

CHURCH GROWTH SERIES PODCAST, EPISODE 4
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Connecting new people
to the church

In this final episode of a four-part Church Growth podcast series, we focus on how you connect with guests to integrate into the life of the church and help them become long-term disciples of Jesus Christ.

- Episode 1: Is your church ready for growth?
- Episode 2: Plan outreach events that build relationships and growth
- Episode 3: Guest readiness

Managing the Lifecycle of People in Your Church

- Guest – Don't know other people in the church or the **routines of the church**.
- Regular Attenders – Show up to church regularly. May start to think about attending Sunday school and other activities at the church. Familiar with the service times, worship and generally know what to expect.
- Members – Made a formal commitment to the church using their prayer, presence, gifts and service to the church. Some people may not have officially joined, but act like members.
- Fully Integrated – Deeply connected with people in the church. Has a strong friend group, understand the unwritten rules and know the idiosyncrasies of the church.

The goal is to move people through the lifecycle. People leave as they move to the next phase but experience resistance or difficulties in the process.

How do you get regular attenders to become members?

- *New people need information to decide whether to join the church.* What's here for me and my kids? What's expected of me?
- *Guests don't know how to join the church.* They don't know the process, how long it takes or what the expectations are to join.
- *Something happens shortly after they engage with the church.* Keep an eye on new members as they work to integrate into a new community.

How do you get members to become fully integrated?

- New people need to form new relationships. Depending on how many new people are joining the church, the “friendship slots” for your existing members may be full. (We all have limited capacity for very close friends.)
- You need to help new members form 2 to 3 strong relationships inside the church. If you have a large group of new members, you can have them integrate with each other. If not, you need to find specific members who have things in common with new people and facilitate a connection. This needs to be intentional or it won't happen.

Do your new members feel underutilized?

- Do the 10% of people who do 90% of the work do it because they want it done in a specific way?
- Develop a way to identify the spiritual gifts of new people and inspire their use for the church and for God. **Intentionally look to place people into existing ministries** (like the sound booth). Involvement leads to a sense of belonging and contribution to something bigger than ourselves.
- We're called to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Growing people from guest to regular attender to member to fully involved member is part of our mandate. **Think about an intentional process as how to help people grow.**