



7 Steps to Moving

CHURCH MEMBERS

FROM CONSUMERS TO PROMOTERS

eBook and Survey

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BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE OIKOS MOVEMENT

DESPITE YOUR BEST INTENTIONS, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO ACTUALLY RECOMMEND JESUS TO A FRIEND?

Turning Customers into Promoters



Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." —MATTHEW 28:18-20

The Great Commission made some things very clear. To follow Jesus doesn't mean we're now part of a fanbase. Neither does it mean we recognize the importance of following the tenets He taught. We're more than that. When we give our life to Jesus, we become an organic extension of who He is. Our life mission now flows out of who we are in Christ.

Jesus assumed that the group He was with in Matthew 28 would be as focused about His mission as He was.

His words framed an implied expectation that the many good things they could do would now

be set aside for this one great thing that Jesus assumed they would do.

Frederick Reichheld is a business strategist. His research provides a portal into the world of customer loyalty. He defines loyalty as "someone's willingness to make an investment or personal sacrifice in order to strengthen a relationship." Therefore, customer loyalty is not just about being a "repeat customer." A repeat customer may be trapped by circumstances that actually force them to repeat. For example, someone may fly the same airline repeatedly because it's the only carrier to a particular city, or buy the same product because their budget forces them to settle. Those examples don't reflect loyalty, just necessity.

In Reichheld's terminology, church leaders seek to build congregations made up of loyal customers. (I apologize if that sounds rather businessy.) We hope people will want to come. We hope they will want to invest into the ministries we lead, even sacrifice to be part of what we're trying to accomplish from week to week. And when they do, we feel a sense of accomplishment and gratitude.

1. Frederick F. Reichheld, "The Right People to Get the Extraordinary Done", Harvard Business Review, December 2003.

So far, there's nothing unbiblical or un-Christ-like about that.

Unfortunately, though, that's not enough. Loyalty to a local church may be honorable but loyalty to Jesus is required. The Great Commission is not just a challenge to be disciples. It's a challenge to make them. Clearly, Jesus wants us to be promoters of His Kingdom.

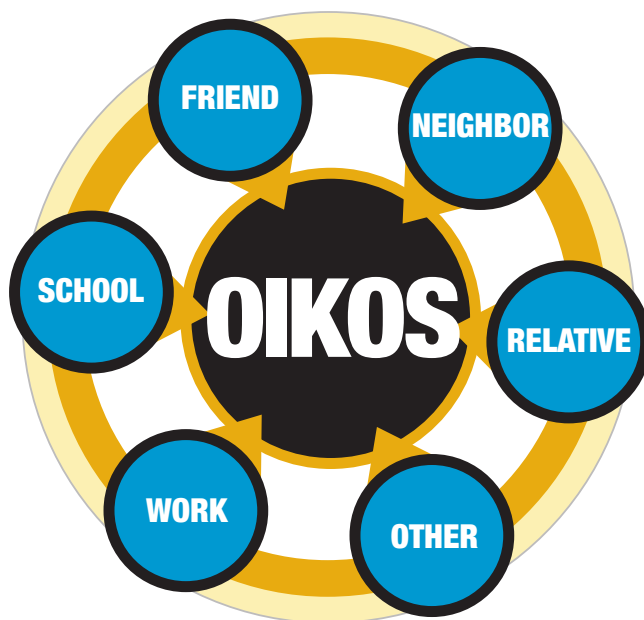
For me, the most interesting takeaway from Reichheld's research was what he discovered about customer surveys. Evidently, the inquiries those surveys make tend to offer little or any helpful information for the companies who solicit them. Typical surveys, he concluded, don't ask questions that are relevant to profit growth. He believes the number one thing a survey needs to do is answer one simple question.

How likely are you to recommend our product or service to a friend?

Recommending something to a friend means that you not only use the product or service for yourself, but that you are willing to place your reputation on the line and recommend it to others. By the way, that was not just the number one question that mattered. Number two was a distant second!

In oikworld that's really important because, when you think about it, everyone who follows Jesus is already a customer of the Gospel. We often say, "We've accepted Jesus as our personal Savior." As individuals, we've said yes to His gracious offer of salvation by faith. But God

has also placed anywhere from 8 to 15 people in the front row of each of our lives. It is with them (Jesus called them "your own people") where Jesus-followers have the best chance to align their lives with the Great Commission and become promoters of the Gospel.



THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE!



It's an old competitive proverb, one that has been applied to a lot of arenas, from athletics to military combat. And maybe even in church.

In a FaceBook survey, we asked church attendees why they tend to not invite people to their churches. Their responses were defensive in nature, but surprisingly candid. While each response was worded differently, they all framed one thing. Fear. The following seven reasons seemed to resonate most often.

7 REASONS WE DON'T INVITE OTHERS TO CHURCH

How A Church Leader Can Move People from Defense to Offense

An Attender's Excuse:

EXCUSE #1: "It's not my job!"

I didn't need a survey to know this one. Pastors regularly hear the same justifications from their church family, excuses to opt out of potential opportunities to promote faith:

- "But God didn't call me into the ministry."
- "But God didn't give me the gift of evangelism."
- "But God didn't give me an outgoing personality."
- "But I don't know enough about the Bible to be effective."

A Leader's Response:

Try to explain how God compensated for our social anxieties before we were even born. As a primary approach to build His Kingdom, He designed an *incoming* strategy to compensate for our lack of an *outgoing* personality. Your church family may not yet know that 95% of the body of Christ came into the body of Christ because of people just like them, people who aren't in vocational ministry, don't have the spiritual gift of evangelism, and aren't Bible scholars. It might surprise your church family that, statistically, they have a much better shot at success than their pastor does!

EXCUSE #2: "I'm afraid they'll say no."

We all fear rejection. In fact, no normal person would really ever enjoy rejection, so this one isn't a surprise either. But that's the problem with fear in general. It tends to immobilize us.

Try to show the difference between being rejected (which Jesus said we'd all experience) and fearing rejection (which we all have to get over). Maybe in a weekend service or training opportunity, simply ask for a show of hands. "How many of you accepted an invitation to church the first time you were offered one?" or "How many of you gave your heart to Jesus the first time you heard the Gospel?" After hardly anyone raises their hand, explain how the people in their oikos are not being any more stubborn than they probably were! But most of your church family will certainly welcome your help in framing a clear and effective strategy to share their faith, so offer them one, one that will greatly enhance the possibility of a positive response from the people they share Jesus with.

EXCUSE #3: "My church is a warzone."

The survey indicated that people tend to be embarrassed by an underlying spirit of conflict, one that is present in way too many churches.

Rally your church around something great. Charismatic leaders do not unite a congregation. They can fill a room, but only a common mission will unite the people in it over the long haul. Give your church family something great to rally around, like the *Greeeeeat* Commission! I don't know why, but Christians who aren't outward focused always seem to default to petty

arguments about worship style and theological soapboxes, especially if they have nothing better to do. Given nothing great to pursue, people can quickly become armchair quarterbacks and critique a ministry or find opportunities to major on minor issues.

EXCUSE #4: *“I don’t feel supported by my church.”*

A lack of support was perceived in different ways:

- *“Our church is judgmental toward non-believers.”*
- *“Our weekend services are not very compelling.”*

Assess how your church systems support an attendee’s personal mission to their oikos. Have a conversation with your staff or lay leaders about how valid those concerns might be. You can’t solve a problem until you understand the problem, so facilitate enough honest conversations to figure out what’s really going on with your church family.

EXCUSE #5: *“I may be exposed as a mediocre Christian.”*

I wouldn’t have guessed this one. *“If they come to church and hear how Christians are supposed to live our lives, they’ll know I’m a disappointment.”*

Try to help people connect the dots between personal growth and personal mission. Oikos is as much a discipleship regimen as it is anything. Our oikos becomes an accountability factor in the process of our own personal growth. So, you’re not the best Christian in the world yet. But remember, it’s still early!

EXCUSE #6: *“I don’t have any non-churched friends.”*

Actually, the longer you’re a believer, the less likely you are to identify non-believers as part of your relational world.

Everyone has non-believers in their oikos, but most church families need to be trained to identify them.

EXCUSE #7: *“I forget to think about it.”*

When I hear that one, I cringe. I mean, really? No pastor should ever allow the people they lead to forget what their purpose is.

Don’t let them forget to think about it. Ever. I’ve found that many pastors never seem to want to repeat anything. I know repetition challenges our creative instincts and, I’m sure, people appreciate things that are new and innovative. But there are just certain things we have to keep hammering home. Good parents don’t worry they’ll remind their children too often to brush their teeth, to take a bath or shower, or finish their vegetables. No good parent ever thought to not remind their kids of those healthy habits because they were afraid a child might think they were being too repetitive. Raising healthy children requires that we repeat ourselves often and annoyingly about those things that matter most.



The following statements describe characteristics of potential *promoters* (us), as seen through the eyes of potential *customers* (the people in our oikos). Your name would replace each of the blanks as you consider each person on your oikos list.

Clearly, their actual opinions matter more than what *you* might think those opinions are, but since having those conversations might be awkward (if not impossible), let's start by simply considering how you think they'd score you from 1 to 10, 10 being best.

TURNING CUSTOMERS INTO PROMOTERS

How Likely Is Your Impact?

What do you think each individual in your oikos would say about you? Score yourself through their eyes — 1 to 10, 10 being best. Remember, *you* are the Blank.

- 1. (Blank) cares about me.
- 2. (Blank) communicates openly and honestly with me.
- 3. (Blank) is committed to my success.
- 4. (Blank) has integrity.
- 5. My relationship with (Blank) has grown stronger over the past year.
- 6. People are more important to (Blank) than personal gain.
- 7. (Blank) is easy to work with.
- 8. I look forward to spending time with (Blank).
- 9. I can count on (Blank) if I need help.
- 10. My life is better because I know (Blank).

- TOTAL SCORE

