

## Are You a Good Steward of Your People’s Time and Talents?

We ask our people to be good stewards of their time and talents. How well are we as church staff and leaders doing at being a good steward of the time and talents they give to the church? The answer to this question is related to the more-frequently-asked question, “Why don’t we have enough volunteers?” The practices covered in this evaluation are ones that help people serve. When we help each other serve, we are being good stewards of each other’s time and talents.

How well are we doing?

5=always 1=never

5   4   3   2   1

### ENCOURAGING AND EDUCATING

					1. We frequently talk about serving at church (not counting when we’re recruiting).
					2. We frequently talk about serving outside the church--at home, at our jobs, in the community.
					3. A visitor or new member would know how to find out what ministries are taking place at our church.
					4. We regularly have Bible studies that encourage people to talk about the specifics of serving, within and beyond the church.
					5. We help individuals discover how God has gifted them for service.

### CONNECTING PEOPLE TO MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

					6. We provide an intentional path to help new members find ways to serve in the church.
					7. Once a year or so, we have a congregation-wide event inviting people into ministry AND we follow-up on commitments made or interest expressed.
					8. We have written position descriptions for all our ministries.
					9. When we recruit for a specific ministry need, we do so in a positive way, without applying guilt or pressure.
					10. Most ministries offer a way people can “give it a try” before they make a commitment.

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**SUPPORT WHILE PEOPLE ARE SERVING**

					11. Our ministry leaders warmly welcome new volunteers
					12. Our ministry leaders provide initial and ongoing training.
					13. Our ministry leaders ask their volunteers “How’s it going?”
					14. Church-wide and within each ministry, we affirm the value of what the volunteers are doing.
					15. We handle conflict promptly, in ways that affirm people and their service.

**AND ALSO . . .**

					16. We train and encourage our staff to equip others to serve rather than to do all the work themselves.
					17. The Senior Pastor talks the talks and walks the walk.
					18. Our database contains up to date info on people’s gifts and interests, and their participation in ministry.
					19. Staff and other leaders can search the database for people with the gifts and interests for a particular ministry. And they do.
					20. We intentionally train our leaders, and deliberately seek and train people with leadership potential.

**The Basics of Equipping People to Serve**

1. Change your focus. Instead of focusing on recruiting people for ministry needs, focus on helping people serve as God has gifted and called them to serve.
2. Become familiar with healthy volunteerism resources. (See next page.)
3. Create a point person and a team that focuses on helping people serve.
4. Involve many more people as you build a system and a culture that helps people serve.



## Equipping Resources

### Books

*Me to We: A Pastor's Discovery of the Power of Partnership* by Alan Nelson; Group Publishing, 2007; \$19.99. A young pastor learns how to avoid burnout by sharing ministry with all the people of his parish

*The Equipping Church* by Sue Mallory (\$21.99) and *The Equipping Church Guidebook* (\$19.99) by Sue Mallory and Brad Smith; Zondervan, 2001. A comprehensive, excellent look at the whole-church picture. Many practical resources in the Guidebook, but the detail can be overwhelming.

*How to Mobilize Church Volunteers* by Marlene Wilson; Augsburg, 1990, \$13.99. A popular classic that initiated much interest in the field.

*Simply Strategic Volunteers* (\$19.99) by Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens; published by Group. A book of 99 bite-size practical ideas. More helpful for retention than recruitment; sometimes oversimplified.

*From the Top Down* by Susan Ellis; published by Energize, Inc., revised 1996; \$24.95. The first and only book written to address the role of the top decision-maker on volunteerism health in an organization. She writes for CEO's of secular non-profits, but much also applies to pastors. Every senior pastor will find much to think about. Available in the bookstore at [www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com).

### Websites & other

[www.TheEquipper.org](http://www.TheEquipper.org) is a website I built and maintain to help churches equip their people to serve. It has a resource section (articles, handouts, powerpoints), a searchable resource database, a newsletter, and profiles of churches and events.

Church Volunteer Central, [www.churchvolunteercentral.com](http://www.churchvolunteercentral.com), is from Group Publishing Company. A \$120 annual membership fee gives access to many resources and to reduced-price background checks. They also do national conferences and are building a network of regional Team CVC groups.

Energize, Inc., at [www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com), is about volunteerism in all kinds of organizations. Resources in their library and store include items pertaining to faith-based volunteering.

*The 55 Minute Training Series* – A series of 55 minutes “lessons” on training busy staff (works for volunteers, too) to succeed with volunteers; a good, quick summary of basic skills such as recruiting, designing jobs, motivating and delegating. \$69.00. Available in the bookstore at [www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com).

