

A Quick Start GUIDE



INTEREST COORDINATOR

A Quick Start Guide for the Interest Coordinator

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Introduction

You have been chosen as interest coordinator for your church. You were selected prayerfully and with anticipation of what your special gifts can bring to this position. Thank you for accepting this role in ministry. This position is an important part of your church's outreach efforts.

As interest coordinator, you will be a member of the church board and personal ministries council. You will work with your pastor and the personal ministries council chairperson to keep track of the names of people interested in your church and make sure they receive follow-up contact. You will regularly report to the board the number of interested people and how you are following up.

Duties of the interest coordinator include:

- Tracking the names of everyone who has expressed an interest in some area of the church's outreach efforts.
- Developing of a database of names of interested individuals.
- Consulting with the pastor and others for criteria of inclusion in the database.
- Overseeing the list to ensure all names and personal information are properly used.
- Training church members, particularly greeters, in obtaining accurate contact information.
- Working with the pastor, personal ministries council members, Bible workers, and others to arrange appropriate follow-up.
- Continually encouraging members to submit names of persons interested in the church.

Making a List

Many members of your congregation have developed relationships with people who are not members of the church, yet have shown interest. These relationships may result from a seminar, a community outreach event, or through the church school or Pathfinder program. The names may come from community services, outreach magazine subscriptions, and church members' personal contacts.

It's your job to organize information about people who come into contact with the church. Your list should include contact information, how each person came into contact with the church, and anything else that is relevant. This list needs to be stored in a database where the information can be easily retrieved by authorized persons, updated, and used for follow-up contact purposes.

A simple computer database will work. You can also find software programs that allow you to track names, family members, addresses, phone numbers, events the individual attended, follow-up visits, and Bible studies. When you enter a name into the database, double-check the contact information as well as whether the person is an interest, a current member or a non-attending member.

Software

Find software you can purchase for member and interest information storage at the following websites:

Software for Ministry

www.softwareforministry.com

Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Software

www.luc.adventist.org/lucis/index.php

Servant PC Resources, Inc.

www.servantpc.com

Jewel Church Accounting System

www.jewelsda.com

Power Church Software

www.powerchurch.com

CCIS Church Management Software

www.ccissoftware.com

Who to Include

You will need to set parameters for what information to include as you begin setting up the database. This means deciding which names to include and how long they will be stored.

Below is a list of information you could include:

- Name
- Address
- Phone (home and cell)
- Email address
- Family information – spouse, children (include children's ages)
- How they came into contact with the church – seminar, community outreach activity, etc.
- Follow-up calls and visits
- Acquaintances within the church
- Who is assigned to follow up with each contact
- Which materials have been given to each contact
- Bible studies completed

Consult with the pastor, personal ministries council and perhaps the church board about additional information they would like to collect.

Social Networking

You will find that it works best to contact some people through social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter. You could also ask if they would like to receive text messages about upcoming events.

Who Gets to See What?

One of your primary responsibilities is to guard peoples' private information. The contact directory is not distributed to the entire church. At the same time, the pastor, elders, deacons and deaconesses, and others involved with follow-up will need access to current information. They will also need the ability to update the list as peoples' information changes.

Work with your pastor and the church board to establish a policy for who can access interest file information. You can provide varying levels of access. For example, if the prayer committee wishes to pray for interested people by name, you could provide a list of first names only.

Those involved in follow-up visits will obviously need more information than just first names. Again, use good judgment and have a reasonable policy in place. This policy should guide you in using individuals' private information in a responsible manner.

This list can help you contact people with pertinent information about upcoming events they may wish to attend. Don't fall into the habit of sending every announcement to every person on your list. For example, an individual who is retired and has no children or grandchildren may not be interested in the announcement that the Adventurers will be eating snow cones on the south lawn the second Sunday in July. This same individual should, however, receive the announcement about a seminar on avoiding senior-targeted phone scams. If the individual is interested in the topic, they will be more likely to attend.

I Can't Read That Number

Your job involves training members, particularly greeters, to obtain accurate information. Information is only useful if it's correct. It's helpful to occasionally remind people what types of information they should collect. You could create and distribute reminder cards that list the categories of information you need. Remind everyone that all information needs to be clearly printed in order to avoid mistakes.

If someone indicates interest but doesn't wish to share personal information, respect their wishes. They may be hesitant until they become better acquainted with more members.

We've Made Contact, Now What?

When you receive the name of a person who has requested more information about your church, requested Bible studies, or expressed interest in an event, the first step is to follow up with a phone call. During the call, find out if the person received the information they sought. If they attended a seminar, ask if it met their expectations. Also learn what other activities and seminars might interest them. Always ask if you can pray with them, and if they have any specific needs.

By making this call, you are the voice of your church. You are providing “customer care” and you want to make sure everyone who expresses an interest is receiving the help and information they need.

If there is a physical need, find out if there is a way the church can help. For example, church members could help an elderly person with yard work or a single mother who needs a babysitter. You can pass these needs on to either the outreach coordinator, community services director or Pathfinder director for follow-up.

As you make follow-up calls you will begin to learn when people are ready to request Bible studies or a personal visit. You will also be able to tell when they are close to a decision for baptism. Share this information with the pastor and elders. They will take the next steps.

Making the Call

Before each call, look carefully over your church records to see who resides in the home you’re about to call. Make a note of each name. Offer a prayer before you call asking God to bless your words and voice inflections.

- 1. Make the call.** Give your name and identify yourself as a member of the church. State that you are making short telephone calls to keep in touch with peoples’ needs and concerns.
- 2. Be friendly.** Be positive and ask how they and other family members are doing.
- 3. Keep positive.** Be careful not to share matters that are negative or critical. Also, make sure you don’t talk about other members. You’re not part of a gossip ring! Rather, your goal is to be a friendly point of contact with the church.
- 4. Personal concerns.** If they have concerns about another person and wish to air a complaint, gently remind them to consider the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17.
- 5. How to deal with requests.** If they have a request for transportation or some other physical need, tell them you will do some checking and call them back. Follow up every request as quickly as possible.
- 6. Be confidential. Respect privacy.** When someone shares with you and requests their information be kept in confidence, remember to honor their request. Obviously, issues of a legal nature will need to be shared with the proper authorities. If there is ever a question, contact your pastor immediately. Be careful not to make promises you may not be able to keep.

7. Be available. Invite them to call you if they have needs or wish for an in-home visit. Ask if you can close the call with a short prayer. Keep it short and remember to pray for the person you are talking with.

You will find a sample call log form on the last page of this Quick Start Guide.

Keep Your List Current

Keep your contact list active. Do not allow it to become stagnant. If you do not have current contact information for some people, move them to an inactive list.

You should add to the list on a regular basis. Send reminders to church officers who have outreach programs, to church members and to the pastor and elders. This will make it easier to collect information.

Summary

Your ministry of providing accurate and up-to-date contact and follow-up information will make a big difference to your church's cycle of evangelism. It will serve as an encouragement to other church members when they can see just how many people are interested in the church's programs. Your pastor and others involved with visitation will be grateful for information they can depend on as they make visits and arrange for Bible studies.

Interest Coordinator Ministry Description

Introduction

God asks the church to be a community of people sharing a common purpose and fellowship, continually growing in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. Paul describes the church as Christ's "body" (Ephesians 1:22).

The church is a kingdom of priests set free to minister for Christ. Our priesthood is to each other within the church and to the world. Every Christian believer is called to ministry and, in baptism, ordained for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). You should view your work for the church as a ministry to which God has called you; it is His will operating in your life.

God supplies each person in the church with the resources for ministry—scripture, spiritual power, God's character, and spiritual gifts. You are equipped for your ministry by gifts received from the Holy Spirit. These spiritual gifts are special abilities given to make your ministry effective and build up the body of Christ.

Duties of the Interest/Prospect Care Coordinator

Whether you are the prospect care coordinator or work as interest coordinator in your church, the duties are the same:

- 1. Gather names.** Systematically get the name of every person who visits on Sabbath, attends a seminar or group, phones or writes for information, requests prayer, contacts the media ministries or gets a missionary magazine. Double-check each name to sort out church members and discover previous involvement.
- 2. Make contacts.** Use the telephone to contact each person. Did they get the information or help they wanted? How did it meet their expectations? How did they happen to know about the program? What motivated them to attend, call or write? The local church prospect care coordinator is an official field representative for each and every Adventist program, and this is how you help the church provide better "customer service" to the public.
- 3. Listen for needs.** A prospect care coordinator must develop good listening skills. If you are a good listener, people will feel free to share their stories with you. As you listen, your mind learns to sort the information given by each person into workable categories: religious background, present spiritual condition, emotional, family, health and economic needs.

4. Establish readiness. The contacts made by the prospect care coordinator are called “evaluation interviews” because the purpose of the conversation is to find out how we can minister to the person. Is there a pressing social or physical need that must be met? What is his or her attitude toward the message and activities of the Adventist Church? Will he or she accept a visit? Is he or she ready to enter into serious Bible study or participate in Christian fellowship? What can your church do for this person?

The readiness of an individual is coded on the following scale: “A” means they are ready for a visit by a pastor and will probably attend church or evangelistic meetings; “B+” means they are ready for Bible studies, either one-to-one or in a small group; “B-” means they are ready to take a Bible correspondence course; “C” means they want more literature on a particular question or help with a particular problem, but are not ready for Bible study. The names of those with no interest are filed separately.

5. Make referrals. As you listen to each person, a nurturing plan made especially for him or her begins to form. This is the next step after your conversation to keep them growing in their spiritual journey. Is there a particular piece of literature they should have? Is there a specific person who should visit them? Is there a seminar or small group they should attend? Is there a CD they should hear or a DVD they should see? In each interview you have only a few minutes to create this plan while they talk, so it is essential that you have quick information and a good supply of materials right at hand. You will need a listing of resources that can meet emotional, economic, health and spiritual needs.

6. Maintain the list. The work of the prospect care coordinator will require some clerical organization to keep names in a prospect list. They must be coded so specialized mailings can be sent to those with various interests and needs. Additional clerical help may be needed. A computer would be more efficient in larger churches. It is essential that every name kept on the list be sent a missionary magazine subscription and mailings from your church about seminars, etc.

Call Log

Church: _____

Date Called: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Family Members: _____

Other Notes: _____

Interest Coordinator

This Quick Start Guide for Interest Coordinators is full of important information to help you start or revitalize a ministry at your local church. This guide contains a job description, instructions for getting started, tips for maintaining a successful ministry, troubleshooting suggestions, recommended resources, and more. Whether you're new to this ministry or a seasoned volunteer, this Quick Start Guide will inspire you with lots of great ideas you can immediately put to use in your local church.

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