

USHERS & GREETERS

TRAINING WORKSHOP

**I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord."
Psalm 122:1**

1. BE MY GUEST - THE HIGH CALLING OF USHERING

Who is the main guest of any Christian worship service? _____.

Who is our main human guest in a worship service? _____.

2. THE MOTIVATION

Luke 7:36-47

Our first motivation must be one of _____.

You want to make _____ paths _____ to God.

3. THE USHER SETS THE TONE

When you welcome a stranger you welcome _____.

Who is the most important person during worship in terms of helping the visitor?
_____.

Presidential image consultant Stephen Clouse puts it plainly: "Within _____ seconds, a person makes _____ judgments about the stranger they are meeting for the first time."

Most people think an usher does only two things - _____ and _____.

The usher sets the _____ for the _____ for the _____ service.



Stan Toler and Alan Nelson in their book *The Five Star Church* offer a checklist of the Secret Church Shopper for the first 10 minutes of experiences with a typical church:

Facility:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.
- G.

Hospitality:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.
- G.
- H.

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We have _____ visitors each week at my Church, (not including those who don't sign out a slip, children, shy people). That's _____ visitors per month or _____ a year.

Last year, we picked up _____ new members which means we are retaining about _____ of our Sunday visitors.

This means _____ may never return. And the figure might even be higher when you include children, or shy people who don't sign the welcome book.

How many visitors does your church get each Sunday?

How many are repeat customers?

How many are retained for membership?

Who is our customer? The _____.

Without the _____ becoming a member, a _____ will dry up and shrivel within a generation.

Remember most people make up their mind about a church in the first _____ minutes.



4. CUSTOMER SERVICE

Why people no longer use Standard Oil Company

_____ % of the customers die

_____ % move away

_____ % found better prices

_____ % convenience

_____ % personal dislike

_____ % indifference toward the customer by employees

Research shows:

If one customer has a **bad** experience he/she will tell _____ people who will tell _____ others.

Therefore, _____ people will know of the negative experience. _____ people will learn about the experience in the subsequent few weeks.

Result: People who HAVE NEVER EVEN come to your church now may never will.

Research also shows:

If one customer has a **positive** experience he/she will tell _____ people who will tell _____ others.

Result: _____ people will now know of the positive work of your church.



Toler and Nelson in their book *The Five Star Church* summarize it this way:

1. Poor service is the number one reason American companies lose business.
2. The average dissatisfied customer tells nine others of the dissatisfaction within one week.
3. It costs a typical business between five and ten times as much to attract a new customer as it does to keep an old one.

The usher can either _____ or _____ a person worshipping at a church.

I want your church to be known for _____ and a high standard of _____ and _____ to all people.



5. THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF HOSPITALITY: A REVIEW OF SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 4:9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.

Gal. 5:22-23 But, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Answer the following questions using the scripture verses provided. We will discuss these in a few minutes. Jot down a one to three sentence answer OR just underline your answer in the passage.

A. Genesis 18:1-8 What was the custom for greeting strangers in Abraham's day?

- Gen. 18:1 The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day.
- Gen. 18:2 He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground.
- Gen. 18:3 He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant.
- Gen. 18:4 Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.
- Gen. 18:5 Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on - since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said."
- Gen. 18:6 And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes."
- Gen. 18:7 Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it.
- Gen. 18:8 Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Answer: _____



B. Judges 19:11-21 How was the traveler treated by the town and who finally welcomed the traveler?

- Judg. 19:11 When they were near Jebus, the day was far spent, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites, and spend the night in it."
- Judg. 19:12 But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel; but we will continue on to Gibeah."
- Judg. 19:13 Then he said to his servant, "Come, let us try to reach one of these places, and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah."
- Judg. 19:14 So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.
- Judg. 19:15 They turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. He went in and sat down in the open square of the city, but no one took them in to spend the night.
- Judg. 19:16 Then at evening there was an old man coming from his work in the field. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was residing in Gibeah. (The people of the place were Benjaminites.)
- Judg. 19:17 When the old man looked up and saw the wayfarer in the open square of the city, he said, "Where are you going and where do you come from?"
- Judg. 19:18 He answered him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; and I am going to my home. Nobody has offered to take me in.
- Judg. 19:19 We your servants have straw and fodder for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and the woman and the young man came along with us. We need nothing more."
- Judg. 19:20 The old man said, "Peace be to you. I will care for all your wants; only do not spend the night in the square."
- Judg. 19:21 So he brought him into his house, and fed the donkeys; they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

Answer: _____



C. Matthew 25:35-40 What did Jesus say concerning the treatment of strangers?

- Matt. 25:35 "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.
- Matt. 25:38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?
- Matt. 25:39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?"
- Matt. 25:40 And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Answer: _____

D. Romans 12:10-13 Why do you think hospitality is included in this cluster of virtues?

- Rom. 12:10 Love one another with mutual affection, outdo one another in showing honor.
- Rom. 12:11 Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.
- Rom. 12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.
- Rom. 12:13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Answer: _____



E. Hebrews 13:2 Who might we be entertaining when we host a stranger and why?

Hebr. 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Answer: _____

F. James 2:2-4 How should a church treat the obviously wealthy visitor?

James 2:2 For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in.

James 2:3 And if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet."

James 2:4 Have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Answer: _____



6. THE PROFILE OF THE VISITOR

Walk a mile in their shoes

“Therefore love the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Deut. 10:19

Barriers to a good church experience:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.
- G.
- H.

What do you need at the moment you walk into a room of people you don't know?

- A.
- B.
- C.



7. THE HIGH CALLING OF USHERS AND GREETERS

“For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my Lord, than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.” Psalm 84:10

The Tithing Man

Greeters - _____ me for worship

Ushers - Help me _____, get me a good seat, be part of it.

Pastors - _____ me, key person in worship, on chancel, get me to sing, persuade me to follow Christ more deeply, confess, love others.

Greeters/Host & Hostesses _____ with the pastor, give the visitor true warmth, direction and true customer service.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

Head Usher (Team captain):

1. G _____
2. L _____
3. P _____
4. C _____
5. R _____

USHERS & GREETERS

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Usher

1. F _____
2. H _____
3. N _____
4. D _____
5. E _____
6. K _____ and R _____
7. G _____

What three positive qualities would make you come back if you met yourself?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List one negative characteristic about you (If someone met you, is there something about you that would make them say, "I may not want to return to church." e.g. not on time, inattentive?)

List three negative characteristics about your church's approach to visitors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three positive characteristics about your church's approach to visitors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



8. THE RULE OF ANONYMITY

Most visitors want to be _____.

9. A GOOD USHER OBSERVES

A good usher will _____.

A good usher is like a _____.

The unpardonable sin of an usher is _____.

Bob Chinn's Crabhouse in Wheeling, Illinois

No CGL-ing!!

a. C _____

b. G _____

c. L _____

Bob Chinn has

Greeters

Hostesses

Seaters

Waiters

"The bigger we get, the smaller we have to think - customers still walk in one at a time."

-Sam Walton



10. CHOOSING OUR WORDS

“Let your speech always be filled with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” Col. 4:6

Kindness in conversation can be developed among ushers.

Examples

Negative: “You cannot go in now!”

Positive:

Negative: “You’re late, you’ll have to sit in the back!”

Positive:

Negative: “You can’t stand here blocking everybody’s way!”

Positive:

Negative: “At your age, I suppose you need a hearing aid?”

Positive:

Negative: “Will you teenagers shut up!”

Positive:

Negative: “Will you tell your crying baby to be quiet!”

Positive:



11. IF THERE ARE DISTURBANCES

1. Move quickly and quietly
2. Always be positive
3. Be clear in your directions
4. Follow up on the individual
5. Be careful about offending anyone
6. Smile

The Basic Principles

- On time, prepared and patient
- Meet need and exceed expectation
- Enhance others' experience of God
- Be firm with the problem, gentle with the person
- Here to GLOE (Greet, Listen, Offer, Escort)



12. KEYS TO RECRUITING USHERS

1. Look for Spiritual Gifts - do they have the gift of hospitality or helps?
2. Recruit friendly people
3. Train all your ushers (*Our policy for this church is that if they don't get trained, they don't usher*)
4. Require good standing in the church
5. Don't be afraid to raise the bar
6. They must be members
7. Include pastor's review of nominees

What they don't teach you at Harvard Business School.

By Mark McCormack

C ommitment

A ttention to

D etail

I nitiative

F ollow up



13. USHER'S CARD

Usher's & Greeters Basic Principles

Lord,

Use me to enhance others' experience of God

Show me how to meet needs and exceed expectations

Help me to GLOE (Greet, Listen, Offer, Escort)

Equip me to be firm with the problem, gentle with the person

Remind me to be on time, patient and prepared to serve

An Usher's Prayer

God, I stand at the door to welcome those You bring this way.

I come prepared to serve You, knowing I see Jesus in the faces of those I greet.

Prepare me this hour to:

Greet the Stranger with grace and warmth, for You know the pain of rejection

Receive the Single Person, for You know the trials of a solitary life

Encourage the Church Family, for You know the refreshment that fellowship brings

Embrace the Children, for You loved them in all their ways

Trust the Spirit's prompting, for You let the Spirit lead You

Grant me Your spirit of hospitality, for those I serve may be Angels in disguise

In Your Son's Name, Amen.

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14. THE ULTIMATE CUSTOMER SERVICE

“Nordstrom employees are instructed to always make a decision that favors the customer before the company. They are never criticized for doing too much for the customer; they are criticized for doing too little.” [Robert Spector and Patrick D. McCarthy, *The Nordstrom Way*, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1995, p 95]

“At its best, Nordstrom never forgets that it doesn’t have all the answers. They know that the customer has all the information that they need, and that salespeople are the most valuable people in the company. The underlying culture and philosophy is not difficult to pass on to the next generation because it’s simple: Give great customer service.” [Robert Spector and Patrick D. McCarthy, *The Nordstrom Way*, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1995, p 237]



15. AN USHER'S ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Church Usher's Checklist

A. Grooming:

- Be appropriately groomed
- Be freshly bathed and use deodorant and breath mints
- No chewing gum
- Clean, appropriate attire and hair neat
- Read the entire worship bulletin

B. Usher Attitude:

- Proud to be an usher
- Optimistic about my church
- Pleasant smile, conversational
- Non-judgmental, kind to all

C. Usher's Responsibilities:

Preparation

- Arrive at least 30 minutes before service
- First to arrive, last to leave
- Study the bulletin
- Count communion cups
- Light candles 15 minutes before service
- Get drinking water for pastor



Attendance

- Take attendance - Attendance is important for major decisions such as a change of service times, budgets, recognizing patterns of growth for more seats
- Count the choir
- Don't take attendance during prayers or solos

Baptism

- Move the baptismal font out
- Retrieve water for baptism

Maintenance

- Keep pew racks clean and well-stacked
- Maintain general tidiness of usher storage area
- Maintain supplies

Ushering

- Pass out bulletins
- Never send people down the aisle, escort them
- Be attentive to the service: watch for crying babies, watch pastor, watch for late comers (your responsibility continues throughout the service)
- Use standard agreed-upon hand motions to communicate, e.g. "people skooch in to make room", pastor pick-up phone
- Collect offering
- Handle any special requirements
- Ready with Kleenex
- Concentrate on service, visitors
- Be available for extra services
- Smile, smile, smile
- Love people to Jesus



Ushering (continued)

- Same doorway
- Same ushers for a month or two
- New ushers watch for a day - the head usher teaches, never have them start without being mentored and tutored

Emergencies

- Know CPR (one on each team) OR
- Know the physicians and nurses in the congregation
- Let pastor know of emergency and nature of it
- Have emergency evacuation plans in case of a fire or similar on cards
- Megaphone

D. Usher's Closet

- Emergency instructions (written out and regularly reviewed)
- Extra registration books or other supplies
- First Aid Kit - up-to-date
- Flashlights
- Jumper Cables
- Lost & Found
- Offering Plates
- Oxygen
- Pencils
- Secure Collection Box



16. CONCLUSION

I'm A Nice Stranger

I never complain. I never create a scene. When I go to church, I never offer an objection if the usher leads me down the aisle to the front seat, while all the members of the church crowd the back seats and fix their curious gaze on my embarrassed march. No, I just take my seat.

I'm a nice visitor. I never growl aloud when I have to push by and walk over the feet of selfish church members who hog the aisle seats and would not move out of their favorite places if it meant the salvation of a soul. Oh, no, I just sit down meekly.

I'm the ideal church stranger. I never reprimand young people who sit behind me chewing gum, whispering and giggling. Oh, no, I'm too polite for that.

At the close of the services as I walk toward the door, I never make a scene if nobody speaks to me or shakes my hand. No, they gather in little cliques and don't bother me. I'm the nice visitor to the church.

And I'll tell you what else I am - I'm the stranger who never comes back.