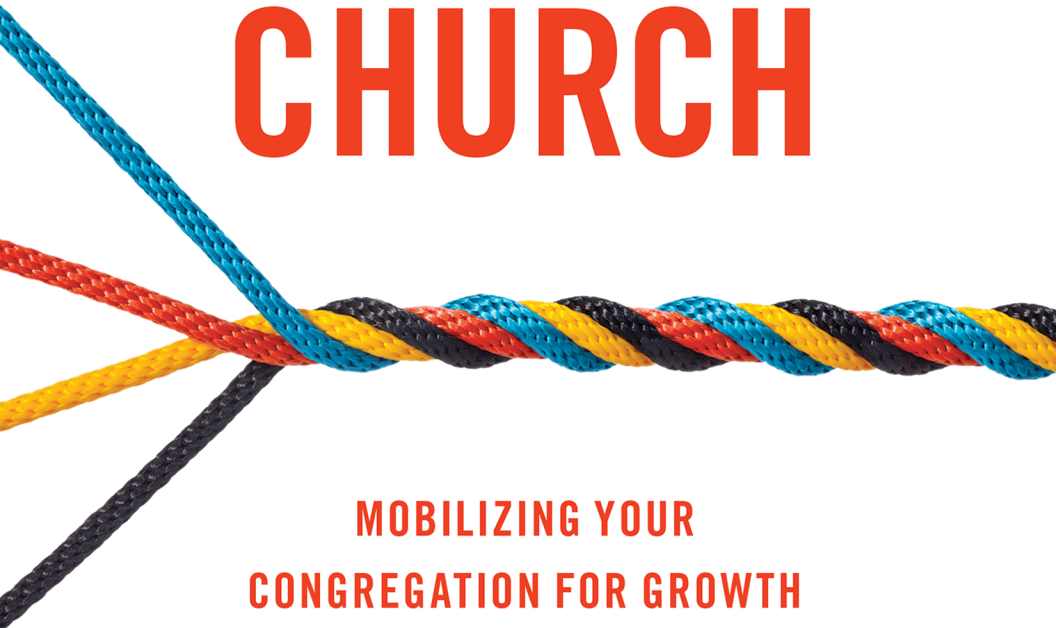


“Volunteer Church is a must-read for every leader in the church.”

—Dr. George O. Wood, General Superintendent, Assemblies of God

THE VOLUNTEER CHURCH



MOBILIZING YOUR
CONGREGATION FOR GROWTH
AND EFFECTIVENESS

LEITH ANDERSON & JILL FOX

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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The Volunteer Church

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APPENDIX 1



Volunteer Development Training

GROWING GREATNESS

A Training Plan for Staff and Those Who Lead Volunteers

It's not about giving your time;
it's about expanding your life.
Be a part of what God is doing.

Why

What is volunteer development?

Volunteer development is a church's effort to train, support, and encourage ministry leaders as they recruit and nurture lay leaders and volunteers. It also seeks to help staff and volunteer leaders work more effectively with their volunteers.

Why is it important?

Many church ministries are volunteer-driven, and, whenever possible, recruiting gifted volunteers rather than increasing staff is going to be more effective in the life of the church.

Why a volunteer development program?

- Through volunteering, people in and beyond the church come to faith in Jesus Christ.

- Volunteers have an enormous impact on a church's ability to provide opportunities to members, attendees, and visitors.
- Volunteering is one of the best ways for people to connect and make friends.
- Volunteering is a form of worship.
- Volunteering gives a congregation opportunities to have an impact, grow the kingdom of God, and be involved in something big even when the effort might appear to be small.
- Volunteering is transforming; it changes the volunteers' lives, changes the lives of those they serve, and helps everyone involved grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

What are the goals of volunteer development training?

- Engage more of the local church in the faith-building activity of volunteering.
- Reward volunteers and increase their satisfaction.
- Increase the longevity of volunteers' service.
- Assist leaders in attracting greater numbers of volunteers.
- Help resolve frustrations (of both leaders and volunteers).
- Build effective volunteer teams.
- Impact God's kingdom.

Prayer

Thank God for your volunteers. Pray for God's wisdom and direction as you move forward with volunteer development in your ministry.

How

Volunteer development has five key steps:

1. Recruit
2. Train
3. Build the team
4. Appreciate and Celebrate
5. Empower

STEP 1: RECRUIT

Occasionally recruitment is passive (a wonderful church member hears about a particular ministry and wants to get involved). Sometimes broadcasting an open volunteer position through a church newsletter or through other public means can yield a volunteer. But most often recruitment requires that an individual be asked to join the ministry. How can the likelihood of a potential volunteer jumping in be increased?

To effectively recruit, a role description for every volunteer position must be prepared so expectations are clear from the outset. Each description should include:

- Title—a straightforward “handle” such as *teacher’s assistant* that is clear to everyone
- Purpose—why is this role important?
- Description—a simple, one-sentence explanation of the role
- Responsibilities—a list of requirements and tasks
- Qualifications—experience, skills, interests

Where do you find prospective volunteers?

- Commission current volunteers to identify prospective volunteers.
- Network with people you know.
- Ask staff whether they know someone who might qualify.
- Church newsletter, webpage, social networking

How do you connect with a prospective volunteer?

- Identify your potential volunteer—strengths, interests, and spiritual gifts. Know what other ministries he or she might be involved in.
- Consider particular ways of making contact—in person, via a letter, email, phone call, or over coffee. Which method will be most effective with the person you are trying to reach?
- Introduce yourself and make a personal connection. Do you know this individual or someone else who does? What do you share in common?
- Share with the potential volunteers why you thought of them, who recommended them, and why.

- Invite the potential volunteer to participate in what God is doing in your ministry area. Mention the exciting things that have been accomplished and will be occurring in the weeks and months ahead.
- Be specific about the role you had in mind (use the role descriptions you created) and state the time commitment up front.
- Follow up in a timely fashion with a call, postcard, or email.
- Stay in touch. If you get a “no for now,” find ways to inform your prospective volunteer of what’s going on in that ministry or other ministries. Keep the invitation open.
- Have faith. Pray about your recruiting efforts and for potential volunteers.

Talk

- Is it easy or difficult to recruit volunteers to your ministry area?

- What are some ways you can better recruit volunteers in your ministry?

Ideas

- Teach your volunteers to always be looking for potential volunteers.
- Celebrate when someone asks a new individual to be a part of the team.
- Keep your ministry’s social media areas updated.
- Refer potential volunteers to the best place in your church building for finding out about ministry opportunities.
- Set an appropriate time frame with your team for following up with volunteers.

- Delegate a specific person to be responsible for contacting and following up with prospective volunteers.
- Think of creative ways you can use social networking.
- Remain positive even when recruiting is frustrating.
- Keep the door open for a different opportunity if a potential recruit is reluctant.

STEP 2: TRAIN

All new volunteers deserve to have effective training so they are set up to succeed in their new role.

- Use role descriptions for the training of each new volunteer.
- Ask new volunteers what they hope to get out of the volunteer role so you can help them develop and succeed.
- Discuss your volunteers' goals and desires for the ministry and for the volunteer team.
- Have an experienced volunteer available to mentor and answer questions for each new volunteer until he or she is comfortable with the role.
- Give each new volunteer a tour of your area, showing where things are and introducing him or her to the team.

Talk

- How do you presently train your volunteers?

- How can you enhance your training to be more consistent and effective?

Ideas

- As you go through the training, talk with your team leaders about what unique ideas they can add to their ministry. (“I will send one thank-you note per month to each of my volunteers.”)
- Additional training may be needed that is specific to your ministry area in order for your volunteers to succeed.
- Train volunteer leaders to recruit more volunteers.
- Check in periodically with your volunteers to see if additional training, encouragement, or support are needed.

STEP 3: BUILD THE TEAM

- Make your ministry area a place where new people feel loved and welcome. Help your volunteers to get to know the new person on the team and overwhelm new volunteers with friendship and appreciation. (If you’ve ever walked into a party where everybody else knows each other and you’re the odd one out, you know how uncomfortable it feels to be the outsider. Don’t let this happen in your ministry!)
- Share successes. Develop a system of communicating experiences—not just grand achievements but also individual stories. Success is about more than programs; it’s about people. How can stories ricochet through your ministry and encourage your volunteers to understand the impact their team is making?
- Pray for each other. Develop an informal email list that people can use to keep in contact and share prayer concerns not just about ministry-related issues but also about personal concerns and praises.
- As you train, look for what the individual is expecting to attain out of this role and ask yourself whether he or she is a potential leader. Can this person be a team leader or be more effective in another role? Paying attention to these details will help you form effective teams.
- Check in often with your volunteers for feedback.
- Start meetings on time. Have an agenda and follow it. Always take time for personal prayer requests and sharing. End on time.
- Remember, volunteering is about outreach. The more people you have on your team, the more lives will be impacted for the kingdom.

- Make sure your team members know you care about their ideas, thoughts, and opinions. Use any that you can, and acknowledge where the suggestion came from.
- Get to know your volunteers. Make sure you spend time with them so you know who they are, who their families are, and what makes them tick.

Talk

- How are your team dynamics?

- Is it easy for new people to join your team? Do they feel welcome?

- Do you provide opportunities for your team to give feedback?

Ideas

- Look for ways to grow as a group in community.
- Pray together as a team.
- Send a weekly email asking for prayer requests that can be distributed to the group.
- Have fun together.
- Host a party.
- Serve together in another area or a community outreach project.

- Begin with an occasional icebreaker at team meetings.
- When there is a new team member, send out a welcoming email with fun and interesting facts about him or her.

STEP 4: APPRECIATE AND CELEBRATE

- Celebrate what volunteers are accomplishing as they give their time and grow. Regular support can mean the difference between a volunteer sticking with the ministry or dropping out.
- Be your volunteers' biggest cheerleader, and remember that your words of encouragement matter. Say thank you and write personal notes. Acknowledge what they are doing well.
- The gift of your time is important. Don't be too busy to spend time with each of your volunteers. Check in regularly during your volunteers' time of service, even with very dependable and committed volunteers, so they don't feel abandoned or taken for granted.
- Pray for and with your volunteers.

Talk

- When was the last time you thanked your volunteers and wrote them a thank-you letter?

- How often do you check in with your volunteers to see whether they are enjoying their volunteer experience?

Ideas

- Thank volunteers.
- Always pass along compliments.
- Be wary of bringing up a negative issue unless it must be shared in order to correct a problem.
- Send a note or email.
- Give a call.
- Listen.
- Go for coffee.
- Have a party to celebrate all you have achieved together.

STEP 5: EMPOWER

- Give lay leaders the empowerment they need in order to do a good job. Train them thoroughly and give them permission to pursue goals with your help.
- Help paint a vision of what could be accomplished by this team. What are they a part of? Let them know you're in the work together.
- Be sensitive to burnout. Give lay leaders permission to contact you with issues or concerns. Propose ways that problems can be solved or responsibilities rotated. Find ways to refresh volunteers.
- Accept that a current role may not be forever. If an individual is looking for a new ministry role inside or outside of the church, be supportive. If appropriate, help him or her to find a new place to serve.
- Remember to delegate responsibilities to team members. It is an opportunity for them to grow as potential leaders.

Talk

- Do you allow your leaders to lead? How good are you at delegating?

- How do you respond when a volunteer resigns?

Ideas

- Help your volunteers discover their potential. Encourage them to take a spiritual gifts test or another assessment tool. Refer them to a class on spiritual gifts.
- Let your lay leaders lead, but be consistently supportive and available to them.
- Find a leadership conference you can take them to.
- Recommend a book to read together as a team to help your volunteers grow.

Q & A

- Do you have questions or issues that you'd like to discuss?

Prayer

Ask God to make you sensitive to the needs of volunteers so you can be a good steward of their gifts of time and talents. Ask God to provide new ways to use volunteers' gifts.

APPENDIX 2



Your Plan for Volunteer Development

Volunteer development is about more than getting additional volunteers. It's about changing your ministry, your church, the volunteers themselves, and expanding the kingdom through the efforts of ordinary people.

Your Vision

- What is God's vision for your ministry? How will you use volunteers to accomplish God's vision?

Your Plan

- What goals do you have for volunteer development in the coming year? How will you achieve these goals?

Your Team

STEP 1: RECRUIT

- Who will be responsible for communicating to *all* volunteers the importance of inviting others to join the volunteer team?

- Who will keep your area of the website updated? Who will be responsible for updating the volunteer opportunities webpage?

- Who will be responsible for writing up volunteer successes for the church to share and celebrate?

- Other thoughts on recruiting?

STEP 2: TRAIN

- Who will create the role descriptions? When will they be complete?

- Who will make sure all lay leaders are trained?

- Who will you delegate to be with new team members until they are comfortable with their new roles?

- Other thoughts on training?

STEP 3: BUILD THE TEAM

- Who will be responsible for communicating ministry success stories?
What are the vehicles in your church for getting the word out?

- Who will be responsible to welcome new team members and introduce them to the rest of the team?

- Who will be responsible for collecting and distributing prayer requests?

- Other thoughts on team building?

STEP 4: APPRECIATE AND CELEBRATE

- Who will plan and coordinate appreciation efforts? (e.g., thank-you notes, parties, etc.)

- Who will develop a system to check in with volunteers while they are serving?

- Other thoughts on appreciation?

STEP 5: EMPOWER

- Which of your volunteers could be leaders or be delegated more responsibilities? What are some ways to make it happen?

- Other thoughts on empowerment?

Q & A

- What questions or issues would you like to discuss?

Prayer

Ask God for his help in implementing a new plan to recruit and nurture volunteers. Thank him for his direction as you move forward.