



Increasing *Guest Engagement*

301: Build the House



Review

101: Open the Front Door

Guest Engagement Begins with Guest Perspective



201: Close the Back Door

Guest Engagement Sticks when Systems Click.



Guest
Engagement
Multiplies with
Connection
Strategies.



We have covered the guest's perspective and guest systems. Now we will focus on strategies for building guest relationships.



People are your greatest asset.

The work of follow-up and connection requires **the heart of a shepherd**. It's a reflection that you truly believe *people are your greatest asset*.

Committing to this process means shifting your mindset from preaching to crowds to caring for individuals.

It's moving from herding a crowd to shepherding a flock.



People are your greatest asset.

“Increasing guest engagement” requires not just understanding the guest’s perspective and having great systems but also also creating strategies of connection.

To see your church grow on Sunday you must be **intentional** about creating easy *pathways for connection* to the church.



Five Connection Strategies



Plan Your Visit

- Collect name, email, and phone number, acting as the Connect Card before your guest arrives.
- PLUS puts them in a connection funnel.

“A Plan Your Visit tool gives
you a jump start on
connection and immediately
places guest in a
communication funnel.”

From Unannounced *To Expected*

- Website tool feeds information into a communication funnel.
- The guest immediately received an automated message.
- You can personally respond to answer their questions before they arrive.
- They show up already feeling connected to you.

Connection *Excellerator*

- Workflows are created depending on the guest response.
- “Add Value” texts to non-responder.
- “Sorry to miss you” text to no shows.
- Dashboard helps your team track the journey of those who do show up and communicate appropriately.



VIP TEAM

- Volunteers trained for connection.
- This team welcomes guest and host them in the service.

“When guests feel like VIPs, they come back. Churches that grow their response rates grow their attendance.”

Michael Murphy

XLR8

How to Build a *VIP Team*

- **Choose the Right People:** Recruit those who naturally love people.
- **Train for Intentionality:** Train them with scripts, examples, and the heart of this role.
- **Empower with Clarity:** Make sure every VIP Team member knows the goal is to connect with every guest, make them feel seen, and help them take one clear next step.
- **Celebrate Stories:** Regularly share wins.

Turning Guests *Into Family*

- **Greet AND Guide:** They meet guests at the door, walk them to the kids' check-in, and help them find a seat.
- **Personal Follow-Up:** Introduce guests to key leaders and encourage them to fill out a connection card or attend the next Welcome Social.
- **Bridge to Next Steps:** This team understands the next steps, points to them, and can answer questions.
- **“Undercover Angels”:** They do not wear badges but work as connectors.



Welcome Social

- Hosted once a month for everyone new to the church.
- The goal is immediate, relational connection with the pastor and leadership team early in their journey.

“Sometimes a moment of relational connection can accomplish more than years of systems and processes.”

Dino Rizzo

Relationship *Impact*

- People are convinced by connection, not their mind.
- They want to feel valued, seen, and to make a friend.
- A moment with the pastor where the person feels prioritized can last a lifetime in their memory.

Party with the *Pastor*

- Once a month connection event.
- Atmosphere is like a party.
- Food is available.
- Pastors are there.
- Key team is there.
- Direct people to next steps and small group.
- One hour.
- Can be in a home.

Other Options

- **15 minutes after every service.**
 - Light snacks.
 - Members bring guests.
 - Leaders Available
- **During 4th Sunday**
 - Same time as Next Steps
 - Next Steps Area
 - Promote Next Steps
 - 45 minutes
- **Once a Quarter**



Connection Tent

- One stop shop for new people.
- Resources and people for guests and next steps.

Connection *Basecamp*

- A clear and safe place for guests.
- Host team is there.
- Connection cards, bibles and gifts.
- Train your team to point people there.
- Develop a follow system for connection tent guests.



Next Steps Course

- One ramp to church life.
- Happens every month so new people can easily join without waiting.

A strategic Next Steps
course helps solve two major
problems of connection:
apathy and attrition.

Apathy: If people have to wait too long to start then they may never start. Get them while they are excited.

Attrition: If the course is too long then people will quit before connection.

Next Steps Class

Bridge to Belonging

- Your Next Steps Class is your primary process for connection.
- It is the gateway to church life.
- This is where you direct all new people to your church.
- From here, they find their place to plug in for the long term.
- This is not your discipleship course. That happens in small groups.

Next Steps Class *Structure*

- Must happen immediately and consistently.
- Random dates are hard to remember. Today is easy to remember.
- When classes are not consistently taking place people miss the opportunity to connect while they wait for a class to open up.

Next Steps Class *Considerations*

- Do not require people to sign up.
- Do not ask people to skip meals without providing food.
- Do not forget about their kids.
- Do not be discouraged by small attendance.
- Blow them away with your hospitality.
- Celebrate them taking a next step!



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