

stuff you wish they taught in seminary



5 Overlooked Volunteer Recruiting Tactics for Your Church

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Your church moves forward largely on the backs of the volunteers you recruit.

The local church is a volunteer engagement organization. At the center of any church staff members' role is the recruitment, reward, and retention of a great volunteer team.

Are you sharpening your skills when it comes to attracting new volunteers? Over the years, I've discovered several highly effective practices that have time and again served as powerful strategies for mobilizing volunteers.

Today we're focusing on specific tactics and practical next steps that you can apply to any volunteer recruitment effort. Here are 5 overlooked volunteer recruiting tactics that you can start using at your church right away:

Thank-you postcards

The next time you meet with a potential volunteer and ask them to join a team, pop a postcard into the mail immediately after the meeting.

The quick postcard follow-up is a terrific way to thank the potential volunteer for their time and reminds them of the conversation that you just had.

Pre-address and stamp the postcards before you even meet with people so that all you need to do is write follow-up steps or conversation reminders on the postcards and then pop them

in the mail right away. (Send the postcards through the main post office in your town so that they arrive within a day or so of your meeting).

This tactic works great if you asked a potential volunteer to consider a role and then gave them a week or so to think about it. The postcard will remind them a few days after your meeting to think about the area that you've asked them to engage in.

Work the list

Most church leaders could do a better job at simply reviewing a list of potential volunteers, interacting with them one by one, and asking if they'd join a team.

Maybe you have a list of people who are currently in a small group at your church but aren't volunteering. Start at the top of that list and work through it weekly to reach out to the next person and help them move closer to volunteering.

From a multisite point of view, this is a wise practice to follow particularly during campus expansion to ensure that no one is falling through the cracks. **People are usually just waiting for someone to ask them to volunteer. If you methodically work through a list of potential volunteers, you'll likely find new people through this simple form of outreach.**

Promote the pipeline

The best people to recruit volunteers for your church are the people who already volunteer in your church. Encourage your current volunteers to consider who they could ask to step in and volunteer.



You could also approach some of the best people on your teams and let them know that in two or three months you'd like them to move into a leadership role but the first step of moving them into that role is to find a few other volunteers to replace them. Your conversations over the intermediate months would focus on who they think would be a good fit for those roles and how to approach potential replacements.

Make a ruckus and have fun

One of the most powerful volunteer recruiting tactics is for your existing volunteer teams to have fun. In fact, this might even be the best way! When your volunteer teams enjoy what they're doing, they'll attract others. Don't be afraid of making a little noise or creating a bit of ruckus with your teams.

Here's an idea that you can customize and implement affordably: make team t-shirts for your volunteers to wear while serving together or during social events. Then take photos of your team in their shirts and share the pictures on your social media channels. This may create just enough emphasis on fun and community that will encourage other people to join that team or other teams in your church.

Next-generation

Churches that have a growing volunteer culture have figured out that we need to open up

volunteer opportunities to the next generation. Part of what we do as leaders is to find other, younger leaders to eventually replace us.

I think the healthiest student ministries in the country include volunteer service as a core part of their discipleship pathway. They articulate to students that developing their volunteer experience is a part of what it means to be involved in student ministry.

Ask yourself this: what are areas in your church where you can engage a younger leadership core? Don't shy away from finding ways to include younger volunteers across all the ministries of your church. This is a great developmental experience for your church as well. It will inject all kinds of new life into your existing teams when younger leaders engage in a variety of your ministries.

Volunteer recruiting is a critical part of your role as a church leader.

What ideas or tactics do you use when recruiting volunteers that you find particularly helpful in your context? We'd love to hear more in the comments [here](#).

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