

Assembling a Launch Team

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Imparting a Launch Mentality

With a church launch, the goal is to prepare a new church that is presented to the community in a way where as many people as possible can be reached and sustained from the very beginning. With a church launch, fundamental ministries are in place, worship is current and uplifting, production is cutting edge, messages are relevant and powerful, the greeters are friendly and helpful, and the children's ministry is enjoyable and secure. The way this can be done is through the finances and participation of supporters who help a church plant in the preparation and execution of an excellent church launch service.

We consider anyone who is part of our group prior to our launch date to be part of the Launch Team. We use the title Launch Team to reinforce our identity as a team that is preparing for our launch service. ***It is vital that the people helping to prepare for the launch have the mindset that they do not consider themselves a church until after the launch date.*** The reason is so that the people continue to stay focused outwardly on gathering people for the launch rather than focusing inwardly on themselves as a small intimate fellowship.

We encourage everyone who is on the Launch Team to be is activated in some capacity to help the church to get started. Participation, no matter how big or small, builds the sense of ownership, which is priceless when a new church is just getting started.

Building a Launch Team

Planting a church has a lot to do with gathering people. The best way to connect with people is through relationships. The following are ideas on how to build a Launch Team:

- Many church plants come out of another church. When you get ready to leave your home church to start your own, meet with the pastor and ask what kind of financial and people resources that they can help you with, even if it is only for a year to help you to get started.
- Work with a church planting organization and associate with other ministers that share your passion for reaching people. Ask them for their help in making connections in your area.

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- Get the word out that you are starting a church. Word of mouth is the most effective way of finding people who will stick. Let people know that you are looking for help with people, finances, resources, etc.
- Activate the people you have around you. Give them cards with the church information on them to pass out.
- Ask friends and family members to help you get started.

If you bring a friend on to your launch team, you both will have to adapt your personal relationship to include a professional relationship. If you bring in friends to help you plant, both of you need to be able to switch from the brother to brother relationship to the spiritual father to son relationship. This is an attitude adjustment of the heart that is inwardly accomplished. Neither one can outwardly make this switch happen. For some, familiarity breeds disrespect. For others, familiarity can breed loyalty. You can lose friendships if this adjustment cannot be made.

- Begin to meet people within your community. Ask the Lord to lead you to the people He wants you to connect with. Build genuine relationships and ask people in the community what you and your church can do for them.
- Look for the unchurched. Do not attempt to proselyte people who already have a church that they are committed to. If someone is looking for another church to attend while they are still attending another church, do not invite them to your team until they have ended that previous commitment.
- You can look for students that are graduating from Bible school or college who are looking to gain experience or add to their resume.
- You could start an internship program for people who are looking for ministry training.
- You can post ads in newspapers or the internet for a new church in their area. You can also use ads when looking for musicians or help with production.
- Get a website developed, even if it is a simple site to get started. Make sure that you are recognized by search engines so that people looking for a church online will find your website.

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Forming a Leadership Team

In addition to a launch team will also need people to serve in leadership positions. Before launching, you will need to have these three leadership positions filled: Administrator, Worship Leader, and Children's Director.

It is best to have written agreements with your leaders, including leadership requirements, expectations, and a description of responsibilities. We suggest that you include quarterly evaluations where you can discuss both achievements and goals. If the leaders falls short of their goals, they may not be able to take the church to the next level.

Make it clear in the written agreement that leadership positions for a church plant are temporary and not a promise of hire. From working with several church planters, we have observed that most people have genuine hearts to serve and help a church get started, but it is also somewhat common to find people who are looking for an opportunity to promote themselves or their ministry. We also see where some people develop their own expectations and are disappointed if their expectations are not met. Pastors need to be aware of this and to use caution when putting someone into a leadership position.

Here are suggestions for what to include in your leadership requirements:

- Be at every service and participate in outreaches
- Give tithe and offerings
- Attend leadership meetings
- Go through the Growth Track
- Help develop your area of ministry

Here are suggestions to help them know what attitudes you expect from leaders:

- Flexibility for change
- Acceptance of new leaders
- Availability to work
- Team oriented mentality
- Serving attitude
- Optimism
- Focus on training and delegation

Lead Team Meetings

You'll need to have consistent meetings with your leaders to strategize on the development of the church. You'll want to continue to speak the vision and make sure that it is implemented into every area of your ministry. You also will want to verbalize and demonstrate your core values. If people have your heart, they will know what you want based on knowing who you are.

Conducting Monthly Pre-Launch Meetings

Have at least three monthly pre-launch services with anyone interested in the church prior to the launch date. The pre-launch services are to provide a church service for your launch team as well as to prepare your ministry teams. They also provide opportunities to get the word out and have something to invite people to. They also are a way to begin developing relationships with people before the launch and to begin plugging people into outreach events. This is also a practical way to communicate how people can serve.

1. Conduct church services

Connect the people with God through heart-felt worship and a message inspired by the Holy Spirit.

2. Ministry team preparation

Pre-launch services also provide opportunities for the ministry teams to begin working. They can build momentum and teamwork. They can locate challenges and find solutions before the launch date. You will need children's ministry workers, greeters, ushers, café assistants, and help with set up and tear down.

3. Share vision

Emphasize that the pre-launch meetings are preparing for the launch when you open up to the community. Keep their focus on the launch Sunday. Continue to emphasize your launch date.

4. Invite people to give and serve

Take up offerings and encourage people to honor God with their tithe and offerings. Invite people to serve in ministries and inform them on how to do that.

5. Communicate Information

In addition to monthly pre-launch meetings, it is important to plan and communicate outreach events, emphasize the growth track, gather information on people, etc.