

Most People Volunteer Because They Were ASKED!*

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So, how many people have you ASKED to be involved in ministry this week? This month? If your job is to equip others for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13), how are you being intentional about equipping?

There is simply no substitute for a personal appeal. But not just an appeal based on your ministry needs (or desperation). It is a thoughtful request rooted in a number of key things (that also make the “yes” more likely):

Pray: Pray that God would direct you to the right people and the right people to you. You truly do not want the wrong person in the wrong place for all the wrong reasons. Prayer also helps you let go of the outcome, so when you are inviting people, you can leave their decision in God’s hands.

Find and connect with their desires and interests: Yes, people may care about your ministry, but, if they are *passionate* about it or about some aspect of it, they will more likely want to be involved and will give more of themselves, go deeper, and stay longer.

Be clear: People commit to a specific “ask.” Be clear on your expectations in terms of skills, experience, time commitment. Have a clear job description for them.

Give them time: Ask them to prayerfully consider involvement and give them a week or so to reflect on the job description and your request. You are much less likely to get the knee-jerk “no” if you give people the space to pray and the freedom to say “no.”

Think of each “ask” as an educational or discipleship moment: Even if you have to ask 12 people to get two “yeses,” you have let 12 people know of your need, you have asked them to pray about that need and your ministry, you have asked them to spend time reflecting with God on His call and gifting and their availability (a teachable moment, often), you have acknowledged their unique value simply by reaching out and asking, and, if you promise to pray for them, you have offered them a pastoral care moment. So, even if it ends up as a “no,” you have done meaningful, relational, caring things to further include these people in this community.

Think creatively: If you get many “no’s,” do you need to revisit that job description and split it into two so that people with less time might be able to do part of it? Can it be done by a couple, a small group, or a family? Are you being clear and specific enough in your “ask,” or might it be too ambiguous for people to feel willing to commit to?

Better yet, **have one of your faithful, satisfied, passionate volunteers do the asking for you.** A satisfied volunteer is the best recruiter.

71% of those who were asked said “yes” to volunteering, vs. 29%. From the document Giving and Volunteering in the United States