

# **Being a Leader that People Will Want to Follow**

## ***Structuring Your Team for Growth***

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Building a good team starts from the beginning. Deciding how you are going to structure your team for growth is the first step to building a good team. I don't believe that a leader should recruit until he or she has a plan for how the team will be used. If you have already built a team, it may be a good idea to reevaluate how your team is structured and how effective the team is.

As a leader, it's important to have a clear plan on how to effectively use your team, how to train and equip your team, and how to place people according to their gifts so that they flourish. The plan must be intentional. If you focus on these areas, they will help you build a dynamic team, with a structure that God will bless, and you will see growth.

### **Using your team**

- Decide on how many volunteers you will need to accomplish what your team needs to do.
- Every volunteer should feel that his or her contribution to the team is valuable. They won't stay with the team if they don't feel needed or that they're wasting their time.
- Be clear with your expectations for each team member by putting together a Ministry Description that outlines the following information:
  - What their time commitment will be.
  - What you are expecting out of them (be detailed in your plan).
  - What they can expect out of you as a leader.
- Plan for growth. Be prepared for the volunteers God gives you.
- Even if your team starts out small, plan for when you will become big.
- Make sure that you are using well the volunteers that you already have. It's easier to keep the volunteers that you already have than to constantly have to recruit. If you're not using your volunteers well, why would God bring you any more?
- Define the overall purpose of your team. Also define the purpose of each volunteer that you are asking to be a part of your team.
- Here's a good checklist to follow when you are determining the needs of your team.
  - With God's help, figure out your need. Be realistic.
  - Decide how you will get your message out to prospective volunteers.
  - How will you train your team and new volunteers?
  - Have your background checks and fingerprinting systems in place.
  - Design a way to learn your volunteers' giftings and strengths.
  - Decide on how you can make sure that your volunteers are being effective.
  - Design ways to make sure that your volunteers are on track spiritually.

### **Training and equipping your team**

- The Bible is clear. Not only are you a recruiter, you are also an equipper. This translates into training.

- For a children’s ministry team to succeed, there must be a focus on training. Here are some ideas for training your team:
  - Train your people in the basics of reaching kids **BEFORE THEY START** working in your ministry. The basics might include:
    - Discipline techniques
    - Characteristics of a good volunteer.
    - How to use the curriculum you are asking them to use.
    - What this generation of kids looks like, and the techniques that you can use to reach kids.
    - Policies relating to volunteers at your church.
    - Expectations that your church has for volunteers.
    - Train them in the individual areas of ministry that they will be working in.
      - On-the-job training
        - Connect your new recruits with veterans to help them get on-the-job training. This is invaluable.
        - Don’t just throw your team members into the mix without giving them this kind of training.
        - Follow up on the training to ensure quality.
        - Give new volunteers plenty of time to grasp their ministry positions before you have them “fly solo.”
        - Provide volunteers with all the spiritual tools they need to be successful in their new ministries.
      - Ongoing training
        - Send your volunteers to conferences.
        - Bring in people from the outside to do training for your volunteers.
        - Whenever you do a volunteer meeting, take time to train.
        - Always be on the lookout for new resources and books to help your volunteers continue to grow and learn.
        - Do quarterly appreciation dinners. These events have a double purpose: to train and equip, and to show appreciation to your volunteers.
        - Do a monthly e-news with training information ([www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com) is a great tool that helps you manage e-news).
        - Constantly evaluate where your team is and what they need.

### **Placing people according to their gifts and talents.**

- To be successful as a team, people must be placed according to their giftings and talents.
- If your team members are not placed according to their giftings and talents, they will get frustrated and give up.
- How to place people according to their gifts:
  - Get to know who they are before they start to volunteer with you.
  - Ask about their gifts and talents.
  - Give them a spiritual gifts test.
  - Don’t be afraid to move people around if they are not fitting.
- People need to feel like they are making a difference and an impact. Placing them according to their gifts and talents will accomplish this.

- It's important to define what a win looks like for the team. This helps the team feel appreciated, and it helps them succeed in their strengths.
- Be willing to delegate and believe in people. They may not do things the way you do, but let them build the gifts and talents that God has given them. Give them chances to grow.

#### In Closing

In writing these articles, our goal is to encourage you to be intentional in the way that you build your volunteer teams. The way that you structure and build your teams is one of the most critical areas and keys to your success as a leader. If you have already built a volunteer team, chances are you may already know how to build a team. I would encourage you to sit down and do an evaluation of your current team. Are there areas that you can improve? If you are in a small church and your team consists of you and another volunteer, it's still vital to build a good foundation and prepare for growth when God brings you more volunteers. I would love to hear your ideas on structuring teams. Please email your ideas and what's been successful for you to [jnoble@ag.org](mailto:jnoble@ag.org).