

MAKE IT **COUNT**

A 10-week study for leadership teams by *Influence* magazine



Building Your Dream Team

By **STEPHEN BLANDINO**

DISCUSSION GUIDE

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A 10-Week Study
For Leadership
Teams

What Is Make It Count?

Make It Count is a leadership development resource for use individually or with staff, volunteers, or board members.

Each installment is also available online as a downloadable PDF, along with interactive pages for group member use. The underlined words and phrases in the following text correspond to fill-in-the-blank sections on team member pages. Access these free resources at influencemagazine.com/Downloads.

These lessons are written by **STEPHEN BLANDINO**, lead pastor of 7 City Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and the author of several books.



Building Your Dream Team

By **STEPHEN BLANDINO**



Every leader is responsible for building teams. In local churches, these volunteer groups are often called “dream teams” because they help churches fulfill the vision of reaching and discipling people.

No matter what you call them, finding, equipping and empowering volunteers is a continual challenge for leaders. This installment of Make It Count examines 10 keys to finding, equipping and empowering healthy volunteer teams. The lessons include the following:



1. **Building.** Team building begins with clarity concerning roles, qualifications and responsibilities. Without these details, you won't know what you need or whom to recruit.
2. **Recruiting.** Most church leaders share a common need for more volunteers. The question is, how do you find them? Recruitment requires

a commitment to prayer, casting vision, creating a system, and communicating next steps quickly.

3. **Aligning.** Sometimes a volunteer wants to serve but isn't sure which role is a good fit. Aligning volunteers with the right roles begins with assessing their personalities, gifts and passions.
4. **Onboarding.** A well-designed onboarding process is crucial for volunteer development. This includes communicating vision and team values, imparting knowledge specific to each role, providing training, and offering opportunities for shadowing.
5. **Equipping.** For volunteers to succeed, we need to equip them with the appropriate resources. These resources generally involve tools for doing the job and a budget for fulfilling the mission.
6. **Training.** Even seasoned volunteers need ongoing training. Team huddles, gatherings, and training opportunities are ways to invest in their long-term success.
7. **Coaching.** Training is team-based, but coaching is usually one-on-one. Follow the biblical pattern of modeling, motivating, mentoring and multiplying.
8. **Promoting.** As volunteers become proficient in their ministry roles, they may show capacity for greater responsibility. Good leaders promote faithful team members with greater levels of responsibility and opportunity.
9. **Appreciating.** Volunteers don't *have* to contribute what they do. Leaders should honor and appreciate those who are volunteering their time and talent in ministry. Appreciation happens best when it's personal, public and practical.
10. **Engaging.** It's one thing to recruit volunteers but another to keep them fully engaged. Therefore, leaders must identify and implement strategies for improving the overall health and engagement of the team.

While reading and discussing each lesson, you'll discover the keys to building a healthy volunteer team united around a vision for the future.

1 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Building

Assess

When building a volunteer team, where do you typically begin the process?

Insights and Ideas

One of my favorite examples of team building comes from the life of Moses. When preparing to build the tabernacle, Moses acknowledged God had chosen Bezalel and Oholiab for the project. These men were filled with God's Spirit, understanding, knowledge, and all kinds of skill. They had the ability to cut stones, work in wood and artistic crafts, and serve as engravers, designers, embroiderers, and weavers (Exodus 35:30–35).

From this passage, we can draw a simple but powerful truth about building teams: Before you build a team, know what you need in a team.

Recognizing what he needed on the construction team, Moses said, "So Bezalel, Oholiab and every skilled person to whom the LORD has given skill and ability to know how to carry out all the work of constructing the sanctuary are to do the work just as the LORD has commanded" (Exodus 36:1).

Author Jim Collins once said, "The most important decisions that businesspeople make are not *what* decisions, but *who* decisions." I believe that applies to building teams in churches as well. Therefore, it is important to identify three things:

1. **Roles.** What roles do you need filled to build the best team? For example, if you're building a worship team, the roles will likely include a worship leader, musicians, singers, and technical personnel. Be as specific as possible.
2. **Qualifications.** Each role will require certain qualifications from the person who fills it. For example, Paul listed qualifications for overseers and deacons (1 Timothy 3).

To clarify qualifications, consider two things: *spiritual* qualifications and *skill* qualifications. Both are important for finding the best people. However, be careful not to create unrealistic standards that make it nearly impossible for people to begin serving.

3. **Responsibilities.** Every role comes with specific tasks. Be clear about exactly what the person in each role will do. Define the tasks and responsibilities.

One of the best ways to clarify these details is by creating written role descriptions. Then you'll know what to look for when it's time to recruit team members.

Reflect and Discuss

1. How clear are you about what and whom you need on your teams?
2. Which of the three categories above most needs attention?
3. How might creating a one-page description for each volunteer role help your ministry?

Apply

For each role on your volunteer team, create a one-page description that includes qualifications and responsibilities. Share these with current team members and use them to identify future volunteers.

1 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Building

Assess

When building a volunteer team, where do you typically begin the process?

From Exodus 35:30–35, we can draw a simple but powerful truth about building teams:

Before you _____ a team, first know what you _____ in a team.

“So Bezalel, Oholiab and every skilled person to whom the LORD has given skill and ability to know how to carry out all the work of constructing the sanctuary are to do the work just as the LORD has commanded” (Exodus 36:1).

“The most important decisions that businesspeople make are not *what* decisions, but *who* decisions.” — Jim Collins

Clarifying your team essentials:

1. _____.

What roles do you need filled to build the best team?

2. _____.

To clarify qualifications, consider two things: *spiritual* qualifications and *skill* qualifications. Both are important for finding the best people. However, be careful not to create unrealistic standards that make it nearly impossible for people to begin serving.

3. _____.

Every role comes with specific tasks. Be clear about exactly what the person in each role will do. Define the tasks and responsibilities.

One of the best ways to clarify these details is by creating written _____

_____.

Apply

For each role on your volunteer team, create a one-page description that includes qualifications and responsibilities. Share these with current team members and use them to identify future volunteers.

2 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Recruiting

Team Review

What progress have you made toward creating role descriptions?

Assess

What are the best strategies you've employed for recruiting volunteers?

Insights and Ideas

When Nehemiah arrived on the scene of a city in ruins, he had no team to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah said, "I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on" (Nehemiah 2:12).

Many leaders today are in the same scenario. They're building from the ground up, and they're having to think strategically about how to recruit a team.

Start with the following four steps:

1. **Commit to pray.** We're often quick to complain about our lack of volunteers. However, Jesus said, "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:38).
2. **Cast a compelling vision.** Nehemiah 2:17–18 says, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace." I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me."

Notice, Nehemiah appealed to the people's desire to "no longer be in disgrace." He then shared the story of how God had moved the king to provide for the rebuilding of the walls.

Needs alone are seldom inspiring. Saying, "We have a bunch of babies in the nursery who need somebody to look after them" won't likely convince anyone to volunteer.

Instead, take a lesson from Nehemiah by casting a vision. Appeal to someone's desire to make a difference in a child's life. Then tell stories about young families who are able to attend church for the first time because childcare is available. Vision inspires people to action.

3. **Create a recruitment system.** Recruiting requires a framework. Your system should answer the three A's:
 - **Awareness:** How do people learn about serving opportunities?
 - **Action:** How do they sign up to serve?
 - **Accountability:** What responsibility do leaders have for recruiting and onboarding new volunteers?
4. **Communicate quickly.** When people sign up to serve, a leader should promptly communicate to assess their interest, availability, qualifications and next steps.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Do you tend to communicate needs or cast vision when you're recruiting people to serve?
2. What does your recruitment system look like, and does it clearly address awareness, action and accountability?
3. When someone signs up to serve, how long does it take to communicate with that person, and what could you do to improve?

Apply

Put together a recruitment plan that includes a commitment to prayer, casting vision, creating a recruitment system, and communicating quickly. Set a deadline for the implementation of this process, and then begin monitoring the impact.

2 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Recruiting

Assess

What are the best strategies you've employed for recruiting volunteers?

"I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on" (Nehemiah 2:12).

Four steps for recruiting volunteers:

1. _____ *to pray.*

"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:38).

2. _____ *a compelling vision.*

"You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.' I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me" (Nehemiah 2:17-18).

3. _____ *a recruitment system.*

- _____: How do people learn about serving opportunities?
- _____: How do they sign up to serve?
- _____: What responsibility do leaders have for recruiting and onboarding new volunteers?

4. _____ *quickly.*

When people sign up to serve, a leader should promptly communicate to assess their interest, availability, qualifications and next steps.

Apply

Put together a recruitment plan that includes a commitment to prayer, casting vision, creating a recruitment system, and communicating quickly. Set a deadline for the implementation of this process, and then begin monitoring the impact.

3 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Aligning

Team Review

What progress have you made toward developing a volunteer recruitment plan?

Assess

How do you ensure a volunteer is serving in the right role?

Insights and Ideas

Because churches are often desperate for volunteers, it's easy to plug people into roles without determining whether it's the best fit. But consider again the approach Moses took with the construction of the sanctuary. According to Exodus 36:2, "Moses summoned Bezalel and Oholiab and every skilled person to whom the LORD had given ability and who was willing to come and do the work."

Notice Moses summoned people to serve based on two things: ability ("every skilled person") and availability ("willing to come and do the work"). Similarly, to ensure people are aligned with the right roles, we need to consider three things:

1. **Personalities.** Every congregation includes many different personalities. Some people are analytical and systematic, and others are creative and spontaneous. Some thrive in visible roles such as teaching or leading worship, while others prefer serving behind the scenes.

Such differences are not a matter of right or wrong. They simply reflect the variety God places in the Church. To match areas of service with individual personalities, we must take the time to get to know people.

2. **Gifts.** Everyone has talents and skills. God also deposits spiritual gifts within the Church. We should consider these abilities and gifts before placing people in specific ministry roles.
3. **Passions.** The ESV describes the workers in Exodus 36:2 this way: "everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work." We can discover what stirs a person's heart by discussing *issues* and *interests*. In other words, what *issues* in the congregation, community or world do they feel compelled to address, and what *interests* could they apply to ministry?

Understanding personalities, gifts, and passions makes it easier to match potential team members to roles. You can usually discover these three things by asking good questions and administering helpful assessments.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Can you share an example of someone finding the right role on a team? What difference did it make?
2. How do personality, gifts, and passions impact a person's effectiveness in a ministry role?
3. What can you do to discover a person's personality, gifts, and passions *before* they begin serving on a team?

Apply

Identify some questions and tools you will use when talking with potential team members. Don't view these tools as formalities. Instead, let them inform you (and congregants) about which roles might be the best fit. This knowledge helps people understand that God designed them on purpose and for a purpose.

3 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Aligning

Assess

How do you ensure a volunteer is serving in the right role?

“Moses summoned Bezalel and Oholiab and every skilled person to whom the LORD had given ability and who was willing to come and do the work” (Exodus 36:2).

Moses summoned people to serve based on two things: ability (“every skilled person”) and availability (“willing to come and do the work”).

Align people with roles based on:

1. _____.

To match areas of service with individual personalities, we must take the time to get to know people.

2. _____.

Everyone has talents and skills. God also deposits spiritual gifts within the Church. We should consider these abilities and gifts before placing people in specific ministry roles.

3. _____.

The ESV describes the workers in Exodus 36:2 this way: “everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work.”

We can discover what stirs a person’s heart by discussing _____

and _____.

Apply

Identify some questions and tools you will use when talking with potential team members. Don’t view these tools as formalities. Instead, let them inform you (and congregants) about which roles might be the best fit. This knowledge helps people understand that God designed them on purpose and for a purpose.

4 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Onboarding

Team Review

What tools have you identified to help you assess the personality, gifts, and passions of potential team members?

Assess

How do you onboard new team members when they sign up to serve?

Insights and Ideas

Often, one of the missing ingredients in volunteer development is a well-designed onboarding process. Once we've recruited volunteers, we need a strategic process to set them up for success in their ministry roles.

Onboarding is a modern corporate term, but the concept has been around a long time. In fact, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego went through something like onboarding before entering the service of King Nebuchadnezzar. Their preparation involved three years of training in the language and literature of Babylon (Daniel 1:5). Only then were they considered qualified to serve.

Thankfully, church volunteers don't need three years of onboarding. However, we should be purposeful about setting up volunteers for success. A good volunteer onboarding process provides the following:

1. ***Vision and team values.*** When people join a team, they should have a clear understanding of the church's vision and values. Vision helps team members see how their roles contribute to something greater. Values guide their behavior as they engage in ministry. If one of your values is unity, your volunteer teams should reflect that.
2. ***Knowledge.*** Team members need to know what's important in their roles. For example, greeters should know where to get their name badges and how to direct guests to different areas of the church. Your onboarding system should ensure team members have answers to the most important questions.
3. ***Training.*** Before someone can run the sound board, he or she needs to learn how to operate it. Small group leaders need training in facilitating good discussions. Café workers should learn how to make coffee. Additional guidance will come in time, but a good onboarding process provides enough initial training to help volunteers perform their tasks successfully.
4. ***Shadowing.*** This is the opportunity to follow experienced team members as they serve. Shadowing is a great way for new volunteers to observe, ask questions, and become comfortable in their roles. Following seasoned leaders gives newcomers a chance to see success in action.

To ensure your onboarding system is consistent, document the process in a one- to two-page onboarding guide. Go over this guide with each new volunteer.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What difference would a quality onboarding process make for new volunteers?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current onboarding system?
3. What can you do to ensure your onboarding system is communicating vision and team values, imparting knowledge, providing training, and offering opportunities for shadowing?

Apply

Review your current onboarding process. Then create an onboarding document for each role that includes the four points mentioned above.

4 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Onboarding

Assess

How do you onboard new team members when they sign up to serve?

Often, one of the missing ingredients in volunteer development is a well-designed onboarding process. Once we've recruited volunteers, we need a strategic process to set them up for success in their ministry roles.

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego went through something like onboarding before entering the service of King Nebuchadnezzar.

Four ingredients of a volunteer onboarding process:

1. _____ *and team* _____.

When people join a team, they should have a clear understanding of the church's vision and values.

2. _____.

Your onboarding system should ensure team members have answers to the most important questions.

3. _____.

Additional guidance will come in time, but a good onboarding process provides enough initial training to help volunteers perform their tasks successfully.

4. _____.

This is the opportunity to follow experienced team members as they serve.

To ensure your onboarding system is consistent, document the process in a one- to two-page onboarding guide. Go over this guide with each new volunteer.

Apply

Review your current onboarding process. Then create an onboarding document for each role that includes the four points mentioned above.

5 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Equipping

Team Review

What progress have you made toward developing an onboarding system for each new team member?

Assess

How do you resource volunteers for successfully carrying out their responsibilities?

Insights and Ideas

When Nehemiah organized people to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem, he knew they would need resources to do the job. God gave Nehemiah favor with the king to secure those resources.

Nehemiah 2:8 says, “And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy? And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests.”

Ministry requires resources. We must equip volunteers with the things they need for success. Those resources generally come in two forms:

1. **Tools for doing the job.** Team members need specific tools to carry out their duties. Sound technicians need audio equipment. Children’s workers need kids’ curriculum, small group leaders need Bible studies, and parking teams need signs.

If we don’t provide the right tools, we’re setting up team members to fail. It won’t be long before they quit in frustration.

Ask team members what they need. And be on the lookout for ways to make their work more effective, efficient and rewarding.

2. **A budget for fulfilling the mission.** Ministry requires funding. Team members may not create budgets or deal directly with money, but leaders should be clear about the cost of delivering effective ministry. And everyone should work together to steward resources wisely.

Tools and budgets communicate to volunteers that what they do matters and leaders care about their success.

It’s easy to look at another church and think, *I don’t have the tools or budget they have to deliver that kind of ministry.* But instead of focusing on what you don’t have, wisely steward what you do have to accomplish what God is calling you and your team to do.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Have you ever been asked to do ministry without the resources necessary to pull it off? How did that feel?
2. What tools do your volunteers need to meet the expectations you have for their roles?
3. How can you allocate a budget to create the greatest impact for your volunteers?

Apply

Do an audit on each area of ministry for which you’re responsible. Consider two questions. First, what are your expectations of the volunteers in each ministry? Second, have you provided the resources they need to meet those expectations? If not, identify the resources needed and find a way to secure them.

5 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Equipping

Assess

How do you resource volunteers for successfully carrying out their responsibilities?

“And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?” And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests” (Nehemiah 2:8).

Two ways to resource volunteers:

1. _____ *to do the job.*

Ask team members what they need. And be on the lookout for ways to make their work more effective, efficient and rewarding.

2.A _____ *for fulfilling the mission.*

Ministry requires funding. Team members may not create budgets or deal directly with money, but leaders should be clear about the cost of delivering effective ministry. And everyone should work together to steward resources wisely.

Apply

Do an audit on each area of ministry for which you're responsible. Consider two questions. First, what are your expectations of the volunteers in each ministry? Second, have you provided the resources they need to meet those expectations? If not, identify the resources needed and find a way to secure them.

6 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM Training

Team Review

What resources have been secured to equip volunteers for success?

Assess

How are you providing ongoing training for volunteers?

Insights and Ideas

After onboarding and resourcing volunteers, it's easy to turn our attention to other pressing needs. But good leaders understand training isn't a once-and-done activity. Instead, they invest in the ongoing development of team members.

The apostle Paul understood the importance of ongoing development. He said, "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize" (1 Corinthians 9:25–27).

Olympic athletes don't just do a couple of training sessions before heading into the games. Their training happens consistently and proactively over time. We must likewise be consistent and proactive in training volunteers. Consider the following three ideas:

1. **Team huddles.** Team huddles are short gatherings that happen prior to a service. They might involve the entire volunteer base or individual departments. Either way, a good team huddle provides a few important things.
 - **Inspiration.** Take a moment to inspire team members by sharing a story of life change, celebrating a ministry win, or focusing on the church's vision or values.
 - **Information.** Share important information relevant to your volunteers for that day's ministry.
 - **Prayer.** Pray together, seeking God for any needs in the group. Pray for the service, yielding your gifts and abilities to the Lord and inviting the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of people.
2. **Team nights.** Schedule special volunteer gatherings throughout the year — perhaps quarterly or biannually — where you can provide training to your entire volunteer base. Do a portion of the training with all your volunteers (vision casting or churchwide training). Then offer breakouts with specific training for departmental teams.
3. **Team training.** Some of the best team training can happen outside of church. Consider inviting volunteers to quality training events happening in your area or online. Participation might stretch their thinking and help them realize possibilities for the future.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What does your ongoing team training plan look like?
2. What would it take to implement (or improve) team huddles?
3. What kind of training do our teams most need? Can we provide this training during a team night or outside event?

Apply

Put together a plan for ongoing training of your teams. Explore the possibility of team huddles, team nights, outside team training, and any other team development opportunities.

6 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Training

Assess

How are you providing ongoing training for volunteers?

“Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:25–27).

Three ways to train volunteers:

1. *Team* _____.

- _____ Take a moment to inspire team members by sharing a story of life change, celebrating a ministry win, or focusing on the church’s vision or values.
- _____ Share important information relevant to your volunteers for that day’s ministry.
- _____ Pray together, seeking God for any needs in the group. Pray for the service, yielding your gifts and abilities to the Lord and inviting the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of people.

2. *Team* _____.

Do a portion of the training with all your volunteers (vision casting or churchwide training). Then offer breakouts with specific training for departmental teams.

3. *Team* _____.

Some of the best team training can happen outside of church. Consider inviting volunteers to quality training events happening in your area or online. Participation might stretch their thinking and help them realize possibilities for the future.

Apply

Put together a plan for ongoing training of your teams. Explore the possibility of team huddles, team nights, outside team training, and any other team development opportunities.

7 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Coaching

Team Review

What does your plan for ongoing volunteer training include?

Assess

Have you received coaching from another leader? If so, what did the coaching process entail, and how did it benefit you?

Insights and Ideas

Coaching is one of the most powerful ways to invest in your volunteers. It moves beyond team huddles and large group gatherings to develop one-on-one relationships. As author Tim Elmore said, “More time with fewer people equals greater kingdom impact.”

The apostle Paul practiced coaching with his young apprentice Timothy. Paul said, “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:1–2).

Notice four characteristics of Paul’s coaching:

1. **Motivating.** Paul began by motivating Timothy. He said, “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” Paul was encouraging and motivating Timothy to develop deep roots for his faith in Christ.
2. **Modeling.** Timothy had heard Paul preach and teach “in the presence of many witnesses.” Beyond that, however, Timothy saw Paul’s life (2 Timothy 4:7). Timothy knew Paul practiced the gospel he preached.
Modeling is one of the most powerful forms of coaching because it adds credibility to everything the coach says.
3. **Mentoring.** Paul told Timothy to entrust the gospel “to reliable people.” In other words, Paul was challenging Timothy to take what he had learned and invest it in others. Having mentored Timothy, Paul expected him to mentor others.
4. **Multiplying.** Further, the people Timothy taught would “also be qualified to teach others.” Paul invested in Timothy, who would then invest in reliable people, and those reliable people would invest in others. Growth didn’t die with Paul. He had a vision for multiplication that would continue far into the future.

Who can you begin motivating to grow? Are you modeling the behavior you want others to emulate? Are you mentoring someone and then challenging that person to mentor others? And is the ripple of multiplication extending far beyond you? Coaching takes intentionality, but the results can be transformational for generations to come.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What does Tim Elmore’s statement mean to you: “More time with fewer people equals greater kingdom impact”?
2. What member of your team should you begin coaching?
3. What could that coaching process look like?

Apply

To begin coaching, take two steps. First, identify a person to coach. Choose someone who is eager to learn or has untapped potential. Second, determine a coaching plan. You might have a monthly coffee meeting to debrief that person’s area of ministry or a weekly meeting to discuss a leadership book or personal growth resource.

7 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Coaching

Assess

Have you received coaching from another leader? If so, what did the coaching process entail, and how did it benefit you?

“More time with fewer people equals greater kingdom impact.” — Tim Elmore

“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:1–2).

Four characteristics of Paul’s coaching:

1. _____.

Paul was encouraging and motivating Timothy to develop deep roots for his faith in Christ.

2. _____.

Timothy knew Paul practiced the gospel he preached.

3. _____.

Having mentored Timothy, Paul expected him to mentor others.

4. _____.

Growth didn’t die with Paul. He had a vision for multiplication that would continue far into the future.

Apply

To begin coaching, take two steps. First, identify a person to coach. Choose someone who is eager to learn or has untapped potential. Second, determine a coaching plan. You might have a monthly coffee meeting to debrief that person’s area of ministry or a weekly meeting to discuss a leadership book or personal growth resource.

8 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Promoting

Team Review

Who are you coaching, and what is your coaching plan?

Assess

How do you determine whether to promote a volunteer to a higher level of responsibility?

Insights and Ideas

One of the classic biblical examples of promotion is in the Parable of the Bags of Gold (Matthew 25). After the master entrusted his wealth to three servants, he left for an extended period of time. Verse 19 says, “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.”

The first two servants doubled their master’s wealth, but the third servant was lazy and buried the master’s wealth in the ground. At the end of the story, what had been entrusted to the lazy servant was taken away from him.

But look at what the master said to the other two servants: “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!” (verses 21,23).

This passage has many lessons, but let’s focus on three:

1. *Faithful stewardship leads to greater leadership.* When we’re faithful in the small things, God can entrust us with greater responsibility and opportunity.
2. *The team member’s job is to be faithful.* Faithfulness involves more than just showing up. Being present is part of it, but faithfulness requires wisely stewarding whatever God entrusts to our care. It’s doing our best with our time, talent, treasure, and influence.
3. *The leader’s job is to promote faithful team members.* The Parable of the Bags of Gold offers another insight for leaders. The master honored faithfulness with promotion. We should do the same with those we lead.

When team members are faithful and leaders practice promotion, teams will develop higher levels of capacity. Rather than building a team of followers, you begin building a team of empowered leaders.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Read Matthew 25:14–30. What other leadership lessons can you draw from this parable?
2. How do the three points above challenge you?
3. Why is it easy to overlook the promotion part of this parable? What volunteer in your area of ministry is deserving of a promotion?

Apply

Do an honest assessment of your team. Nobody is perfect, but think about who may be ready for a promotion. What could you do to begin giving faithful team members greater opportunities for leadership?

8 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Promoting

Assess

How do you determine whether to promote a volunteer to a higher level of responsibility?

“After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them” (Matthew 25:19).

“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!” (Matthew 25:21,23).

Three lessons from the Parable of the Bags of Gold:

1. *Faithful* _____ *leads to greater* _____.

When we’re faithful in the small things, God can entrust us with greater responsibility and opportunity.

2. *The team member’s job is to be* _____.

Faithfulness involves more than just showing up. Being present is part of it, but faithfulness requires wisely stewarding whatever God entrusts to our care. It’s doing our best with our time, talent, treasure, and influence.

3. *The leader’s job is to* _____ *faithful team members.*

The master honored faithfulness with promotion. We should do the same with those we lead.

Apply

Do an honest assessment of your team. Nobody is perfect, but think about who may be ready for a promotion. What could you do to begin giving faithful team members greater opportunities for leadership?

9 BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Appreciating

Team Review

Which faithful team member have you taken steps to promote?

Assess

How do you show appreciation to your volunteers?

Insights and Ideas

Volunteers don't *have to* do what they do. They are volunteering because of a desire to serve and make a difference with their God-given gifts. But if we're not careful, we can begin taking volunteers for granted.

Leaders have a responsibility to honor and appreciate those who are investing their time and talent in ministry. Paul said, "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).

What does this look like amid daily ministry? How can we express appreciation to our volunteers in an authentic and meaningful way? Start with the following three ideas:

1. **Personal appreciation.** The most meaningful appreciation is personal. It's a handwritten thank you card. It's noticing a team member's contribution in the moment, and then stopping to acknowledge it and say thank you. It's expressing appreciation specifically instead of broadly.

Rather than saying, "Thanks for serving," be specific: "Thanks for the way you helped that family with three kids safely cross the parking lot and get checked in to our kids ministry. That's the kind of service that means so much, and I'm thankful for how you love and serve people so selflessly."

2. **Public appreciation.** There are also times to express appreciation publicly to your entire team. It might be through an appreciation banquet or a Christmas party in your home. Acknowledge the collective efforts of the group, while also highlighting stories of impact because of the faithful service of team members. Just be careful not to embarrass anyone, especially those who don't like public acknowledgment.

3. **Practical appreciation.** Express appreciation in practical and tangible ways. Hosting an occasional meal, handing out gift cards, or bringing in breakfast treats are simple but thoughtful ways to show how much you appreciate your volunteers and what they do. You might even keep track of birthdays so you can recognize these special days.

Authors Gary Chapman and Paul White observed, "The question is not, 'Do you appreciate your co-workers?' The real question is, 'Do they *feel* appreciated?'" The same is true of volunteers. Without appreciation, you're missing an important, biblical part of team development. And there's a good chance your team members' service will be short-lived if they don't feel noticed and appreciated.

Reflect and Discuss

1. How regularly do you show personal appreciation to volunteers? What can you do this week to let some of them know you notice and appreciate their efforts?
2. What could we do as a congregation to show appreciation to all of our volunteers?
3. What simple, practical expressions of appreciation might our budget allow us to provide?

Apply

Write notes of appreciation to three volunteers this week. Then put together a plan to acknowledge and appreciate your entire team — personally, publicly and practically.

9

BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Appreciating

Assess

How do you show appreciation to your volunteers?

Volunteers don't *have to* do what they do. They are volunteering because of a desire to serve and make a difference with their God-given gifts.

“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves” (Romans 12:10).

How to express appreciation to volunteers:

1. _____ *appreciation.*

The most meaningful appreciation is personal. It's a handwritten thank you card. It's noticing a team member's contribution in the moment, and then stopping to acknowledge it and say thank you. It's expressing appreciation specifically instead of broadly.

2. _____ *appreciation.*

There are also times to express appreciation publicly to your entire team. It might be through an appreciation banquet or a Christmas party in your home. Acknowledge the collective efforts of the group, while also highlighting stories of impact because of the faithful service of team members.

3. _____ *appreciation.*

Express appreciation in practical and tangible ways. Hosting an occasional meal, handing out gift cards, or bringing in breakfast treats are simple but thoughtful ways to show how much you appreciate your volunteers and what they do.

“The question is not, ‘Do you appreciate your co-workers?’ The real question is, ‘Do they *feel* appreciated?’” — Gary Chapman and Paul White

Apply

Write notes of appreciation to three volunteers this week. Then put together a plan to acknowledge and appreciate your entire team — personally, publicly and practically.

10 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Engaging

Team Review

To which three volunteers did you send a note last week?

Assess

What are the best strategies you've used for keeping volunteers engaged?

Insights and Ideas

One of the remarkable aspects of Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem was his ability to keep the team engaged despite constant ridicule.

Nehemiah 4:1–3 says, "When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, 'What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble — burned as they are?' Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, 'What they are building — even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!'"

Even with this opposition, Nehemiah kept the people focused on the vision at hand. He ignored much of the ridicule, reassigned people with various responsibilities, and championed the mission.

It's one thing to recruit a volunteer team, but it's another to keep team members interested in the vision, the ministry, and their roles. Following are 10 things you can do to engage volunteers:

1. **Model.** Be authentic, caring, and full of integrity. Be a leader worth following as you model the way.
2. **Lead.** One of the best things you can do for volunteers is lead them with excellence.
3. **Energize.** Cast vision for the future, regularly reminding team members their service is making a difference.
4. **Connect.** Create space for team members to build relationships and get to know one another outside of church.
5. **Communicate.** Routinely update volunteers on relevant ministry details.
6. **Mentor.** Personally invest in the growth of individual team members.
7. **Listen.** Welcome feedback by providing opportunities for people to share ideas for improving ministry.
8. **Pastor.** Show genuine care and encouragement, pastoring volunteers through difficult seasons.
9. **Equip.** Regularly equip team members with training and resources that will help them succeed.
10. **Empower.** Share power and authority with volunteers as they grow in responsibility.

Each of these actions will contribute to the overall engagement level of your team. Most importantly, volunteers will feel acknowledged, loved, fulfilled and appreciated.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What are the biggest challenges you face in keeping your team fully engaged?
2. Which of the 10 steps above is most difficult? Why?
3. How could we do a better job as a congregation to improve volunteer engagement?

Apply

Pick two of the 10 steps above to keep your team engaged. Put together a meaningful plan to implement these strategies this week. Then add a new step each month.

10 | BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM

Engaging

Assess

What are the best strategies you've used for keeping volunteers engaged?

One of the remarkable aspects of Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem was his ability to keep the team engaged despite constant ridicule.

Read Nehemiah 4:1–3.

Ten ways to engage volunteers:

1. _____ . Be authentic, caring, and full of integrity. Be a leader worth following as you model the way.
2. _____ . One of the best things you can do for volunteers is lead them with excellence.
3. _____ . Cast vision for the future, regularly reminding team members their service is making a difference.
4. _____ . Create space for team members to build relationships and get to know one another outside of church.
5. _____ . Routinely update volunteers on relevant ministry details.
6. _____ . Personally invest in the growth of individual team members.
7. _____ . Welcome feedback by providing opportunities for people to share ideas for improving ministry.
8. _____ . Show genuine care and encouragement, pastoring volunteers through difficult seasons.
9. _____ . Regularly equip team members with training and resources that will help them succeed.
10. _____ . Share power and authority with volunteers as they grow in responsibility.

Apply

Pick two of the 10 steps above to keep your team engaged. Put together a meaningful plan to implement these strategies this week. Then add a new step each month.