2 Critically Important Hidden Groups

OF PEOPLE AT YOUR CHURCH

RICH BIRCH

Even in a church of a few hundred people, it's easy for folks to get lost. People can slip through the cracks and you will not be able to serve them well. Regardless of the church size, we need to constantly consider how people are plugging into our ministry.

There are two groups of people that can easily slip through the cracks, which are not acknowledged at most churches. However, by not paying attention to these groups you could be significantly impacting your ministry in a negative way. Let's consider these two groups that your church might be ignoring but shouldn't

Very First Time Guests //
Some of the hardest people for most churches to connect with are the people who are with you for the very first time. These people are timid and feel strange about being at your church and so they naturally don't want to stick out or to be identified. Typically these guests are going out of the way to ensure that your people and systems don't identify them.

First-time guests are important because they represent the future of your church. Understanding what they think and feel about their experience with your church is critical for pulling apart so as to fuel the future of your ministry. The insights you can mine out of first time guests are huge because they are unfiltered by your expectations of what the ministry should be.

3 Ways to Connect with First Time Guests
- **"New Here" Gifts //** Ensure that you are offering a compelling gift to your guests to encourage them to self-identify. Here are the examples from 33 churches of some first-time guest gifts. The big idea is to offer something really great that your guests would actually want and not just another coffee mug!
- **Speak to Them //** Build in a regular part of your communication from stage to your guests, letting them know you are glad to have them here. Please don't make them stand and identify themselves but verbally acknowledge them so they can be assured you were anticipating them being with you.
- **Train Your People //** If your people bring a friend for the first time, train them to introduce that person to a few people at the church. Again, make sure they aren't weird as they interact with people because moving them beyond just attending to actually just talking to people can be an important first step in making a deeper connection with your church.

Resources to Help Your Team Connect with First Time Guests:
- Download this PDF of "4 Stages of Engagement with First-Time Guests" and talk about it at your next team meeting.
- Listen to this interview with Greg Curtis from Eastside Church in Anaheim, California that talks about their approach to assimilation and how it helps new people get connected to their church.
- Take your team to play bingo (seriously). How does it feel to go to that for the first time? Reflect on that with your people about how it feels to come to your church for the first time.

The "Super Users" //
There is a group of people that hide in plain sight at your church. They are the "super users" who are totally plugged into your ministry in every way. These people attend services all the time, volunteer on a few teams, are plugged into the community, donate to the mission, and invite their friends.

It's easy to take this group for granted because they are right in front of you all the time. It can be hard to see them as a distinct group because the church operates because of these people.

This is a critically important group because they are fully plugged into the ministry and see the mission from many angles. In fact, these people often see the inner workings of the ministry more clearly than most leaders because they participate in more aspects of the church than any other single leader. Sometimes these people are easy to dismiss because it seems like their ideas are bit unrealistic because they are so committed to the church. In fact, their fervor for the ministry might actually be off-putting for most leaders because we're used to dealing with people who are more standoffish about our church.

3 Places to Find "Super Users"

- **Donor Data //** When pulling out donor data for your church, push past the top 10% of the donors that give disproportionately and you'll often find a layer of faithful givers who consistently give to the mission of this church. Correlate those names with people who are connected to your church in other ways and you're on your way to find some incredibly solid people in the life of your church.
- **First in. Last Out. //** When you run an event at your church, who are the people that get there before anyone else and are around until the end of the night. Lots of times, churches will have those people that just want to plug in and help and are willing to go an extra mile with their time to make it happen. Watching who steps up at special events

is a great way to see who is a "super user" in the life of your church.

- **All in Spouses //** Have you ever noticed that "super users" at your church seem to run in pairs? Watch for families who volunteer together or couples who show up all the time to jump in to help. Finding these families will reveal a cluster of impact your church is having and will want to reproduce.

5 Questions to Ask Your "Super Users" To Improve Your Ministry

- What change are you looking for in your life by being involved in our ministry? Why is that important to you?
- What's something we should change this month that would help our ministry to be more effective?
- Can you describe what parts of our ministry is helping you the most?
- What is frustrating about our ministry and needs to change?
- What's something we changed that we need to revisit and possibly reverse?

Visit unSeminary.com for more free resources!

UNseminary

BUILD YOUR CHURCH. NOT A BUILDING. Learn How Today