

Chuck:

Have you ever watched a football game and noticed the players as they huddle up? There's a synergy among the team members as they come together, all with one purpose, in great anticipation, ready to hear the play that's been called.

A lot of teams nowadays run a fast-paced, no-huddle offense...but there's a reason the huddle has been such a mainstay throughout the history of the sport.

It's a powerful tool for football teams, and it can be a powerful tool for your volunteer team.

[SUNDAYU PROMO]

Speaking of powerful tools...

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[INTRO MUSIC]

The volunteer huddle.

Wayne: The volunteer huddle.

Chuck:

It's one of the most underutilized, most valuable tools in leading volunteers at churches. I've been a part of them and led them. Wayne...you've led hundreds of them as a worship leader and production director.

Wayne: Yes, I love the volunteer huddle.

Chuck:

How would you define the volunteer huddle? What is a huddle?

Wayne: In its most basic form I'd say a huddle is really just a pre-service gathering of your volunteers. But as we will see today it's a super powerful time and great way to communicate with your volunteers

Chuck:

And there are dozens of reasons that huddles are important...but today we want to walk thru just a few reasons that having a volunteer huddle is essential for your ministry.

Wayne:

I think one of the most important things about a huddle is it helps you establish your culture.

Chuck:

What do you mean by that...establish your culture?

Wayne:

Culture is a mindset, It's a way of life' or living for our volunteers, meaning the way they do things.

Culture says this behaviour is or is not acceptable while another behaviour is deserving of praise.

The culture we create, and trust me you are creating a culture, sets the standard for day to day activities.

For example you might want to have a culture of encouragement.

Meaning you want your volunteers to fill each other with courage.

And if that's the culture you seek then having a huddle and using that time to encourage your volunteers is a great way for you to model that behavior and establish that culture.

Chuck:

Just having a huddle and expecting everyone to be there for the huddle creates a bit of culture on it's own.

We could probably do an entire podcast on creating culture for your volunteers...and maybe we will in the future...but let me ask you this...

...What's the difference between establishing culture and casting vision. Because that's the second thing we listed that's important about having a weekly huddle...vision casting.

Wayne:

Yes of course,

Vision casting is a great way to say where you see the ministry going.

You can talk about upcoming changes but Casting vision is really just passing on your passion.

For example, if you were vision casting, you might say:

I really feel like this thing that's happening today is going to change someone's life.

We aren't just doing a task here today, what we are really doing is making visitors feel welcome, and when they feel welcome, they are more likely to get something positive from the service.

Chuck:

And, vision casting doesn't have to be this grand, far-out there big view of how things can be. You can cast vision for how you want the day to go...which is our third benefit to having a weekly huddle...focusing everyone's attention on the day and relaying information about that day.

If you're on a production team, it could be walking everyone through a tricky transition that's going to happen so everyone is on the same page. If it's a children's ministry team, it could simply be giving everyone a little insight to how the craft should work for the day.

It's just a chance to touch base with everyone and make sure everyone is on the same page.

Wayne:

{rewrite this to suit you}

I like what you said there...it's a chance to touch base with everyone. And that's important and here's why...

Think about it like this... I don't know how many folks wake up in the morning and say "I wish I could hold open the door for more people", or "You know what I really want to do is park more cars." I think folks volunteer with us because they are looking to connect with a group that's on a mission.

Also if you oversee a lot of areas or if you have a big team it is hard to have a personal touch-point with all of your volunteers each week. It's a super important thing to do — and everyone should try to have a personal touch point with all their volunteers each week — but if you do happen to miss someone, at least they *felt like* they got to connect with you through the huddle.

Chuck:

That's so smart and so true.

Plus, it gives everyone a chance to connect with each other.

Wayne:

Yes.

The huddle is a chance for every volunteer to look at and connect with the group. It's a great way for your team to "actually feel" like they are part of a team.

Chuck:

You want your volunteer teams to have a small group feel to them. You want volunteers who serve together to care for one another. But sometimes in the hurry of a Sunday morning (or

whatever day they're serving), they don't have a good chance to connect unless you pull them all together for a huddle. Then, they at least feel like they get to connect with each other.

Wayne:

Exactly.

Chuck:

Okay...let's recap. Having a volunteer huddle every week is important for these reasons:

1. It helps you establish culture.
2. It gives you a chance to cast some vision.
3. It gives you a chance to center everyone on the day and have a touch point with everyone.

And, the next one is...

Wayne:

It gives you a chance to center everyone spiritually.

Chuck:

Ah...yes...and getting everyone spiritually focused is arguably the most important thing we do as a leader.

Wayne:

So it's really easy to look at our volunteers as employees or interns. But that's not what our volunteers are. They are God's people, doing the work of the Church, with you as their leader. They are not just people accomplishing task on a checklist. There's a real spiritual component to what's happening here. SO the huddle is a great time to change our thoughts from the Mechanical aspect (the how we do things) to the Spiritual aspects (the why we do things) of the service, weekend, event.

Chuck:

And we believe this spiritual focus is so important, that's why we're including a devotional for you each week in The Volunteer Memo.

By the way, if you haven't signed up for The Volunteer Memo, let me tell you about it real quick...

It's a monthly email that we send that has resources, templates, articles, and — as I mentioned — devotionals, to help you recruit, assimilate, train, and care for your volunteers better.

Check it out at volunteermemo.com. I think you'll find it helpful.

Wayne:

I'm excited about The Volunteer Memo. I think it's going to transform how people care for and lead their volunteers.

Well, Chuck...that's probably about all the time we have for today.

On the next podcast, we'll be looking at some practical tips for *how* to create a successful volunteer huddle. What should you do during a huddle? When should you have it? How do you get people to attend the huddle? How do you build excitement for it? And so on...

Chuck:

Sounds good...thanks everyone and we'll see next time and, until then, happy huddling and go lead those volunteers well!

[OUTRO MUSIC & VOICE OVER]

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