

A blue-tinted photograph of a person's hands pouring coffee from a glass carafe into a white mug. The person is smiling and looking down at the cup. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a kitchen or cafe setting.

Building a Volunteer Team that Grows Itself



CHURCH MARKETING
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Set clear expectations for your team.

The first thing someone will ask when you speak to them about joining your team is 'What's involved?' so start by establishing what players need to be on your team and what their responsibilities will be.

Will you need 2 people or 5 people to help in your nursery? What time will your camera team need to show up before service to get ready? How often will someone be expected to serve?

Setting clear expectations before recruiting will give you clarity in whether that person will be a fit, both in skill set and schedule, and help them decide if they'll join your team. One of your expectations will be that they will learn to recruit new team members, because your team plays an important part in your church, and there are lots of new growth opportunities coming.





Find the right people to join your team.

Look for people who have the skills you need outside of the context of your team. If you're recruiting someone to help with your Instagram, look for people in your church who are consistently posting quality instagram posts, or watch for people who are great with other people's kids before and after service to join your kids team.

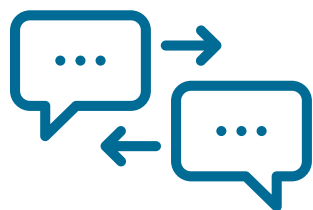
Offer them a trial period, with a set evaluation date. They are more likely to say yes if they know they can try it out and see if it's a fit with no strings attached.



Have team meetings on purpose.

Most of the team members who leave teams love what they do on the team, but not what's required of them outside of that responsibility. If you're having frequent 'mandatory' meetings that aren't purposeful, this could be enough to drive great team members away.

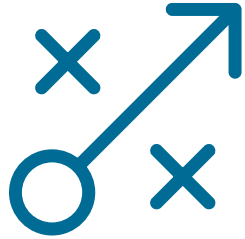
Find ways to accommodate multiple schedules (like online training, or videos people can watch on their own time) or make in-person meetings optional, but worth talking about, so people who opted out feel like they won't want to miss the next.



Establish team communications outside of a face-to-face meeting.

Have a 3-sentence communication that needs to be sent to your team? Try a text message, an email or create a facebook group for your team members.

This is a great way to encourage your team, coach them, offer and invite feedback while respecting their schedules and allowing them to hear from you at their convenience.



Train intentionally.

Too many times we have a new team member come in for training and give them too much or not enough information. They may leave a training session feeling unequipped or inadequate and discouraged from being part of the team.

Create a clear system for training with checklists of the things they need to learn. Does someone need to turn on equipment, or turn things on in a certain order, or check the temperature in the room, or replenish batteries? Have a checklist a new team member can complete for learning every step of their position, and walk through your pre-service and post-service checklists together. Let them know that each time they serve, they will use these checklists to be sure everything has been completed to get ready for service.

Having team checklists is essential for releasing others on your team to do the training, and to be sure every new team member is trained in the same way.



Talk about your church's core values often.

Why are we here and doing what we're doing? How does each step of what we do as a team play into the big picture of our church? How can we intentionally live out each step of our core values?

Take a moment at every team meeting, email, pre-service run through to talk about how you'll live out your core values as a team today.



Create a system of feedback.

Feedback is an important part of growing together as a team, whether you oversee the team, or you're a team player looking to move into team leadership. Create an expectation that your team will receive feedback, and an open door for them to give feedback. Make it a regular part of what you do to open that door, even if there isn't any feedback. Often the resistance to giving feedback isn't the actual feedback, but the awkwardness of trying to start that conversation.

Feedback is valuable and this cycle gives you the opportunity to encourage your team, and also coach or correct them, while helping them see that you are open for opportunities to grow.



Encourage your team to recruit.

Talk about the results you've seen as a team, positive feedback you've gotten from people that your team has served, and your team's growth potential.

Underline that this can't be done at your current size, and remind people of the simplicity of your training structure checklists.



Publicly celebrate new team recruits

Don't just celebrate the recruit, but celebrate the person that recruited and trained them. Make this part of your team conversation and an exciting part of being on your team.

Part of the first conversation that you have with this new recruit is letting them know that you'll be this excited when they also recruit someone. This sets a clear expectation that they will also recruit (see step 1).



Author

Adam McLaughlin

Born and raised in Canada, Adam now lives in Florida overseeing Marketing and Communications at Life Church in Fort Myers

Adam blogs at AdamMcLaughlin.net helping communicators inform their churches and impact their communities.

Would you like to have more volunteers? How about better trained volunteers?

You can test drive the Church Marketing University Volunteers Course for free. This is a complete step by step video course all about building volunteer teams that grow themselves. The course also includes done-for-you resources to help you implement this strategy for your church.

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