

SECTION VI: Staff Culture

Mobilize volunteers

The number one responsibility of every staff member is to mobilize volunteers. Become an expert at this. Anyone who sucks at mobilizing people will not last long as a staff member. You've got to learn how to ask people to join your team and then find ways to keep them motivated and engaged by utilizing their talents and gifts. By the way, we don't use the word "recruit". It sounds like the military.

Don't be late (being on time is late)

Be early to every meeting, event or function. If you're meeting a volunteer, be at the destination at least 15 minutes early so you can be prepared and not waste their time. Everyone is busy, but we show people respect by arriving early and being prepared.

Do more with less

Every week people sacrifice financially for the sake of our mission, "To make it easy for people to find and follow Jesus Christ". We have a responsibility to manage resources with incredible integrity and attention to detail.

-Always save receipts.

-For larger purchases (\$250+), look online for coupons (by the way, you can often purchase coupons and/or coupon codes on sites like eBay).

-ALWAYS price shop multiple stores (this can be done online).

-If something is within a reasonable driving distance, pick it up and don't pay for shipping!

We value effectiveness over effort

We DON'T measure employees by how many evenings or weekends they are in the office. We DO measure them by how much, how quickly and how well they get their work done. So - don't brag about how many hours you work. Instead, talk about the important work you got done.

Be positive (even if you don't feel like it)

If you're having a crappy day, that's okay, but choose an appropriate outlet to deal with the problem so that you do not look like a "Debbie Downer". People are more fun to be around when they SMILE.

Communicate quickly and clearly

Don't waste people's time with long emails. Keep communication short and to the point. Whenever possible... please bullet point your emails.

Sunday mornings and special event parking

We save the best parking spaces for our guests so always park far away. The last thing we want is for someone, who took a risk on attending church, to turn around and drive off because they could not find a parking space.

Give the credit, take the blame.

When something that your team did rocks, thank and recognize the people that made it happen. Instead of taking the praise for ourselves, it's a great opportunity to promote and encourage our team. What gets rewarded gets repeated!

On the flip side, when something does not go as planned (and it will happen), take responsibility and come up with a solution for making it better next time. Don't blame people. Instead, ask yourself what context you failed to set.

Nobody is going to fault you for making a mistake so long as you recognize why it happened and how to avoid it the next time around.

Continually grow and improve

We will never reach an arrival point on our teams or programs where no further improvement can be made. There is always room to improve! Equip yourself and equip your teams (books, articles, networking with others, etc.). You should become "the expert" in whatever position you hold.

One way we practically work towards improvement is our weekly and monthly reports (online forms). Please ensure your weekly report is submitted by the end of day on Sunday and your monthly report is submitted by the last day of each month.

Solutions, solutions, solutions

There is no question that problems will arise in your volunteer teams, programs and systems. There is no getting around it, it's just going to happen, and that's okay. Problems are an opportunity for us to get better and improve what we do. But what is even more important than problem avoidance is problem resolution. When something goes sideways don't automatically run to your supervisor and ask what needs to be done. You are being paid to anticipate problems and come up with solutions to those problems. Before approaching your supervisor for guidance, identify 3 possible solutions to the problem (pick your favorite). Now you're ready for your supervisor's guidance on how to move forward on resolution. Problem solved!

Overstaff

Every single week multiple people on your team(s) will call in sick, walk in late or simply not show up. THIS IS A GIVEN! Prepare for this by overstaffing your teams each and every week. Never blame volunteers for a poorly staffed team.

Do it now!

Don't procrastinate. Think ahead. If you had 3 months to prepare, be ready in the first month. Poor leaders procrastinate.

Throw parties

Every staff member should become an expert at throwing parties for their teams. If it's "not your personality", then mobilize another person who can help you throw parties. Our goal is to create an environment that people want to be around.

Clear over cute

Whenever you do an event or need to choose a name... determine to be clear over cute (ie – 3rd-5th grade vs. Kid's Kingdom). This ensures we don't create a culture of insiders with insider language.

Follow up

It is vital that you check and follow up with your Fellowship One database connections by the end of day Wednesday, each and every week. Your initial follow up can be an email, but after that it needs to be a phone call. Assuming you've done your best to follow up, any outstanding contacts need to be completely deleted after one month to ensure we don't have a messy database.

Create systems

The better the system, the easier it is for a volunteer to come on board. Keep everything easy and accessible. Don't have long training manuals or lots of meetings. Keep it simple, but do have a process for everything from how to follow up with people interested in your ministry... to communicating with your team... to training your team. Next - work the system!

Come prepared

When you come to staff meetings, always have your notebook or other documents printed and ready to rock! Waiting for someone to run to their computer and print something out while everyone is waiting is a drag. Besides, people might mess with your coffee while you're gone.

Manage yourself

Work at being an incredible time manager and giving yourself projects. Don't wait to be assigned work. Dream, create and implement on your own! Unless you suck at what you do, you won't be micromanaged.

Take responsibility

Don't ever say, "That's not my job"! Take responsibility. If a trash can in the office is filled... empty it. If you notice a spill... clean it up. Own the problem!

Say what you're thinking

Don't expect staff to read your mind. Be kind and polite, but say what you're thinking.

Sunday mornings are for everybody, except family and friends.

Don't huddle around family and friends on Sunday morning. You can see them anytime. Sunday mornings aren't for coddling babies, having conversations with other staff, or planning a vacation with some friends. Focus all your time and energy on volunteers and guests. Love them. Appreciate them. Inspire them.

By the way, when you meet someone who is new to Great Lakes, you can get a feel for who they are and how you can guide them by asking these questions:

1. How did you hear about Great Lakes?
2. How long have you been attending Great Lakes?
3. What is your church background?
4. Are you in a Growth Group or a volunteer team?
5. How can I help you get into a group or onto a team?