

Serve Local Follow-Up Tips

After the conclusion of your event, the work begins for the Follow-Up Team. Follow up is an intentional process that gives life to information cards. It is recognizing what people need, when they need it, and provides you the tools and insight to connect with them intimately. It will also help identify opportunities for future ministry.

Include follow-up in the early stages of planning. Once you determine the ministries you will perform, think about how you can get contact information from those who attend an event or that you contact individually. Follow-up becomes difficult when adequate information is not gathered. Be sure to have registration cards at all events. Only ask for the information you need. People are easily annoyed with excessive requests for information. The more blank fields you ask guests to fill in, the more half-empty, or completely empty, forms you will receive in return. So be strategic about what you ask for. Keep it simple. A name, address, phone number, and email address may be plenty for what you need. Providing a form that is well-designed and easy for the person to fill out can make the process easier as well. Make sure there are plenty of pens and clipboards available. Consider an online registration that can be completed quickly on a phone, which gives you immediate access to the information. Just make sure that you are collecting something that allows you to follow-up with every guest adequately.

Also, build a team of individuals who can assist in the follow-up process to ensure that it does not “fall through the cracks.” Build your team with members who are comfortable talking to others about matters of faith and who easily relate to others of all walks of life. Consider using your spiritually mature teenagers, especially to help follow-up with their peers. Teenagers will also be able to assist in using social media to connect with individuals.

Make immediate contact with those who made professions of faith. Have the follow-up team call these individuals the afternoon/evening of your event. It is probable that these new believers are still processing their decision, so be prepared to answer some questions, but the most important part of the call is to celebrate their decision and encourage them as they begin their walk with Christ. Invite them to church with you the next day, and arrange a place to meet them to help ease any apprehensions they have about attending. Set up a time to meet with each individual to share next steps of their new relationship.

Begin to work on contacting everyone who did not state that they actively attend a church. This could be a large amount of people, so this step may take several days; however, it is important that everyone in this category is contacted within a week. This is commonly the largest group of people who attend an event. Depending upon the number of professions of faith, a follow up team can usually contact this group the afternoon/evening of an event, inviting them to the next service. Many of them may not have a relationship with the Lord, while others have just dropped out of church. Choose your words carefully, in order not to shame them. Create a relationship that is open to future contact from the church. Share with them the ministries of the church and invite them to the next service.

Contact everyone who attended. It is probable that a large percentage of those who said that they actively attend a church do not actually actively attend. They may have a church where they are members, or a place they attend sporadically and on holidays, but they are not active. Some of them, as well as the family members in their home, may not have a personal relationship with the Lord. Consider

some written communication to thank them for coming to your event and simply state that your church is available to them should they ever have a need.

Specific ways to follow-up

By personal contact. This was the chief method of our Lord and of the Apostle Paul. Nothing will ever substitute for the personal contact needed in building disciples. Personal contact includes face-to-face visits, phone calls, and spending time together in the routine of life.

By personal prayer. Both Jesus and Paul spent much time in personal prayer for new believers. If we are interceding, we will follow-up.

By personal representatives. When Paul was unable to visit the churches, he sent other men in his place. He spent much time with them to train them, then sent them (Philippians. 2:19-24). As the pastor, you cannot do all the follow-up alone. Train people to assist you, equipping them to be the personal contact for others.

By personal correspondence. Much of the New Testament consists of personal letters to Christians to encourage, teach, and guide them in their new faith. Consider sending letters, emails, and texts but send a hand-written note along the way. A personal, handwritten note shows you took time for them personally. Explore ways to connect on social media. Add them to your mailing list. Keep a data base of families that have attended special events and include them in any promotion you do for future events.

The most effective follow-up will use all the above methods, enabling the church to have multiple touches with each individual and family. The more touches you have, the higher the probability you will assimilate those who attended your event into your church.