



# The Nuts & Bolts of a Volunteer Huddle

**Creating an irresistible volunteer culture takes intentionality. If you want to raise your volunteer retention and engagement rate, the lowest hanging fruit is providing better connections among your volunteers. HUDDLES are the BEST way to do just that!!**

However, there is a nuance to huddles that is often overlooked. It's kind of like the difference between a funeral and a party. Volunteer huddles can go either way if not done well.

Let's start by defining what makes a huddle a WIN:

An effective HUDDLE is a 7-10 minute focused, high energy, mini pre-game rally to cast vision, build team morale, communicate important details, last minute changes, and pray for the day!

*Questions* to ask to determine if your huddle was a win...

- Was it fun?
- Was it no more than 10 minutes?
- Was it inspiring? Did we share an inspiring story of life change?
- Was it informative?
- Does everyone feel more connected?
- Did we pray?

- Choose a huddle leader who is energetic and fun\*!  
If that's not you, that's okay! Take this opportunity to identify and equip one or more volunteers to take the lead.
- Replace Yourself...Huddles are a highly effective tool for leadership development. The fringe benefit is it also creates a healthy competition amongst your team for who can come up with the most creative ideas/activities for a huddle! So. Much. Fun.}
- Gather your volunteer team, virtually or in person {ideal size is 10-12 people}  
30 minutes before service time for a 7-10-minute volunteer huddle.
- If possible, provide coffee and a snack or go all out and provide a full-blown meal. Whatever floats your boat!



Consider utilizing the proven framework below to include the 4 Things Every Volunteer Needs; Support, Empowerment, Connection and Significance. (based on research from Christine's book, "The Volunteer Project: Stop Recruiting. Start Retaining.") **The Volunteer Project: Stop Recruiting. Start Retaining**

## 4 Things Every Volunteer Needs:

### 1&2. Support & Empowerment

#### *Make It Helpful!*

- Include Announcements and Reminders about details for the day and future events/trainings.
- Drive Home the day's Bottom Line/Big Idea- the one thing we want people to remember.
- Remind them why they are here

(e.g.- Kid Min Volunteer — to love kids because they are made in the image of God and to help kids mature in their ability to relate to God and grow in their faith.)

(e.g.- First Impressions Volunteer — research shows that in the first 7 minutes, a 1st time guest decides whether or not they will return or if they will even open their heart to the message...what you do matters!)

### 3. Connection

#### *Make It Memorable & Fun!*

- Facilitate a fun activity or ice breaker {google icebreakers/team building activities} that drives home the bottom line or one that reinforces an organizational value or desired culture.
- After completing the activity/game, drive the point home by making the application to the value or desired culture.
- Try to keep it to about 5 minutes. The goal is to make your point and get volunteers pumped up and excited to SERVE!

### 4. Significance

#### *Make It Meaningful!*

- Share a quick story of life change that connects the role they play to the overall mission of the organization "Let me tell you what happened last week because of you... What you do matters and we couldn't do what we do without you!"
- Pray- Close out your huddle with an uplifting and encouraging prayer for the team and for the people you serve!
- Get corny and create a team cheer and get to it!!! "Go Team!!!"

**\*I know what you might be thinking..."Huddles are great for extroverts but what about the introverts???"**

I need you to know that this framework is proven to be successful with both introverts and extroverts. If you're an introvert, please don't be too quick to dismiss the ideas. Keep in mind that almost everyone likes to have fun and be a part of a winning team! Give it your all for a month or two and watch the magic happen!

*Cheering you on!*

Christine Kreisher, Author of The Volunteer Project: Stop Recruiting. Start Retaining.