

First Impressions/Connectedness

Week 1: Connection

1. Identify Visitors.
2. Have Front Door Greeters.
3. Give opportunities for guests to volunteer personal information.
4. "Greet" people on the way out.

Question: What are good conversation starters for new people or people you do not know?

Weeks 2-4: Relationship

1. If you make meaningful connection, there is a 50-50 chance of a second visit.
2. Most guests will only make a 3rd visit if it is possible for relationships.
3. Studies show "people who stick in a church make 5-7 friends within the first several months."
4. Connecting people to people must happen quickly
5. Creating 3rd private places where corporate meetings turn into smaller vulnerabilities

Question: What physical environments in your church reflect a third place, inviting people to converse and interact? What capacity do you have to create or enhance this space?

Weeks 6-8: Involvement

1. Create pathways to involvement.
2. Encourage smaller group participation.
3. Notice if someone is absent.

Question: What are good systems to put in place so people are missed?

Weeks 10-12: Contribution

1. Preach action, not knowledge.
2. Make it uncomfortable to stay disengaged.
3. Create easy on-ramps and off-ramps for people to contribute.
4. Be aware of the trust vs. control factor.
5. Allow the Holy Spirit to change people.

Questions: In what ways does your vision invite newer people to belong to, to be a part of what God is doing in your church? Are you allowing natural on-ramps and off-ramps for those volunteering in your church?

In what ways does your vision invite newer people to belong, to be a part of what God is doing in the church?

Recommended Reading:

Waltz, M.L. (2009) *Lasting Impressions: From visiting to belonging*. Group Publishing.

Young, J; Malm, J (2018) *The Comeback Effect: How hospitality can compel your guests to return*. Baker Books.