

Some Assumptions Underlying the Leadership of Volunteers in Churches and Faith-Based Organizations

- Planning is central to the engagement of one volunteer or many: this speaks to the theological basis of stewarding God's resources.
- There are discrete steps needed to effectively lead volunteers: the omission of any one of the steps may well compromise the whole effort.
- Volunteers mistreated in a church or faith-based setting may well leave the church, but may also leave the faith. The stakes, therefore, are high.
- There are all sorts of people in the pews waiting to be asked to help.
- People who volunteer in the church are more likely to financially support the church.
- Church size makes a big difference in the way one goes about planning, in the language one uses, and in the way volunteers are engaged.
- Being a church volunteer is not any holier than being a volunteer in the Boy Scouts or coaching a girls' soccer team, or teaching literacy skills: all can be ministries. Christians can respond to their faith's call to serve in many ways.
- "Call" is two sided: the individual may feel a call to a specific ministry, but the call must be affirmed by the community. A person leading volunteers may well have to serve as the interpreter of the community's (possible) response.