

First Impressions That Wow: Transform Your Welcome Team

***IBSA* | Leaders**

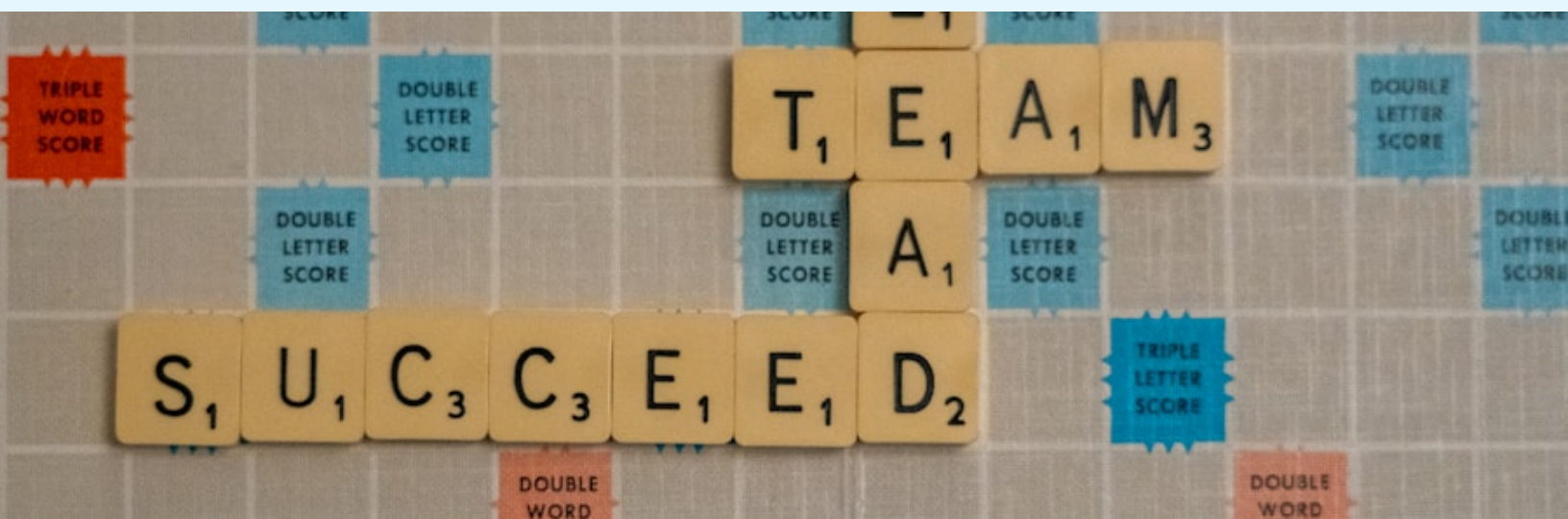
Introduction

Creating a warm and inviting atmosphere at your church is essential for making guests feel valued and at home. The first few moments of a guest's visit determine whether they will return. This guide provides practical training and strategies to build a welcoming and effective guest services team.



Chapter 1: The Importance of First Impressions

- “Every Sunday is someone's first Sunday.”
- Guests decide within 7 seconds whether they feel welcome.
- The people they meet matter just as much as the service.



Chapter 2: Guest Services Training Options

1. **Video-Based Training**
 1. Interactive and engaging.
 2. Includes quizzes and role-playing scenarios.
 3. Empowers volunteer leaders and reduces the pastor's burden.
2. **Traditional Training**
 1. Conducted through slides and presentations.
 2. Led by a pastor or designated leader.
 3. Allows for immediate feedback and hands-on learning.

Chapter 3: Establishing a Volunteer Culture

- **Others-focused** and friendly.
- **Inclusive and non-judgmental.**
- Walk guests to their destination rather than pointing.
- Let guests lead the conversation and match their energy.
- Prioritize **people before policy** to ensure meaningful connections.

Chapter 4: Scheduling and Commitment

- **Recommended:** Serve every other week.
- Use **Planning Center Online** for scheduling and reminders.
- Volunteers should **find a replacement** if they cannot serve.

Chapter 5: Sunday Volunteer Roles

Greeters

- Arrive 25 minutes early.
- Wear name tags and “I Can Help” lanyards.
- Position at entrances before and after service.
- Assist with post-service engagement.
- Direct lost guests with warmth and care.



Coffee Team

- Ensure coffee and water stations are stocked and clean.
- Maintain an inviting hospitality area.



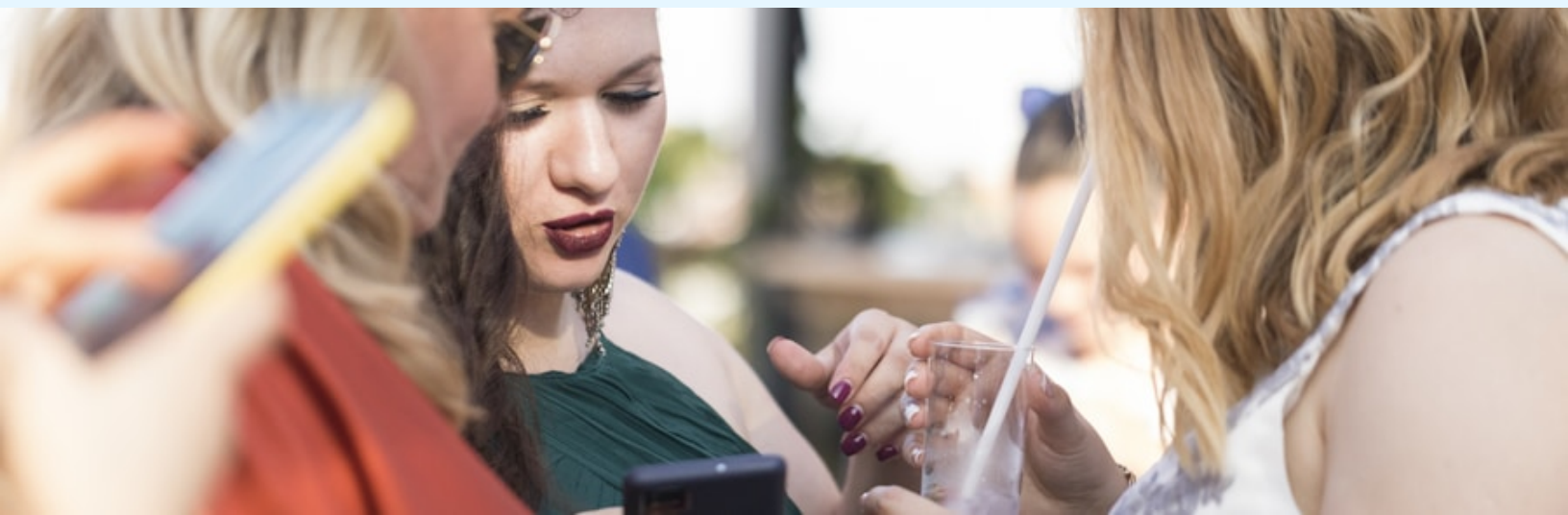
Information Desk

- Answer common questions.
- Direct guests to staff members or ministries.
- Manage lost and found items.



Ushers

- Assist with seating guests.
- Ensure a welcoming and distraction-free environment.
- Clean the auditorium before and after service.



Chapter 6:

Understanding Guest Behavior

- **Nonverbal cues matter.** A guest's body language may indicate they need help but feel hesitant to ask.
- Signs of a lost guest:
 - Darting eyes or tilted head.
 - Walking in a zigzag pattern.
 - Hesitant posture and shifting weight.
- Approach with **warmth and empathy** rather than waiting for them to ask for help.



Chapter 7: Magic Phrases to Make Guests Feel Welcome

01 “I’m so glad you’re here!”

02 “You are in for a treat today!”

03 “The talk today is amazing! You’re going to love it.”

04 Guest: “How’s it going?” You: “Better now that you’re here!”

Chapter 8: Small Talk Strategies

Use the **F.O.R.D. method** to engage guests:

Friends & Family

Occupation

Recreation

Dreams

This approach makes conversations natural and engaging without feeling forced.

Chapter 9: Welcoming Beyond Sundays

- Every church event should have greeters.
- If a church is not prepared to welcome guests, it will struggle to retain them.
- Even regular attendees appreciate intentional greetings.



Chapter 10: Mastering the 7-Second Rule

Studies show that visitors decide within 7 seconds whether they feel welcome.

Use **nonverbal warmth** (eye contact, smiles, open posture).

Avoid distractions (phones, chatting with familiar faces instead of guests).

Be **present and ready to assist** at all times.

Conclusion

A strong welcome team plays a vital role in creating a hospitable and inviting church environment. By focusing on training, intentionality, and warmth, your church can transform first impressions into lasting connections.

Are you ready to WOW your guests? Start implementing these principles today!

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