



Recruitment at Its Best

by David Boyd

One of the quickest measurements of the quality of a children's pastor is assessing his or her ability to build a volunteer team. Recruiting, training, and caring for volunteer leadership is a tough, ongoing, never-ending job. But it pays great dividends. Unfortunately too many children's pastors and leaders undervalue this job.

Once I had a children's pastor say, "I'd really love this job if I didn't have to work with all the adults." I understand the stress and frustration this individual was probably feeling at the time. Keep in mind, though, that your adult leaders—who are busy touching lives and reaching souls—may have lacked the confidence or ability to minister to children before you recruited them.

For years to come, fruit will be won for God because of your ability to grow your team.

Ephesians 4:11,12 states, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."

Note: Our responsibility as pastors is to "prepare God's people for works of service." It is one of our highest callings. Recruiting and training workers is fundamental to a thriving and growing ministry.

So how do you recruit? What mistakes are made? How do you



build a team that will last? Entire books can be written on this subject. Here are some simple keys.

Never Stop Recruiting

Getting to know the people of your church is key to successful recruiting. Spend time meeting and greeting people. If you are not one naturally, become a people person. Meet every parent.

Greet Every Visitor

Find ways of meeting every

person in the church. Use every moment of every church function to get to know people.

Have Passion

Find ways to share your passion. Be excited about everything you do. Be excited about the nursery! Be excited about kids receiving Christ! Excitement breeds interest!

Recruit Helper Positions

Recruit people who assist others. Create positions that fit the giftings of people. Call positions by what you want them to do—a registrar, a classroom helper, a baby rocker, a craft person, a snack person, a greeter. A greeter position in a classroom may be the individual who is recruited to greet the kids and register the visitors. Then that individual helps the teacher with whatever he needs. If you call the position an "assistant teacher," you will scare people off. A "greeter position" they understand. Once people work in a "greeter" roll, they eventually learn how to help teach. You then have a "teacher in the making."

Value Your People

Many children's pastors make the mistake of pushing away people who don't seem to fit, especially when they first arrive at a new church. Every person has a potential for your ministry. Even a person who is not good with kids could potentially fix your equipment, or make PowerPoint presentations during the week, or build your sets. Every person has value. It is your job to see where they fit and to sometimes create a new position to fit them.

Care for Your People

The secret to a long-lasting team is when they know you care. This includes giving them time off. Be gracious when someone is leaving. If you do, they may return someday. Even

if they do not, they will speak positively to others about you and ministry to children. Send your workers expressions of appreciation of all kinds and not just at Christmas. Every time there is a service, do your best to say hello to every worker you possibly can. Visit the places you do not naturally go to, like the nursery or preschool areas. Make sure those people know you care. Jump in and help when people are shorthanded. By being willing to do the worst job, your volunteers, in turn, will feel better about having to do it themselves.

Recruit Ahead

Work hard to get helpers for every teacher you have. Providing a helper for a teacher

will often keep a teacher from resigning. Work hard at recruiting. When you do, you take the stress off the need for future recruiting.

Recruiting and building your team is the toughest part about children's leadership. It is a never-ending job, and rarely do people compliment you on it. However, when you recruit and train well, you are saving yourself stress later. Plus you also relieve stress from your workers, which keeps your worker base strong, which makes it easier to attract people to your team, which makes recruiting easier.

Pray hard for God's wisdom, then work hard so God can bless you. You can do it! God bless!

Questions for Further Study—

1. How much of your time monthly do you allot for recruiting and training your teachers and assistants?

2. List different ways that you can show your appreciation to your volunteers.