowing your mind to wander to unhealthy places. At the first sign of mental attack, do something: pick up your Bible, play worship music, say a prayer, or call a friend. Contemplation is rarely the answer. Overthinking a problem can and will be the death of your ministry. Acknowledge you made a mistake, apologize if necessary, and let it go! You can’t move on to tomorrow’s victory if you’re stuck in yesterday’s dilemma.

Passion isn’t always loud. In my position, I’ve had the opportunity to lead many types of leaders. One of my favorites is PJ. As a busy working mom, with a successful husband who frequently travels, PJ singlehandedly oversees the children’s ministry at a campus of about 1,500 people in a rural area of Charlotte. PJ is what I call a ministry ninja, effective but quiet. Sometimes we assume success means being the loudest voice in the room with the flashiest personality. We believe in order to survive and be recognized, we have to dominate. However, if you seek life change for those that attend your church, hard work and dedication are the recipe for success. PJ doesn’t do her job because she seeks recognition. She does her job because she loves the families she serves and the team she leads. Her passion shines through in the clarity of her emails, the organization of her resources, the level to which she executes her initiatives, and the endless hours she spends building relational equity with her team. Ask yourself if you are making a splash or if you are passionately pursuing the advancement of the kingdom.

Titles don’t matter. Family ministry is not a stepping stone to something greater. An anointed calling into family ministry is something greater. This is my seventeenth year in family ministry. I started when I was just 19 years old. I didn’t have a clue what I was doing. Actually, it was worse than that. I was the only daughter of the pastor of a startup church in rural East Tennessee. I knew nothing about kids, and even less about children’s ministry. My dad came to me and asked if I wanted to be the Children’s Director. I remember thinking, “Wow, that sounds important.” And my first week on the job, I did feel important . . . right up until the moment the service was over and I was ready to hand back both the kids and the impressive title. I felt clueless and unqualified. But I did learn a valuable
lesson. A title does nothing if it’s not supported with dedication, authenticity, and eagerness. Steward the opportunity God has given you. Serve Him with your whole heart in the role you’ve been assigned, and put the proverbial career ladder out of your mind.

**Time is both your friend and your enemy.** Between Gina and I, we’ve been in ministry for over three decades. That’s a long time. Knowledge is power, but wisdom is priceless. The dilemma is that in order to gain the wisdom you need to be the best version of you, you need to have experience, but experience takes time. You may feel inadequate to face what’s ahead, but if you stay hungry, remain humble, and push through the moments you feel like succumbing to doubt, the overwhelming days will become years, brimming with applicable insight.

Four years before her win in Rio, Helen Maroulis was expected to compete in the London Olympics. She entered the Olympic trials ranked No. 1 in the United States. She hadn’t lost a match in 18 months. Then she lost to Kelsey Campbell in the best-of-three final. She was devastated, of course, but even more humbled when the Team USA coach asked her to go to London—not as a competitor, but as an assistant to the other wrestlers. When asked about her decision to serve as support for those who took her spot on Team USA, Helen said, “I didn’t want to. I was heartbroken. But it’s a great sport. It’s going to teach you through the adversity. So I went.” The adversity sharpened her focus. She changed weight class and powered on. If she hadn’t, Rio wouldn’t have become her reality. If she had thrown in the towel, it would have been Yoshida on top of the Olympic platform in 2016.

Every season has setbacks. The key to endurance is perception.
How do you view what’s hindering you? Will you allow your setbacks to suspend your efforts or sharpen your focus? If you’re just starting this journey, let me break it down for you. Ministry isn’t always easy, but it is fulfilling. It isn’t always fun, but there are moments when your heart will burst with joy. There are tough days coming, but sweeter days to follow. You can’t always choose your obstacle, but you can choose your response.

Are you ready?
START WELL, NOT RIGHT
“Wow! Who thought that was a good idea?”

The question slipped out before I realized what I was saying. I never meant to verbalize my thoughts. But it didn’t matter. Whether I meant to or not, I’d spoken out of turn.

I was the new leader of my church’s children’s ministry. I was standing with my team, staring at an oddly shaped room with quirky accordion room dividers and mismatched fixtures, and the words fell out of my mouth. Everyone within earshot now knew how I felt about the general design of the environment. In eight brief words, I inadvertently discounted the work of those around me.

Those words had an immense impact on my new team. They reflected a part of my heart I’m ashamed to say was there. For some reason I thought I could do better. In that moment, I knew it didn’t matter if what I said was true or not, statements like that weren’t going to help me lead a team and ministry forward.

Can I be more transparent?

There was a time when I was so overconfident in my leadership ability that I would drive past churches along my daily route and think, “Oh, I could turn that ministry around. I could make that better.” I truly believed I had the Midas touch—that no matter where I went, any ministry I led would turn to gold.

Arrogant, right?
I can’t really tell you where this over-confident, over-compensating posture came from. Thankfully, time and experience have taught me the fallacy of it.

Over time, I began to realize success in ministry has less to do with a magic touch and more to do with a yielded heart. How I carried myself in that initial year of leadership would greatly determine how quickly and effectively I could create change. After all, change has to happen. Increasing the capacity of any ministry often requires a transition in vision, strategy, and approach. It also requires next-level leadership. You’re probably holding this book right now because you’ve been entrusted with the responsibility of being that kind of leader. And you’ve got what it takes!

But don’t forget, leading change doesn’t mean you rush in with guns blazing. Leading change requires a heart open to seeing what God has done so far, what He is doing now, and what He wants to do next. In order to do this successfully, there are three important postures leaders must maintain. These postures are: 
- **Honor past investments**, get on the same page, and lead like a ninja warrior.

### HONOR PAST INVESTMENTS
Let’s be real. When you step into a new ministry, there will be existing systems, environments, and processes that will make you scratch your head. Yet the things we see as ineffective today may have been effective in the past. Or it could be that the process you are questioning today was never effective. But in the end, it doesn’t matter. At some point in time, there was a leader in place who implemented that system for a reason that made sense to them. That doesn’t mean you have to keep it. It doesn’t mean you can’t ask questions about why it exists. But what if you filtered everything through the assumption that the model in place today was successful at some point?

This posture of honoring what’s already in place doesn’t prevent you from implementing change. But it does keep you from derailing the trust you’re attempting to build with your new team.

As the newly appointed leader, you are standing on a bed of trust you haven’t earned yet. It’s been granted to you. It’s your job to earn it over time. Trust is the currency of change. And you need lots of it.

Choosing to challenge the effectiveness of the model while honoring past investment tells your team that you see the hard work they’ve done. You see the blood, sweat, and tears that others have shed to get where you are today. You see the work of their hands, the investment of their hearts, and the great things that have happened as a result. Don’t diminish it—honor it.

When you honor what’s been done, others will more likely be open to trying new things in the future.

**Try This: Do a 5 in 5.** Before making any changes, it’s important to pinpoint what’s going great. I have an exercise I do to help me focus on what’s going well—I call it the “5 in 5.” After an event or service, I invest five minutes writing down five things I witnessed that went right. I began doing this when I realized my focus was placed heavily on what was wrong, instead of seeing what was right. I needed to change my mindset to see what was going well in my new ministry. So I started doing this exercise every Monday morning. In the seasons that I’m faithful to this exercise, the level of celebration within the ministry is exponentially better.

Here’s an example of my most recent 5 in 5:

1. Dave, an elementary small group leader, was intentional in how he engaged one of his few who came into our environment acting standoffish. The little boy wasn’t interested in leaving dad and joining his small group. Dave was quick to respond, gentle in his encouragement, and respectful of the boy’s parents. The effort paid off. Well done!
2. Our stage host was called into work for an emergency. Another volunteer, Bobby, was prepared to cover the role. Bonus: Bobby had an awesome attitude about the last-minute change.
LEADING CHANGE DOESN’T MEAN YOU RUSH IN WITH GUNS BLAZING. LEADING CHANGE REQUIRES A HEART OPEN TO SEEING WHAT GOD HAS DONE SO FAR, WHAT HE IS DOING NOW, AND WHAT HE WANTS TO DO NEXT.

3. Kim was so flexible when more kids than expected showed up on Saturday night. Her attitude and ability to adjust exemplified the model volunteer. I loved it!

4. The nursery team was encouraging to a new couple leaving their baby for the first time. They took time to lead the couple through what to expect. Great job!

5. Harley rocked it as a worship leader. She’s a great addition to the team.

GET ON THE SAME PAGE

You were placed at the helm of your ministry because your leader believes you are capable of leading it forward. But it’s dangerous to assume your game plan is the same as theirs. It’s tough to build a skyscraper on a foundation designed for a house.

Before you implement any changes, invest the time and energy necessary to ensure your game plan aligns with those who lead you. Programming or events that aren’t integrated into the overall vision of the church are divisive and unproductive, no matter how amazing they might be. There are few churches in existence that are swimming in resources like time, money, physical space, and volunteers. (For the ministry leader that has more resources than they know what to do with, let me just say congratulations. You’re the minority.)

So we’ve got to be strategic with the resources available. The first step is to find out how your ministry feeds into the greater vision of the church. Take time to discover how programming and events born out of your ministry move your church closer to seeing that vision become reality.

This sounds great in theory. It’s very challenging in practice.

Can you guess why it can be difficult? Because we like our ideas! We’re personally attached to them. But we won’t serve our churches well if we implement ideas that cause us to drift from the overall vision.

In my early years of ministry, I fell in love with big production
events. I still love the music, the lights, and the crowds. In my mind, the bigger, the better. Maybe your church hosts an FX (Family Experience) for families in your community. If so, you know that big events are a ton of work, but they’re also a ton of fun.

If you visited my church (Faith Promise) on a weekend, it might appear on the surface that we’re driven by big, concert-like worship events. But the truth is, small groups are the engine that keep us moving. We believe small groups are the most strategic method through which people can grow. So as much as I love stage-driven events, if my agenda was to create productions that draw families in, yet I focused little on connecting them to small groups, then I’d be working against the very strategy my church has employed to reach our community.

In order for my ministry strategy to align with the strategy of my church’s overall approach, small groups have to be a high priority, not a second thought. So we invest a lot of resources and time into making small groups successful. Don’t get me wrong, we still do large events with amazing worship, crazy lights, and creative storytelling. But we do these events to mobilize kids and their parents toward a next step of connecting with one another and with a church community.

There’s nothing wrong with having ideas and preferences when it comes to ministry. In fact, you were probably hired for this job because you have great ideas! But you won’t get very far if your ideas and preferences don’t align with the leaders who have been placed above you.

A solid move for getting on the same page with leadership is to become a student of those you report to. Find out what they see for the future, what direction they want to take, and how your ministry plays into that. Then discern where you can shape your strategy to align with the overall direction of the church.

Try This: Play a game of “Ask Your Leader.”
If you’re wondering what the leader above you is thinking, then take a moment and ask your direct report if they’d be willing to set up a time to chat with you. When you get together, ask the following questions:

- What are two critical outcomes you want to see from my ministry?
- What’s your expectation for when these outcomes will be met?
- What are the non-negotiables in our ministry in terms of programming, environments, and strategy?

LEAD LIKE A NINJA WARRIOR
My family is a big fan of the show American Ninja Warrior. We get downright giddy when a new episode airs. There’s something about the impossibility of the challenges and the sheer grit required to complete them. The doorframes of my living room are covered in the footprints of my 11-year-old. He simply can’t help himself. Watching the ninjas traverse the course on television inspires him so much that doorframes now double as spider walls. It’s impressive to see him run, jump, and brace himself in the narrow space.

I think the thing I love most about the ninja course is that despite its challenges, the course can be conquered with training and focus. But no one jumps from the first challenge (the floating steps) to the final challenge (the invisible ladder) in one leap. The course is conquered one challenge at a time.

Leading your team through change is much the same way. You don’t introduce change then see the fruit of that change all in one step. You actually have to overcome a series of challenges along the way. And not only do you have to conquer them, you’ve got to lead another group of ninjas to victory as well.

The only way to accomplish this is to ensure you lead your team by providing defined direction and giving clear steps to guide the way. This is where vision and values come into play.

Defined Direction
In American Ninja Warrior, there’s a buzzer that signifies when a competitor has reached the end of the course. If they don’t hit
a buzzer, the ninja knows there are still challenges ahead. They haven’t reached their goal. Your ministry team needs to know the same thing. They need to know when they’ve hit their goal. Even though ministry is never done, creating celebration points along the way gives your team the energy to charge ahead. You need to cue your team for when it’s time to hit that buzzer with all their might and dance around like crazy people.

Knowing the value Faith Promise placed on small groups, the direction this ministry needed to lean toward was a stronger small group culture. But the journey ahead could get rocky. Recruiting the number and caliber of volunteers necessary seemed like an impossible climb up the warped wall. So, we had to figure out how to celebrate the little “buzzers” along the way.

As a leader, where can you place markers to stop and celebrate another step in the right direction? How can you ensure there is ample celebration around the critical steps that lead you to see your mission come to reality?

Clear Steps
I love the idea of “ninja holds.” Nearly every challenge on American Ninja Warrior involves gripping some version of a handhold in order to traverse the course. Often the holds are difficult and challenge the participant to focus with great effort. If the holds were too easy or too close together, there would be no challenge to it. The course would lose its appeal. If anyone could do it, the course would lose the quality that sets the ninja competitors apart from the rest of humanity.

On the flip side, if the holds were too spread out or impossible to grab, competitors would give up. And no one would successfully complete the challenge.

Your ministry has leaders. Hopefully strong ones. And you want to lead your leaders well. The best way to lead them is to give them ninja holds that challenge them to focus their efforts and stretch their abilities, yet reward them along the way.

In the ministry world, ninja holds are clear vision and strategy. Great vision without solid strategy is nothing short of frustrating. Yet one of the first holes a leader can step in is to share a great vision with no plan for how to get there.

Creating a strategy is like creating a series of ninja holds that lead others through the challenges of ministry. Obviously our objective is a strategy many can follow. So the level of difficulty has to be appropriate. But don’t be tempted to make things easy. The greater the challenge, the greater the value.

Try This: Map out your direction.
Invest time getting your plans out of your head and on paper. Now that you’re on the same page with your leadership, what is the best next step for your ministry? Is it to introduce an FX event to engage families in a common experience? Is it to dig deeper into small groups to ensure every kid has the best seat in their circle?

Define the direction of your ministry in this new season. Then clarify the steps needed to make it a reality. If your volunteers understand the direction you are headed and the steps to get there, they’ll find it easier to follow.

KNOW YOUR INFLUENCERS
I’d been in my role for six months. It was time for a volunteer training to bring the team on board with the new focus on small groups in our preschool and elementary environments. I was super excited about the plan for that Saturday morning. I would lead the whole group with the vision of small groups then send everyone off to area-specific breakouts. I’d carefully chosen some highly competent volunteers to lead these breakouts and share great tips and tricks for leading in preschool and elementary environments. I walked away that afternoon like I’d hit a homerun. Success!

On the drive home, I received a call from one of my preschool small group leaders. “Hey Gina, I just wanted you to know what was shared in our breakout today. I don’t think it’s what you’d hoped for.”
It took me a while to digest what the volunteer had shared. But in the course of that 45-minute breakout, my preschool breakout leader single-handedly dismantled the vision I’d so passionately shared just moments before.

To be fair, her intentions were pure. This person had invested more hours in preschool ministry as a volunteer than I could count. She was committed and passionate to say the least. However, she didn’t align with the direction I was headed. And I never took the time to figure that out.

I think leading leaders is one of the trickiest parts of leadership.

So far we’ve talked about honoring the foundation you’re building upon, aligning your plans with the vision of the church, and creating a clear pathway for others to follow you toward a ministry vision.

Your next critical step is to bring the right people around you to reach that vision. And finding the right people is a matter of identifying your Influencers and determining which ones have influence you want to amplify and which ones have influence you need to manage.

Let’s get down to the nitty-gritty. What’s an Influencer? These are the volunteers that others follow. Their opinions carry more weight than others. They have the ability to sway others toward or away from your vision.

In a season of change, it’s important that you know who your Influencers are and what kind of impact they have on your team.

I like to use a graph to map out my Influencers. This map helps me identify whose influence I want to leverage and whose influence I need to manage.

The graph is simple. Draw out a graph defining the y-axis as “Flexibility” and the x-axis as “Competence.” Then create a list of all the Influencers you have on your volunteer team. As you plot them on the graph, answer the question, “How flexible and competent is this leader?”

Each volunteer will land in a different spot on the graph, but you’ll find a great opportunity to work strategically with your team. Take a look at the variety of Influencers and the kind of impact they can have.

The Resilient Cheerleader
Some of your Influencers are high on the flexibility side, but low on the competence side. They’ve gained their influence with their contagious energy and “can-do” attitude. They will do anything you ask them to do. But they may not be able to pull it off. When you ask others to follow these leaders, you may create frustration. Your volunteers want to know that the person you empower to lead is capable of the job you’ve given them. If they aren’t, you quickly lose the confidence of that team.

The Skillful Stick in the Mud
Other Influencers are more competent, but less flexible. These leaders will struggle to buy into the changes you propose and pulling them forward may feel like dragging a mule. When you ask others to follow these leaders, you may find an entire team moving in a direction you don’t want them to go because you’ve empowered a leader that isn’t aligned with you. The temptation is too great to insert their own opinion and perspective on the directives within the ministry. Left unchecked, you’ll find an entire team of people who have disengaged from the vision and are functioning in a silo.

The Game Changer
The key Influencers you really want to leverage are the highly competent, highly flexible types. These leaders are not doormats. They won’t hang on every word you say. They’ll ask hard questions and have high expectations. But they will support you and the changes you propose. Their competence has already earned the respect of others. Their support of you and the direction you lead will encourage others to follow. These are the volunteers with influence you want to leverage. These are your game changers.
DON'T QUIT

Making it in ministry isn’t as easy as some might think. After all, it’s not like you’re a superhero. With every unsuccessful outcome, dropped ball, or negative interaction, you hear the same question in your mind, “Am I still ‘called’ to be doing what I’m doing?” But don’t hang up your cape just yet. The best journey is one where you have the confidence of calling and an intentional strategy that gives you practical hope through the difficult times.

Staying with it takes tenacity, vision, purpose, and a plan to make every day and every person count. In this book, Gina McClain and Jessica Bealer draw on their own extended experiences in some of the nation’s most well-known family ministries to encourage every leader to stay superhero strong.

JESSICA BEALER
Jessica Bealer has been leading children’s ministry for 17 years, including five years overseeing standards, systems, staffing, and atmosphere for the children’s programs of Elevation Church. She has overseen the launch of nearly twenty locations, and is considered a specialist in kidmin multisite. Jessica is a mother of four and married to Frank Bealer, the CEO of Phase Family Centers and Executive Director of Leadership Development at Orange. Together they are the founders of FamilyMinistry.Church.

GINA MCCLAIN
Gina McClain’s passion for leadership began during her first 10 years at Life.Church in Oklahoma City. Leading in a rapidly growing, high-accountability environment meant that hunger and hustle were key traits she couldn’t lead without. Gina has continued the journey at Faith Promise Church, learning and re-learning the basic skills of loving and developing people. She speaks to leaders all around the nation as part of reThink/Orange. Gina’s married to Kyle McClain and they have three kids: Keegan, Josie, and Connor.