



LEADER GUIDE: EPISODE #10 HOW TO DOUBLE YOUR VOLUNTEERS THIS YEAR

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH CHANGER:

It's time to rip the lid off your leadership and push past organizational pain points holding you and your church back. **Church Changer** is designed to equip church leaders with practical tools, proven strategies, and best practices to help you reach more people for Christ and shatter growth barriers in your ministry. Listen today, and put key takeaways into practice tomorrow! We're here to collaborate with you and cheerlead for you. Join Co-hosts Pastor Tim Lucas and Lauren Bercarich, along with special guests, as they outline a clear path forward so you can increase your impact, and let's have some fun in the process! New episodes drop the first Tuesday of each month.

EPISODE NOTES:

Overview

Having a full roster of volunteers was always a challenge, even pre-pandemic. But, now it feels like as church leaders we have to put in double the effort for only half the returns. It's not your imagination - the serving culture has changed. And that means it's time to rethink how we recruit, retain, and reward volunteers. Now, more than ever, the church must invest in its people and envision them to use their gifts to serve others. Done right and you can grow your volunteer base. Increase your numbers and develop a healthy culture at the same time! Let's learn from Liquid Church's Pastor of Campuses Kayra Montanez.

Something Free

As promised in the podcast, our Something FREE this month is a full transcript of Pastor Tim's "Bring Your Brick" activation message! This is a message that's been field-tested and we have proof of concept. BTW - not just at Liquid, but at other churches, and we've seen this activate an avalanche of new volunteers. Go ahead and [click here to download the transcript](#). And watch Pastor Tim deliver the message [by clicking here](#). We hope this is a gift to you and your ministry!



Growth Strategy #1: Launch A Dream Team Expo

The Dream Team Expo is similar to the NFL Draft. We are trying to RECRUIT as many new volunteers as possible. We want them to stop sitting in the stands, and to get onto the field and serve. So, twice a year we dedicate a Sunday Service to vision casting around teams. We challenge people to activate their spiritual gifts (ie: hospitality, working with kids, playing an instrument, etc) to advance the Kingdom!

At the center of the experience is what we call an "Activation Message" (your free transcript is provided above!). An activation message is different from a typical Sunday sermon in that it has one singular purpose - to ACTIVATE as many people as possible to start serving somewhere. Even if it's once a month. This is about engagement. So we cast a vision for serving and the impact it has And we do it in a creative and kinetic way. We also include real life stories and examples to highlight our amazing volunteers. Ultimately, we want to help people connect the dots to how they can be part of the larger story that God is writing in our church.

After the activation message ends, we release everyone into the Lobby for the Dream Team Expo. That's when the fun really starts. Each team has decorated spaces with tables, candy, team flags, and much more. There are designated team members staffing each area, so they can connect with everyone as they "shop" for a team at the Expo. On Bring Your Brick Sunday, the result was incredible - we had 564 new volunteers sign-up to serve.

Sign-ups Are Not Show-ups

Sign-Ups are not the same as **Show-Ups**. Every leader knows showing up to serve is harder than signing up to serve. Typically, only 30-40% of volunteers who sign up on Sunday translate into trained up volunteers for the long haul. That's why you need a huge pool of sign-ups on a Sunday as a starting point.

The point is: If you need 30 new volunteers to show up and get trained up, then you need 100 people to sign-up, because not everyone will follow through. This behavior is perfectly normal! Don't be discouraged... just know you need to prepare accordingly.

Follow-up Is Key

Think of the people who sign up at an Expo like fresh fruit- you need to follow up within 24 hours or your fruit will spoil. All our Campus Leaders work late on an Expo Day, because most aim to follow-up that same day with a text message to get them to take their next step and commit to serving the following week. Followup begins with a text. The next day, they receive an email. And for those who don't respond...we keep their data and we invite them into other serving opportunities at the church, such as serving at an Outreach.

Growth Strategy #2: Identify Leaders

Volunteer leaders are vital to our teams running smoothly. So, what is the pathway to leadership and how do you identify the right people for these roles? Here's a practical and a spiritual response:



PRACTICAL: Your best path is to identify people from the base of volunteers that are already serving! As you get to know people relationally, their gifts, skillset and desires will come to be known to you and so out of that, you invite people into next steps...which for us usually starts with a Team Coach role.

SPIRITUAL: Don't underestimate how much prayer accomplishes in bringing the right people. What I always tell my team is that God is actively at work in people's lives' in ways we have no idea and our role is just to provide the opportunity for them to say yes to what God already started in their lives. So I always tell my team to never take it personally when someone says no. They're not saying no to you, they're saying no to God!

Growth Strategy #3: Invest In Your Volunteers Monthly, Quarterly, Annually

The biggest shift we made this year in our volunteer strategy church-wide is to shift from *appreciation* to *investment*. While it's good to thank people and reward them, more and more we find that relationships are the new excellence. We wanted to invest in our people relationally, and we wanted to invest in their leadership.

So this year....we took a gamble and held MONTHLY Dream Team Gatherings where we could do just that....invest in people's relationships with each other. We had food, icebreakers and games for people to connect with each other, and then we invested in them by providing training and specific resources depending on where they served. We had over 3,000 people participate across our campuses in this initiative this year, which in turn has increased our serving numbers. We started the year at just under 23% and we've moved to almost 40% at the end of this year, which is significant for us! So next year, we want to lean into these gatherings but we're shifting to a quarterly model.

And then each September, we host a yearly training event called PreGame, where we pull out all of the stops for our teams! We feed them, have incredible worship, a main session and then mini sessions held by campus pastors and other leaders all related to the theme of that year. It's the event of the season where we regather and restart the flywheel of serving in anticipation of our Fall runway.

Growth Strategy #4: Reward Your Volunteers On The Regular!

We want to create a culture where we reward our Dream Teamers. Think about it - this is a highly gifted, unpaid Army of Servant Leaders that makes your Sunday Services possible. What would you do without volunteers to rock babies and minister to Middle Schoolers, to lead worship and help get cars parked and make guests feel welcome? So... you need to create systems and a culture for rewarding your Dream Teamers on a regular basis.



Church-wide we provide breakfast and coffee to all of our volunteers, which is a big budget line, but very much appreciated! Then, campus wide, we send thank you cards to vols or we do things like surprise and delight...we give a shoutout to someone on their social media page, or we have a pastor brag to their spouse and thank the spouse for letting them serve and be a rockstar. We also give out gift cards and host parties during the summer to thank people for what they do. But, mostly, we try to tell stories of how our volunteers are affecting the mission and vision at Liquid through their actions and their engagement.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Continue the conversation! Here are questions to ask yourself and your team to help your church thrive. We hope Church Changer will inspire you to put into practice what we discuss each month!

- 1. Do you think the Dream Team Expo concept could work at your church? Are you willing to experiment with this in 2023?**

- 2. Are you actively identifying new leaders for your volunteer teams? Or are you leaving this to chance?**



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3. Do you have a culture of investing in your volunteers? What's your strategy for investment in 2023?

4. How can you regularly reward your volunteers to express appreciation? Which tactics work well and which require a revamp?

5. In terms of building healthy volunteer teams - where do you face the biggest challenges: recruitment, retainment, or rewarding them?

We are rooting for you! May this be the year you shatter growth barriers in your ministry!

