

## Handbook Training Emphasizes Work of Salvation

By Adam C. Olson

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During a worldwide leadership training in February 2011, members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles instructed participants on using the new handbooks more effectively. The meeting was a follow-up to the November 2010 worldwide leadership training in which the handbooks were introduced.

The speakers emphasized how to use the handbooks in a more inspired way, the importance of understanding the doctrinal foundation of the new handbooks, how to apply the principles of adaptation to Church programs, how the handbooks' changes can be applied to carry out the work of salvation, and the role of women in councils.

Participating in the broadcast were President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency; Elders Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland, David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson, and Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elders Craig C. Christensen, Bruce D. Porter, and W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy; and the general presidents of the auxiliaries.

### More Inspired Use of the Handbooks

Calling the meeting a “second opportunity to discover how to use the handbook more effectively,” President Eyring encouraged leaders to increase their capacity to receive revelation.

“Only by the Spirit will you know how to apply what you read in the handbook,” he said. “. . . It may seem to you impractical to expect or even hope for the stream of revelation you need in your daily service. It will not come without faith and hard work, but it is possible.”

President Eyring promised that as leaders work and pray to “understand and follow the words of life” given to them, the Lord will help them give service and leadership beyond their own powers.

### Doctrinal Foundation of the Handbooks

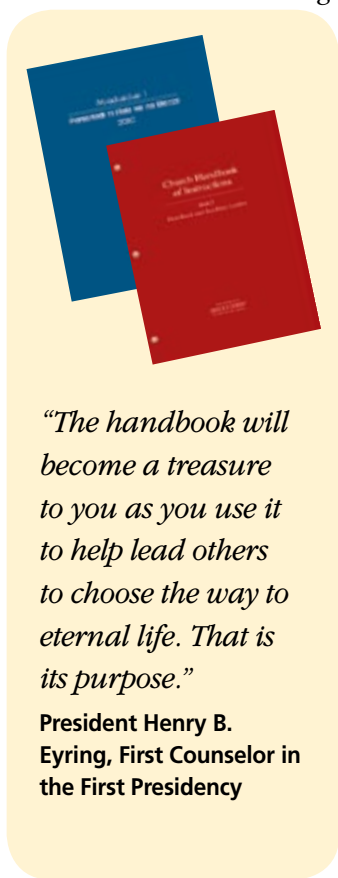
“[The handbook] is doctrinal,” said Elder Oaks, “and it is shorter than the prior handbook because on many subjects it refrains from stating rules or giving directions. Instead, it gives principles that inspired leaders can apply . . . according to their local circumstances.”

Elder Bednar and Elder Christofferson warned leaders against skipping the beginning chapters of *Handbook 2* to get to the policies in the chapters thereafter. The earlier chapters lay a doctrinal foundation for understanding and applying the principles and policies that follow.

### Principles of Adaptation

“On matters of doctrine, covenants, and policies established by the First Presidency and the Twelve, we do not deviate from the handbook,” said Elder Nelson. “Adaptability is allowed on some other activities to meet local circumstances.”

According to Elder Porter, chapter 17, “Uniformity and Adaptation,” was included to help local leaders follow the Spirit and determine when it is appropriate to adapt certain programs. The chapter explains what cannot be changed and gives five conditions



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under which adaptations may be made: family circumstances, limited transportation and communication, small quorums or classes, insufficient number of leaders, and security conditions.

“Appropriate adaptations do not weaken the Church. They strengthen it,” said Elder Porter in an address read by Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy. In making inspired adaptations, local leaders should not feel they are settling for less than the ideal. “Every unit of the Church has access to the doctrines, the ordinances, the priesthood power, and the gifts of the Spirit necessary for the salvation and exaltation of God’s children,” Elder Porter wrote.

### The Work of Salvation

Changes made throughout *Handbook 2* are meant to further the work of salvation. President Eyring said: “The handbook will become a treasure to you as you use it to help lead others to choose the way to eternal life. That is its purpose.”

Chapter 5 specifically brings together under the title “The Work of Salvation in the Ward and Stake” a number of topics previously treated separately, including member missionary work, convert retention, activation, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel.

“Paul said that in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times, all things will be gathered together in one in Christ,” said Elder Bednar (see Ephesians 1:10). “There’s one work.”

Elder Cook helped clarify how some of the policy changes in *Handbook 2* contribute to the work of salvation. He emphasized the importance of bishops and ward councils meeting welfare needs now that a welfare meeting no longer exists. He explained the increased role of Melchizedek Priesthood leaders in counseling with quorum



*In the work of salvation, priesthood leaders should consider the next ordinances an individual needs and how to assist in that preparation.*

members. He further clarified changes that allow fathers who are not fully temple worthy to participate in ordinances and blessings of family members in certain circumstances.

### Women in Council

Elder Scott expressed concern that in some places, leaders miss opportunities to include women when counseling together. “When [women] can be encouraged to take part freely in ward council meetings, their ideas are always helpful and inspirational,” he said.

Leaders can encourage participation by calling on sisters by name and by expressing gratitude for insights and recommendations offered, Elder Scott explained.

### Anticipated Results

Elder Nelson concluded the training by expressing three hopes: that simplification will allow the time and resources of members to be utilized with greater effectiveness, that the power of the priesthood will grow in each priesthood holder to bless every individual and every family in the Church, and that each member may feel a greater sense of devotion and discipleship. ■

### More Online

Find audio, video, and text of both worldwide leadership training broadcasts at [lds.org/menu/service/serving-in-the-church](http://lds.org/menu/service/serving-in-the-church).

*Handbook 2* can be found online at [lds.org/handbook/handbook-2-administering-the-church](http://lds.org/handbook/handbook-2-administering-the-church).

The new Leadership Training Library will be available on the Serving in the Church section of [lds.org](http://lds.org) by mid-2011.