

Dear Youth Leader,

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Regards,
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A plan for developing leaders

written by
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A Plan for the Developing of Leaders

This is something I wrote in response to the question, “What do I do if I work at a church that has no leadership team?”

Before you take a youth ministry job/role

1. Do your homework before you take a youth ministry position. Examine the potential for leaders by asking: Who is there? What is the history of leadership? Will the present leaders stay? Are there godly youth in grades 11 & 12 who may stay around?
2. What is the community like—do youth stay around after high school? If yes, your job is easier. If no, you have to look more towards the adults for help.
3. Is there a College and Careers group? If so, can you work with the leader? This is paramount as it will probably be the group to resource you with leaders.
4. Discuss the issue of leadership with the elders and senior minister and the hiring team. Explain your vision of ministry and how a godly leadership team is crucial. If they expect you to fly solo or be the Pied Piper...you may want to rethink this job.

Once you take a youth ministry job/role

1. Meet with your leaders (if there are any) as often as feasible. Dinners, lunch, coffee etc.
2. Can you form a leadership Bible study? This will take some convincing but see if you can. This is by far the most effective way to develop strong leaders as a cohesive team.
3. Form a small group youth Bible study straight away. Find a group of homogenous youth who are not in a group and start meeting weekly. In fact, you may need to start two! (as a full time youth minister I have lead a leader's Bible study, a junior boy's group, and a senior boy's group all at the same time).
4. Set into place structures that will produce solid Christians. This will include running a good youth meeting that aims to develop strong disciples, retreats, training events etc.
5. Can you run a summer program of interns? This is a great way to train up youth. Can you run an intensive training week during summer?
6. Ask, how can you “graduate” youth from the youth group to become your leadership team?
- (7. By the way, never stand up in front of church and ask for help. You want volunteers who meet the criteria of godly people worthy of imitation. General announcements get anyone and everyone.)
8. Get your prayer warriors active.

What to do if you need adults to be the leaders (because there are no university aged students)

1. This has some real strengths—adults who have been Christians for a while tend to be much wiser than university students!
2. You will have to factor in how to work with their full schedules.
3. You will need a high profile in adult settings. Make sure you can preach often, be visible in services and in the coffee time. Get to know adults and let them get to know you. Share with them your vision, passion and the needs of the youth ministry.
4. Sell the vision, sell the vision, *sell the vision*. Meals, lunches etc. etc.
5. Set up some sort of mentoring or short-term exposure. You can ask an adult to join you for a month as you lead your Bible study. This may show them that they can do it. It may also excite them to take on a group themselves. Involve adults in all facets of the youth ministry: cooking, driving, setting up/taking down, giving testimonies, just sitting in as chaperones. This can create a real desire to do more (like run small groups).
6. Quite often adults need to be reassured that their age is not a barrier between them and the youth. The bottom line is, to the young people anyone over age 21 is *old!*