

GROWTH POINTS

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Building an Evangelistic Church

Researchers agree that most growing churches in the USA do so from transfer growth. There are, however, churches that are considered High Conversion Rate (HCR) churches.

A HCR church is one that grows at a ratio of 20:1, or 5% per year by conversion growth. These churches see one new adult convert for every twenty people in average attendance.

Insights from HCR Churches for Building an Evangelistic Church

1. Build an evangelistic conscience.

- Preach and teach the Great Commission.
- Share your own passion for reaching the lost.
- Reframe evangelism as a privilege, rather than a duty.

- Reframe evangelism as a ministry of conversation.

- Write your own church's story like the book of Acts. Feature stories of people who came to faith in your church.

- Reinforce evangelism when it happens through interviews, highlights, testimonies, and recognition.

2. Focus on your extended congregation.

- Help others see the unreached people around them.

- Assist church attendees to identify people in their own social networks.

- Encourage prayer and care for the people in their social networks.

- Focus your people on building the relationship before giving an invitation.

- Teach people that they will likely be many links in the chain of relationships and invitations before a person believes. All links in the chain are important, not just the last link!

3. Train your people in stages.

- Train everyone to be involved.
- Train everyone to be an inviter.
- Train 50% of your people in conversational evangelism.
- Train 10% of your people in verdict evangelism.

4. Design safe events for members to bring their friends and family.

- Rethink your public worship service.
- Redesign old events and programs.
- Start new groups and classes.
- Engage in missional opportunities.
- Emphasize BIG days.

5. Develop side-door ministries.

- God's policy is to reach people with troubles, trials, and temptations – recovery groups
- Jesus ministered to zealots, as well as the poor, blind, and lepers (those expressly bared from the temple) – support groups.

- People gather around special interests – affinity groups.

6. Strengthen your connection ministry.

- Evaluate all the stages in your welcome ministry from first engagement with your church to participation in ministry.
- Recruit newcomers to work in your welcome ministry.

- Visit other churches to learn best practices in welcoming and involving newcomers.

7. Reward those who participate in evangelistic activities.

- Remember: What gets rewarded gets done; what gets praised gets repeated.

The good news is that people are receptive to the Gospel. The prediction that people would lose interest in religion and spirituality as a society became more secular has not proven accurate. Secular, post-modern people are more interested in faith and spirituality today.

Putting some of these practices from HCR churches will help you improve your evangelistic outreach.

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