



# Episode 67: Creating a Culture of Succession

Featuring: Mingo Palacios & Charles Stoicu

<https://thepodcast.com>

## Transcript:

Mingo Palacios: [00:02](#) Hey everybody, thanks for tuning into the PD Podcast. You know, from time to time we get the luxury of traveling around the country and actually bringing our podcast to conferences and events that are happening all over the country. This conversation took place at Catalyst Conference, an incredible time together with so many churches. I hope you enjoy the conversation.

Mingo Palacios: [00:22](#) Welcome to the Purpose Driven Podcast. My name is Mingo and today I have a small city of people inside the airstream. We're at Catalyst Conference. Welcome everybody to the podcast. We're excited

that you guys are here. In the lineup for guests, including myself, my very dear friend of over a decade, Charles Stoicu. Glad you're here my friend.

Charles Stoicu: [00:48](#)

Man, I'm really pumped to be here.

Mingo Palacios: [00:49](#)

From Eastside Church continuing the legacy of leading the young. Yeah, it's been fantastic. It has been fantastic. The last time we had you on wax was a year ago. Your episode didn't play 'til much later, but it was one of our most viewed episodes because of the fact that you gave so many people an honest look at what it means to engage a young emerging leader. And here you are with a multiplicity factor of like 30. And so I just want to come back to the table a year later and talk about the fact that the job is never done, right? And now that you have even more influence and you have even more responsibility, what's at stake for somebody who's continuing to grow in their influence? And then also what is your conviction for the people that you bring around you as they experience the best of what you get to experience?

Charles Stoicu: [01:48](#)

Man, those are like some incredible questions to not have to talk about for much time. Gosh, I mean, so most recently is I came back to work like three days ago. I was on paternity leave.

Mingo Palacios: [02:00](#)

Congratulations by the way.

Charles Stoicu: [02:01](#)

I had a son. His name is Reneer means army of wisdom. My wife and I love the Pacific Northwest and

so we named him that. In my sort of wake, this team of people that are in this RV are the ones that have been-

Mingo Palacios: [02:15](#) Ahem. Clarify. Airstream.

Charles Stoicu: [02:17](#) Oh, sorry.

Mingo Palacios: [02:17](#) Thank you. Just for the record, just for the record airstream.

Charles Stoicu: [02:20](#) I'm sorry, all of you are RVers that don't have airstreams out there. But we have a team of people that have been really running our young adult ministry for all intents and purposes. Just to my right is going to Matt Feldkamp who is actually on staff at Eastside. And it came through our young adult ministry and God has been hired at our church and then Taylor Gonzalez also is kind of the communications head for that. And then there's a plethora of, whether it's small group leaders or hospitality team or guest service leads or incredible connectors, setup teams, our table group teams, our worship teams. The whole nine.

Mingo Palacios: [02:53](#) The whole nine. All represented.

Charles Stoicu: [02:56](#) All represented and they have owned the ministry as me being gone. And so I actually went to my first young adult gathering for seven weeks last night. Last night I didn't even have any responsibilities for that, which for me makes me think one of two things. Either I need a new job because I don't have one or man, I have been given the best job on the planet to help

equip and empower the next generation. And so I think what hangs in the balance is kind of the lack of decision if we don't make it to engage the next generation we'll lose the next 50 years.

Mingo Palacios: [03:30](#)

That is huge. And for anybody listening, just consider what you've invested by way of ministry, whether it's a decade or two or three or some of our listeners for decades of loving and living inside the local church, to not take a moment to strategize how you incorporate who's next could cost you the entirety of what you've put in up to this point.

Charles Stoicu: [03:59](#)

It will cost you the future I think.

Mingo Palacios: [04:00](#)

Yeah. What was it like asking some of the rallied trusted ones to be given the reigns in the wake of a life moment. How was it stepping into that process? Was it cold? Was it the first time, had you been incrementally given responsibility? Give us a little bit of a pathway so that those who are leading younger teams would have a little bit of idea of maybe where they should or shouldn't be leading their own.

Taylor: [04:31](#)

Yeah, for me, Charles has been investing in my leadership four years ago, five years ago, but now back then looking to the future if I could, like, I would have never expected to like be a part of a team to actually lead a ministry. There was definitely a little moments to lead up to this point. But it did take time for me to feel comfortable for sure. It was not overnight. And I remember one time Charles asked

me to do announcements one week and I said no and I shut that down and then now I love doing it and it definitely takes a lot of patience on my part with trusting myself and trusting that God has put me in the right situation at the right time. And Charles really equipped me and my leadership, but also believed in me and I wouldn't have done it without this team's belief in me.

Mingo Palacios: [05:30](#)

That's such a good point. I feel like there's so many ministries that are doing the equipping but are missing the belief, where they go, "Here's the resources. Here's the resources." But I actually don't know that they're actually able to do it. And how much more confidently do you step into the things you're asked to do when there's a wind of belief behind you, right? There's a swell of belief. I believe deeply in the team that I bring to the table more so than they believe in themselves. And like everybody who I call to the table, I already believe they have it in them. It's just a matter of giving them the experience opportunities so they can see it also. I already believe you can do it. I just need you to believe also.

Charles Stoicu: [06:13](#)

Yeah, I think that's like the hardest part. Actually, Matt and I were talking about this last night, like equipping people with a task or a skill or here's maybe somehow to lead is one thing, but to actually give people the courage or the wherewithal that they can actually do it, is something that I don't know if you can actually give as much as you can show. And there's people in the bus today that-

Mingo Palacios: [06:41](#) Ahem. Clarification, airstream. For our listening audience airstream.

Charles Stoicu: [06:43](#) Airstream, oh my gosh. By the way, where's Johnny at? This airstream looks fantastic.

New Speaker: [06:52](#) [Crosstalk]

Mingo Palacios: [06:52](#) Keep going.

Charles Stoicu: [06:53](#) I only got two and a half hours of sleep last night. Newborn, newborn. But there are people in this airstream that I don't even think they even know how much I believe in them. Because for me there was a young adult pastor, college pastor that basically gave me keys to the Kingdom as an intern. He left and that sort of left a vacuum for me to lead. But the whole way I knew that I'd been equipped to do, I didn't know that I actually could do it.

Mingo Palacios: [07:22](#) Yeah, that's great.

Charles Stoicu: [07:22](#) It was kind of the moment, the thing to step in, like whether it was the opportunity that was put in front of me or the challenge that was in front of me that sort of led to it. And so I think for me, the, one of the things I'm even learning now is where are the opportunities to give to people so that they can then know that they have what it takes because that's hard. That's just difficult.

Mingo Palacios: [07:42](#) It reminds me, so the Good Shepherd, Jesus, says, "I am the Good Shepherd." And one of the attributes of

Jesus is that He always is going before his assignments preparing by way of equipping or He himself has gone through it. Right? So, you want to know if you've got a terrible shepherd in a boss, ask if they've been there. So like, "Have you led through this before? Have you ever experienced the assignment that you're asking me to do because I'd love to glean some wisdom before I get out there and go for it." That's going to display wisdom on your part as the person being asked, but it's also going to give the person asking you to do something an opportunity to convey a mutuality of suffering or experience or victory in a way that I think could even build a relationship opportunity between you. There's oftentimes a void of legitimate relationship between a supervisor and somebody who's being asked. That's a great way to build it.

Charles Stoicu: [08:41](#)

Yeah.

Mingo Palacios: [08:41](#)

My next question is, as a team all together, one of the big questions that keeps coming up is how are we using social media to create more authentic expressions of our belief and our community versus perpetuating the void of, like the fallacy, like posts the best throw away the rest. Right? So are you guys utilizing that as a community? Are you utilizing it personally? Have people decided to ditch it all together because you're frustrated with it? Where are you guys as a ministry?

Taylor: [09:16](#) Yeah, so I run the social media and I capture the photo content. I have a team that does that too and I think for me when it comes to storytelling, it has to be authentic or else it's not really a true story. And when it comes to our community as a whole, I love capturing those moments that tell our community's story and sharing that. And I think when that's not shared it's not a story.

Mingo Palacios: [09:42](#) What's a better picture? A picture of the person on the stage or a picture of a person inside of your ministry?

Taylor: [09:48](#) Inside my ministry or inside our ministry, yeah.

Charles Stoicu: [09:50](#) Especially when they're the person on the stage.

Mingo Palacios: [09:53](#) I love that.

Taylor: [09:53](#) Yeah.

Mingo Palacios: [09:54](#) So, can you drill down on that for me because I feel like I'm seeing an overdose of great lighting, a lot of smoke and one person. If we're talking about community and we're only platforming a celebrity, what is that doing for community?

Charles Stoicu: [10:09](#) Man, I think one of the coolest things in our ministry and we have people in the room today that are communicators and hosts and people that make it happen. One of my sort of things in my ministry, replication and multiplication. We did this last summer, a series called Uncommon and it was really kind of the first gain to go, "Hey, there's a lot of young



adults and voices that could share and have something to say" which created this opportunity for young adults to basically share their stories, their experience of what it's like to be a young adult. And so for over nine weeks in the summer we had a different young adult speak each week in that and individuals in the room. So I think Taylor spoke and Matt spoke and Jake spoke, Maddie spoke, Kyle has spoken. Macy's going to speak some point soon. There we go.

Mingo Palacios: [10:54](#) So you've really given the keys away, you really given the opportunity to shine on.

Charles Stoicu: [11:01](#) Yeah, I think it's one of the things in our organization that I find we have maybe the best opportunity is we have the best platform to develop the future communicators. And so to kind of give that away to help give coaching to that. That was what I did over the summer and I was on paternity leave, so I didn't speak for those six weeks. We had Jake and Matt and Oz and Kyle and Sarah and Maddie have all spoken in that space and have given their kind of perspective to what it's like to follow Jesus as adults. Whether they're on staff or their volunteer, they're a college student. My sort of picture is to go, "Let me help equip you to get the skills of how and then give you the platform to do it" which has been really, really fun. A lot of work. Any of the people that prepped for that, is that a lot of work?

Group: [11:49](#) Yes.

- Charles Stoicu: [11:49](#) But it's also really cool to walk away and to see photos from those or as I'm on paternity leave and I'm rocking my baby to see like, "Oh, here's a really cool statement that Jake had or here's something like an insight that Matt had or that Maddie had about faith and about God and about guardrails" and to see the kind of the cornucopia of wisdom that exists-
- Mingo Palacios: [12:09](#) Oh my.
- Charles Stoicu: [12:09](#) And to give it and to give it to our community I think is a huge responsibility and also an opportunity that we need to be aware of in our ministries.
- Mingo Palacios: [12:18](#) Can you give us a couple of practical examples of what it means to authentically lead your community? As a pastor, because everybody's obsessed with authenticity and we talked about it in social. So like the buzzword of buzzwords this year, right? "Authentic. We want to be authentic." I don't think that that's any different than what has happened in church culture leading up to this place, but if the desire to be authentic is there, then that means we've had a taste of inauthenticity. And so what does that look like?
- Charles Stoicu: [12:49](#) In my mind, I don't know how to be authentic. I don't have like a three step plan for authenticity, which maybe that's the secret? It's not programmed. I'm kind of the weird bearded guy that says some stuff that's dumb sometimes and life is hard. I have a kid, I can't think sometimes to acknowledge those things. But the thing that you said about authenticity that is most

interesting to me is I think authenticity pours from a place of being willing to be vulnerable with what's actually real.

Mingo Palacios: [13:17](#)

So vulnerability.

Charles Stoicu: [13:18](#)

Yeah. It's the honesty of who you are and what's actually happening, whether it's awesome or whether it's miserable, but to be able to share some of that. This team knows the ins and outs of how hard my life has been over the last couple of years, like the ins and outs of the points in their lives and things that and again, like varying levels of degrees of that, but to try and create opportunities for honest conversations, that's a core of our ministry is to create table discussions that you can create an opportunity for an honest conversation. You can't make people be honest. We can give people kind of nudges in those directions to be able to have that.

Mingo Palacios: [13:49](#)

As core volunteers inside of the ministry, describe the kind of leader that you aspire to be or give me the description of a leader that you're looking at to emulate. The reason why I'm asking is because for so many churches, the absence of young adults is frustrating. And so one of the things we try to do through our podcast is just say, "Hey, this is what they're looking for." As blatant as that is, it's like, "This is what we're looking for." So, if a few of you would be so kind as to approach the microphone or those that already have the microphone, give me two or three things in specific detail that you're looking for in

somebody to pour into your life. Much thinking is happening in this exact moment.

Matt: [14:47](#) Yeah. Well, I guess I'll share then when it comes what we want on our team. I think in all ministries what we want is someone who's willing, right? You can't get somewhere unless you try. And at that point when we understand and we see someone, after awhile you get used to seeing kind of people and you can kind of gauge them and whether or not they have the capacity to lead. I think that one of the things, I just met Charles a few years ago and he was one of the first guys I met when I came to church. So I was de-churched. I was unchurched. I was living in sin.

Group: [15:26](#) [Laughing]

Matt: [15:26](#) We just went there. Charles approached me and he met me where I was and he said, "Matt, I want to get you on my team." And I'm like, "Charles, I'm probably not the best guy for that." And he said, "No, Matt, you are." And like Taylor spoke about earlier, he believed in me and that was what brought it to me. And as he built this team, I think that so often we're looking ahead and we're looking ahead and we're looking ahead and it really creates this 'me culture' in our lives. But when Charles turned back around and said, "Well, I don't want to leave anybody else behind. Hey Kyle, will you take this over? Hey Taylor, will you take this over? And, and as a team, we've been able to kind of filter through that and really, I mean, it's a lot

easier to get somewhere on the team than by yourself.

Mingo Palacios: [16:17](#) I'm making you answer next. While you answer, somebody is coming to the microphone. So go prep yourself.

Volunteer: [16:23](#) Yeah, why that came to mind first was willingness to learn because I knew how to play with the camera and everything like that, but I wasn't ready to be a leader and I didn't know what it took to be a leader. And when you get to just watch and learn from, you're already a leader like Charles and your peers around you. If you're not willing to learn and learn from your mistakes and what you missed and what you couldn't take in, your willingness to learn can obviously make you take that next step into something that is scary, but you can learn from it.

Jake: [17:01](#) Yeah. So my name's Jake. How's it going? A couple of things came to mind I guess. First one would be a humility so just own when you mess up, and to just approach life and approach leadership from that posture of humility. And that's what I look for. That's what I desire to be. That's the kind of leader I desire to be. But I also have seen that in Charles and his leadership and I really admire that. So that'd be the first thing. Second thing that came to mind was innovation, to refine and change and grow and never settle and always wanting to push and push and push for the sake of the Gospel and the people that don't know Jesus and being innovative in that way and

creative. That is definitely a value that I strive for and again, I've seen in Charles. And then the last thing was this, the selflessness that comes with intention and with devotion to other sin to replication. In leadership, anybody that's ever walked with somebody or let somebody, let's say it's high schooler or a young adult or whatever, somebody younger than them perhaps. But if you've led somebody then sometimes that can be taxing and I don't think there's any price higher than the time that you devote into somebody and care for them and walk with them. And you hope, that there's like those moments that just bless you. And I think Paul and Timothy, Paul just like in his letters to Timothy just swollen with love, like he just loves this guy, but also it is a sacrifice. Love is sacrifice. And so that's pretty important.

Mingo Palacios: [18:53](#) Anybody else?

Kyle: [19:01](#) Hi, my name's Kyle.

Group: [19:05](#) [Laughing]

Kyle: [19:05](#) I just danced my butt off. I mean I guess I'll just be like, kind of piggybacking off what some of the others have been saying. I've got two things but one, just like the intentionality that these leaders can have. I could honestly say when it came to church back in the day, I had nothing good to say about it. And pretty much, I walk into Eastside, walk into those doors and the first thing, I see Charles walk up to me. And it wasn't just like, "Hey, you're tall. You're a big dude. You probably

played football." It's like, "I to know who you are." Having those real conversations. So I think in a leader like the intentionality is very important to have. But two, just the trust, like he said he sees sometimes these leaders that walk into these doors, they don't even have a lot of trust for themselves. They don't see themselves being these awesome leaders that we are. And it's just like to see him say, "Hey, if you win, it's a win for Jesus and it's going to be great. But if you fail, know that it's not the end of the world. There's learning that comes from that. Failure is the best teacher. Lean into it and just get better. You know what I mean? So it's just seeing that this leader that is in our lives that's always pouring into us, make us the best us that we can possibly be, is awesome. Seeing he has a baby so he has to take a little break. He has no problem just giving different roles, different tasks, different responsibilities to the other leaders that are surrounding him in this ministry. And it's not like this huge like tug on his heart saying like, Ooh, should I do this?" He's like, "Dude, I want to do this. I trust these people. I know full heartedly that they are going to win and that they're going to pour like all the love that Jesus has given us. All the wisdom that we have learned over these years to these people that walk through those doors." So, yeah.

Mingo Palacios: [21:36](#)

Clearly so much coming to the surface about how you've impacted just a small fraction of the people that you get proximity to. What do you say, Charles, to the leaders frustrated that they can't rally around

them, a group of next generation leaders, but they want to?

Charles Stoicu: [22:01](#) Man, it's really hard. It's difficult. And the team that I sit with today in this airstream, not RV, just clarify that-

Mingo Palacios: [22:13](#) Glory to Jesus.

Charles Stoicu: [22:13](#) The team that I get to sit with today, that the interns that are at Eastside, the young adults that are owning and leading our church in whether it's worship or whether it's our technical skills or the overall parts of how Eastside is, has been able to flourish. The team that we have today wasn't the team that I inherited. It wasn't a team that I just showed up and occurred. It's a team that I prayed for and it's a team that I kind of tell the story sometimes when we talk about like, how did we get here? I drew a really big chart on a big white pad, like sticky pad on my wall of all the positions that we could have for things. And I just began to pray for people, for God to begin to fill those places with young adults and at that time we had like, I think it was like me and David and a guy named Nate Javier and a couple of other people that were willing to show up and it was my wife and I showed up on a Wednesday putting tablecloth covers on because nobody else would show up and people told us that people wouldn't come and there wouldn't be anybody there and nobody wants to get there early to do stuff and nobody wants to get here to before word gets out. And just all of these sort of walls. And I went,



"Man, those aren't the kind of young adults that I know. I feel like the young adults I know, the young leaders that I know want to do something that makes a difference. They want to do something that changes something and want to be a part of helping other people make it better. And so I went, "I'm going to begin finding people and inviting them to that. And if they don't show up to that, that's okay. But I want to keep inviting people to that." And, David over here, as an intern with us at Eastside, he's been around our young adult for about four years. Five years now? David help me out. Five and a half. David used to hate me. I didn't really enjoy David. David didn't-

Mingo Palacios: [23:56](#)

Confession hour right now.

Group: [23:57](#)

[Laughing]

Charles Stoicu: [23:58](#)

David modeled reconciliation. He came to me and was like, "Hey Charles, I'm sorry if I've been like a jerk or mean or whatever. I had coffee at this random place. We didn't set up coffee, we just sat down one day and I was like, "Dang bro. I have the most respect for you. I'm sorry if I was ever frustrating to you." And now he's on our intern team, pastoral care intern. He's praying for people. He's going to hospitals. He's here because Matt said, "Hey, I think you've got some pastoral bones in you. So would you be willing to be an intern? And David was like, "I don't know" and then Kyle was like, "David, you've got to be an intern." And so David's an intern and is leading people and

pastoring people because other people believed in him. It didn't happen by accident.

Mingo Palacios: [24:42](#) That's good.

Charles Stoicu: [24:42](#) It was prayed for and it's intentional along the way and that just takes time. It takes energy. It's not pretty, it's messy. It's not linear. It doesn't just always go up. It kind of goes in these loops and these backwards areas. But I think that's kind of the best pieces to keep just leaning into it and keep asking God to bring people to you and to help make you be the best leader for those people you can be. He's brought all the people to you to lead that He wants you to steward. So just steward the ones that he's brought you.

Mingo Palacios: [25:10](#) Yes. Dude, thank you so much for that. It encourages me to know that who's in my peripheral vision right now, who's in my space, God has marked out for me to love well and steward well and to focus there and not on those that I don't have yet. And to discipline myself in that zone is so hard but how much better is it, how much better could it have been when we were in the room hoping that we would be chosen and poured into if that leader wasn't looking over our shoulders, waiting for the next crop of people to come in, but to invest in the moment for who's there now?

Charles Stoicu: [25:54](#) Well, the people that are there now are the ones are going to build the thing after you're there.

Mingo Palacios: [25:57](#) Here we go.

- Charles Stoicu: [25:57](#) If you're just looking past the people in front of you and not investing in the ones that are near you or the ones that God has brought to you, we get new guests that come into our ministry, every new guest that comes to our ministry is an opportunity for God to make them an elder somewhere. Are we taking that seriously? Are we taking that approach to new guests of God might have that person marked to be an elder and a CEO and a business owner and an entrepreneur. And so God's brought those people to us, let's love them well and do them well and develop them well. And then if they turn into something rad, that's awesome. And the Kingdom wins and maybe we get to be on their podcast one day because somebody did that for you. A guy named him Rich basically goes, "Hey dude, just don't burn the camp down" and you almost did. But you're here because that guy invested in you.
- Mingo Palacios: [26:40](#) Yeah. A hundred percent.
- Charles Stoicu: [26:40](#) And I'm here because of a guy named John Nelson who thought I could be a life guard even though I couldn't swim. Matt's here because some guy was like, "Hey, those Khakis aren't looking very good on you, I need to get you in like some shorts.
- Matt: [26:50](#) I don't wear shorts often.
- Group: [26:53](#) [Laughing]
- Mingo Palacios: [26:56](#) Have all of a vision of what's not yet there.

Charles Stoicu: [27:00](#) Yeah. They're just calling people to what you think can be and what can be seen.

Mingo Palacios: [27:04](#) So excellent.

Charles Stoicu: [27:04](#) And if you fail in the process, man, God gets the glory and if you succeed He gets rad things away. And so everybody in this room right now is a, is a victory of what God has done in our ministry and they are now the, like the banner wavers for the people that are going to come into the ministry and every church has those people and they exist in every corner of every ministry. So it's just identifying them and going, "Hey, I think you can be a banner waver for the next person. Will you be willing to do it?"

Mingo Palacios: [27:28](#) So excellent man, stop burning down this podcast because it's so good. Charles, if people want to get connected to you and your ministry and some of the lessons that you guys have learned, how do they do that?

Charles Stoicu: [27:41](#) Oh Man. So, we're at Eastside. It's in Anaheim. We're just up the road from Mariners. And so, Eastside on the Eastside\_CC would be our Instagram. You can connect with any of our young adult stuff. #EthosFmly. That's e, t, h, o, s, f, m, l, y, We get rid of the vowel because we didn't like it. Actually, honestly this is just a side note that hashtag existed because somebody created it because they didn't know how to spell.

Mingo Palacios: [28:08](#) No, you stop it. It was an accidental hashtag?

Charles Stoicu: [28:11](#) Accidental hashtag that started like in 2014.

Mingo Palacios: [28:15](#) Ride it for all it's worth.

Charles Stoicu: [28:15](#) And so we've kept that. And then we have a bunch of rad young adults that you can check out our Instagram story and see what they're doing and see what's going on. One of ours, Kyle, you heard from earlier was actually dancing today at Catalyst, so he'll be up there doing some shimmy shakes and some other things.

Mingo Palacios: [28:29](#) Oh that's awesome.

Charles Stoicu: [28:30](#) Yeah, that'd be great. Or you can just hit us up, me, eastside.com and hit my email or any of social media stuff.

Mingo Palacios: [28:36](#) So great. Guys, thank you so much for your time. Thank you for your answers. Thank you for your conversation. And for the room, thank you for being honest and thanks for sharing and showing up because although you don't say anything, your presence says so much. So for our listeners, we love you. We'll talk to you guys soon.

Mingo Palacios: [28:54](#) We hope today's insights left you feeling inspired and propelled towards your greatest potential. Thanks again for joining us for another episode of the PD podcast. Until next time.

--- END ---

<https://thepodcast.com>

