

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

Re-Engage Your People in SERVING

Episode 194

Reopening and Re-Engaging Our Churches in the Mission (Part 1)

You've been waiting for this day for months. Instead of talking about how ministry strategy needs to shift because of the pandemic, you're starting to talk about what ministry will look like on the *other side* of it. But if you're like most of the pastors we're talking to, reopening and re-engaging your congregation has already been more challenging than expected.

There are no real experts in this season, but churches in some parts of the country are a month or two ahead of the learning curve. So, in this four-part series, we're sharing interviews with pastors who are leading the way in navigating the reopening challenges ahead of us all. In Part 1, we share Quest Church's story and a few practical takeaways to help you re-engage people in serving roles.

What Quest Church Experienced

Since reopening for physical gatherings, people have been coming back to attend a worship service but not coming back to their serving roles. A few stand-out quotes:

- *"I think we were naive when we opened back up. We thought everybody was going to be coming back and that those that were coming back were also going to be serving again. And even though we heard other churches were having that struggle, we just thought it wasn't going to be the case with us. And so it was very interesting to see people coming back to worship, but yet they weren't coming back to serving. It put us in a predicament that we honestly weren't prepared for."*
- *"We were really scared to ask, mainly because people are dealing with their own crises and we just thought this would be one more thing on their plate. So we shied away from it. But we knew that if we wanted to keep our doors open, then we needed to ask people to serve. Especially in our kids' ministry, we were having to turn kids away because we didn't have enough adults in the space. So, we decided to make an ask."*
- *"About 100 people responded to say they wanted to serve, which was amazing. But we were also reluctant because from past experience, many people don't follow through. But this time it was completely different. For example, we had 45 people sign up after that Sunday ask to serve in Kids Ministry, and 42 are now serving. That response rate is unheard of."*

Best Practices for Re-Engaging People in Serving

- **Build new teams rather than trying to get old teams to come back.** Focus on engaging people who are coming to physical gatherings *now*.
- **Make the ask.** Think “full Sunday message,” not an email, Facebook post, or announcement. Pick a Sunday, put it on the calendar, and dedicate the entire message to explaining why you want people to serve and inviting them to start. Make the ask. Content may get people in the door, but connections keep them coming back.
- **Easy first steps.** Make it easy for people to say, “*I’m interested.*” Quest Church created a [simple card](#) for people to indicate interest.
- **Immediate follow up.** By the end of the day after the ask, everyone that indicated interest at Quest Church was contacted to schedule a one-on-one conversation via Zoom.
- **Give people a start date.** In the normal church process, we make it complicated: orientation, training, background checks, shadowing, etc... all BEFORE you ever put someone on the schedule. Instead, try treating it like a new job: Give them a start date and then train them. Run background checks before volunteers engage with kids, but you can still give them a start date.
- **Appreciate people who serve.** A handwritten note and a Starbucks card are nice touches.

2 Types of People Attending Your Worship Services In-Person Right Now

- People who were at your church pre-COVID. They remember more people. They probably think you have enough volunteers because there are fewer people.
- People who are new to your church. There is a lot of church shopping right now, and people are looking for places to connect.
- Both groups of people won’t know there’s an opportunity to serve others unless you make the ask. Answer the question, “*Why should I serve?*”

Next Steps

RE-ENGAGE: An Unstuck Roundtable on Carrying the Mission Forward in the New Normal

Sign up to join us on July 20 for a [FREE Webinar](#) to share more best practices and learnings from churches who are leading the way in reopening and re-engaging their people. We can't promise you all the answers for navigating these uncharted waters, but it's our hope that you will leave this event re-energized and empowered to lead well in the Fall 2021 season. [Register Now](#)

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