



CREATING A STRATEGY FOR FIRST TIME VISITORS

How To Use: This is an excellent exercise for a leadership training session.

- A. Divide the workshop participants into groups of six to eight people based upon their years of membership in your church. If you have an attendance of more than fifty then create a second workshop. It is difficult to manage a workshop of even fifty because these workshops require skilled leadership and such leadership is at a premium in most churches.
 1. Ask every person the length of his membership in your church.
 2. Record this answer on a flipchart. Do not record names. Purposely avoid using names in workshops since you are looking for an answer driven by a consensus rather than a single personality.
 3. Determine how many groups are feasible and their size.
 4. Fill each group by putting the newest members together, the next newest members together, etc. Use a flipchart for your data. *It is likely (and desired) that the newest members will see the church differently from the way the oldest members do.* Their findings will provide a learning experience to even the oldest members!
- B. Divide into separate meeting areas.
- C. Each team will develop answers to the twelve questions in Step E. The questions should appear on one sheet which each student will keep. The numerical answers are recorded on another sheet to be received by the leader. **NO NAMES SHOULD BE WRITTEN ON THE SHEET.**
- D. The leader reads the directions in Section E, answers any questions, then maintains silence as the group quietly completes the assignment. **The scale is 1 (Perfection) to 10 (Disaster).** Take six minutes for this silent study.
- E. Directions: the leader reads, “Imagine you are a first time visitor at our church. How would you rate us in that first visit in the following

categories? Record on the second sheet your answer. We will use your own ratings to develop one score for the entire team.”

1. Were you able to find a convenient parking space?
 2. Were you able to easily locate the auditorium?
 3. Were you greeted outside the auditorium?
 4. Did you receive a bulletin or newsletter before entering the auditorium?
 5. Assuming you had children, were you able, either by yourself or with the help of others, to take your children to their meeting place?
 6. Do you understand the announcement slides, the bulletin, and the public announcements?
 7. Were the first five minutes in the auditorium (before the service) productive?
 8. Did you hear clear instructions on when to stand, when to sing, when to shake hands, and when to speak?
 9. Did you receive adequate attention during our churchwide greeting (fellowship/ handshake)?
 10. Let's assume you did not bring a Bible or are a non-Bible student. Was the pastor's message clear enough for you to understand?
 11. Did you leave the service with the impression that this church is interested in you?
 12. Were you comfortable with the furniture, the lighting, and the temperature?
- F. The leader collects the answers and develops a consensus score for *each* question. It is best to enter this data in a computer spreadsheet for quicker analysis. Last, add all of the scores to develop a complete team score for this study.
- G. Review the questions with the lowest scores and develop some ideas to resolve each of those issues.
- H. Each team reports back to the workshop. A spokesman shares his team's findings with the entire group. The workshop leader can now develop overall scores for each question. These scores will identify areas to address.
- I. Compare each team's scores. Look carefully at the difference in scores between the newest members and the oldest members.
- J. Catalog or summarize the findings during the following week and issue these findings to each participant in either electronic or hard copy.