

B E W E E K L Y

VOLUNTEER PLAYBOOK



4 STEPS TO MOVE VOLUNTEERS
TO SERVE WEEKLY

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C O N T E N T S

01 *NEW VISION*

FIND YOUR WHY

Why do you want volunteers to serve weekly? This is the most pivotal question to answer.

PROCESS

CREATE YOUR PIPELINE

Because the process is multiple steps, it's important to define a pipeline that sets this new vision in place from the beginning.

03 *DURATION*

DETERMINE YOUR TIMEFRAME

Although you're excited about this new rotation, not everyone is going to be as excited as you. Give them time to embrace the vision.

FINALIZE

TRANSITION YOUR LAGGERS

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Be Weekly Volunteer Playbook

Four steps to move your volunteers to serve weekly.

You're a leader facing a challenge. You've got a team of volunteers you love to lead. When you consider the scope of your team, you see talent, skill, joy, and passion. And you know that if you can focus all of that in the same direction, the ministry you lead could reach further and faster than you could ask or imagine.

But you know there's a critical step to bringing all the talent, skill, joy and passion together. A necessary shift from infrequent serving rotations to frequent serving rotations. You've heard it can be done. But you're not sure where to begin.

We get it. We've been in your shoes. In fact, there are a few simple steps to take to move your volunteer team from random serving rotations to weekly. If you're tired of your volunteer schedule looking like a cruel game of connect the dots, then you're in the right place. Follow the steps in the Be Weekly Volunteer Playbook and move your volunteer team to greater frequency and better ministry.

Step 1: Find Your Why

Why do you want volunteers to serve weekly?

This is the most pivotal question to answer. Without your why, you lack a vision to communicate to a prospective volunteer. What makes serving weekly better than...

- ...every other week.
- ...once every third week.
- ...once a month.
- ...or the Sunday following a full moon.

There's a reason you want your volunteers to serve more often. So, let's put that reason on paper. For me, my reason is frequency. You see, frequency offers some key benefits that makes the volunteer experience far better.

Relationships

Frequency is an important factor because many of our volunteer roles (i.e small group leader, coach, worship leader, etc) are relational at their core. Relationships are the foundation of their role. And frequency is necessary to establish a relationship.



A small group leader leading a group of kids/students.
A coach leading a team of small group leaders.
A worship leader leading a group of kids/students to engage in worship.

Success in these roles is largely determined by how frequently the leader shows up in the life of those they lead. If they only show up every three weeks, monthly or the Sunday following a blue moon... establishing a relationship is much harder to do.

Proficiency

Frequency offers a level of proficiency in a volunteer role simply because you are performing the responsibilities of that role more often. Look at it this way, how well can you develop a skill when you only perform it once every 30 days for an hour... maybe? The truth is... you won't be very good at it. No matter what you're trying to tackle.

This level of consistency allows you to develop skills and rhythms that make the role easier, more effective and far more fun. And when a volunteer feels like they're winning and having fun doing it... you'll have them for the long haul.

Winning + Fun = Longevity

Wait! My church only has one Sunday service.

If your church offers a single adult worship service each week, then a weekly serving rotation is not recommended. But you do have some options! In this scenario, we've seen successful rotations such as:

4 weeks on / 4 weeks off

Build two teams per environment/grade/age to work together to lead four Sundays in a row, then swap.

Every Other Week

Build two teams per environment/grade/age to work together to lead every other week.

Both of these options allow for consistency and opportunity to participate in the adult Sunday service regularly.



Step 2: Create Your Pipeline

How will you process volunteers from interest to assigned.

The process of moving a prospective volunteer from interest to assigned is what we call a volunteer pipeline. Because the process is multiple steps, it's important to define a pipeline that sets this new vision in place from the beginning.

A Volunteer Pipeline can ensure you establish vision, define culture and give a prospective volunteer the right foundation as they begin their new role.

For help Building Your Volunteer Pipeline, find out more at www.ginamclain.com.

Step 3: Determine Your Timeframe

When do you want all volunteers transitioned to the new rotation?

There are ways to lead a team of volunteers from their current serving rotation to a weekly rotation. You can walk in this Sunday and make the grand announcement that everyone will move to serving weekly starting next Sunday.

But I should warn you. That's probably not your best move.

Instead, consider a more gradual approach. Although you're excited about this new rotation, not everyone is going to be as excited as you. No matter how passionately you communicate the Why. So, give yourself some time to lead them to embrace the vision as you embrace it.

You'll discover that some follow sooner than others. And that's normal. The goal is to fail people at a rate they can handle. Give them time and space to view their ministry role through this new vision. I recommend a minimum 6 month transition. If you lead a larger team of volunteers (500+), I recommend stretching out to 9-12 months.



“Leadership is failing people at a rate they can handle.”
-Scott Cormode, Fuller Seminary

But don't worry, it won't feel that long because you'll role this out in phases.

Share the Vision

You'll want to pull your volunteer team together to share this new vision. This is great content for a large training event or your annual vision event. The key is to leverage the energy and excitement around an annual gathering to share your vision.

There are key strategies & skills you'll want to employ to lead toward a new vision successfully. For a coaching session to learn these strategies, go to www.ginamcclain.com/work-with-me.

New Recruits / New Rhythm

Now that you've shared the vision, it's time to implement. With each new volunteer you recruit to your team, you'll recruit to a weekly serving rotation. In the initial stages, it's important to let them know of the recent change so they don't wonder why their serving rotation seems unique. But as time progresses and new volunteers are added, your infrequent volunteer base grows smaller and smaller.

In fact, a benefit along the way is the discontent created within your infrequent volunteers. As they see this new team of volunteers making connections, developing skills and fostering relationships with kids/students a growing discontent wells up within. They begin to see their frequency of serving in a new light. Gradually they change their mind. And decide to make a change. More about that in a minute.

Grandfather the Rest

Remember when I said it's important to fail people at a rate they can handle? In case you forgot, reread the “Determine Your Timeframe” section. That's what makes this step so important.

Though you are moving your volunteer team toward a weekly serving commitment, let's give them time and space to accept that new reality. In fact, we want to give them the chance to see if they want to buy into the vision you've defined.



A great way to do that is to “grandfather” them into this new vision. They don’t have to change a thing... for a defined period of time. We recommend six months. That gets you through at least one peak and one lag season of ministry.

For example, if you roll out this new vision in August then that means:

- All new volunteers are recruited to a weekly rotation as of August.
- All existing volunteers can continue with their current serving rotation until the end of December.

Step 4: Transition Your Laggards

What will you offer those that don’t transition?

Let’s face it. Even with our best visioning, some volunteers simply aren’t going to make the leap with us. And that’s okay. The goal is to build a team of volunteers that want to invest in the vision you’ve defined. It won’t be for everyone. So, give them permission to pursue other options.

Follow Up

Make a plan to follow up with each of these volunteers at the 5 month mark to find out what direction they want to go:

- Change their serving rotation to weekly!
- Change to another volunteer role where a less frequent serving rotation is a good fit.

Don’t be surprised! Most volunteers won’t make it this long. Many will make the shift to weekly or transition off your team. This is a hard reality to face but a temporary pain for a long term gain. So, be prepared.

But what about...

I know what you’re thinking. You’ve got some volunteers who are tried and true. You don’t want to lose them. They are GREAT on your team. But they just can’t serve at that frequency.

Maybe it’s because...

...he’s on-call at the hospital every other Sunday.

... she has her kids every other week and doesn’t want to lose precious weekend time.



...his spouse only serves every other week and they don't want to drive to church separately.

There are a variety of reasons you may want to hand onto a quality volunteer that simply cannot commit to this new vision. These will be case-by-case judgment calls. The important thing is... don't diminish the vision.

In fact, here's another way to put it. If someone can't jump over the bar that's set, don't lower it.

In my experience, my best option is to offer them a role where they 'float' wherever I need them. You might be thinking, "Is she talking about a sub?". Well... yes, sort of.

You see, when I've led volunteer teams to a weekly commitment in the past, if a volunteer couldn't make the shift but they added value every time they served, I offered them an every-other-week rotation. The difference is... they don't have a fixed role. Instead they serve wherever I need them to serve that Sunday.

So, that valuable volunteer continues to show up every other week. And when they walk through the doors, they are someone's hero. Because it never seems to fail... no matter how much preparation during the week... someone's child gets sick, someone has a flat tire, someone finds they woke up in Tahiti that morning... and they simply can't serve. That wonderful, every-other-week 'floating' volunteer can step in and fill that spot.

So, there you go. Four steps to transitioning your team to Be Weekly. It may seem daunting right now. But don't worry. Every tree falls if you take enough swings at it. So start swinging.

Lead your team to Be Weekly and together you'll experience greater momentum, deeper relationships and more fun than you can imagine.

Can we help? Visit www.ginamcclain.com for information on coaching and consulting.

