

Engaging Adults in VBS TIP SHEET



Engaging Adults in Bible Study

VBS is for Adults, too! Here are some good strategies to keep in mind when teaching adults!

Adults like to have fun

You should strive to make sure your class is fun, upbeat, and a stimulating break from the routine of the day. Adult leaders are often tempted to skip over suggested icebreaker activities and go straight to deep Bible study. Icebreaker activities are purposely designed to facilitate relationships and lighthearted fun.

Adults require a variety of learning styles

Teachers tend to teach the way they personally learn best, which means they are discounting the learning styles of others. Only the person giving the lecture wants to sit through a 90 minutes of lecture. Similarly, not everyone will respond to a 90-minute discussion or non-stop paper and pencil activities. Attention spans are getting shorter and shorter – even for adults – and a great way to hold attention is by using a variety of learning styles.

Adults enjoy crafts, recreation and music

Adults really do want to have fun and part of the fun is learning in different ways. Just like VBS for kids, recreation and crafts are part of the learning experience and should include direct links to the Scripture passage and theme for the day. Some of the best application of all takes place around a craft or snack table and recreation is a perfect way to apply Biblical truths to life. If you are a little nervous concerning how adults will respond to crafts and recreation just remember, the leader sets the pace and tone. If you are enjoying recreation so will class members.

Don't assume adults are familiar with the Bible or church language

If you are truly conducting Adult VBS for unchurched adults, you need to lead each session with them in mind. Don't assume adults have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Obviously this is true if you are reaching unchurched adults, but it may be just as true if you have a room full of active church attenders. Never miss an opportunity during Adult VBS to make a clear Gospel presentation part of the session.

Don't assume adults understand how to continue the learning experience at home

Adult VBS is an excellent opportunity to not only study God's Word during sessions, but to also inspire adults to continue learning at home by introducing reading plans and providing resources for continued study. Adult VBS is also a great opportunity to connect unchurched adults with ongoing Bible study groups (Sunday School) and ministries. Invite ministry leaders to drop by during snack, recreation, and craft portions of the session to introduce their ministries and to build relationships.



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Engaging Adults in Volunteering

Adults will volunteer when we let them know how they will make an impact.

Prepare the foundation of prayer

Prayer needs to be the key. Bring your needs and petitions straight to the Lord and ask for His vision, His guidance and His direction. Be sure to take time to listen and respond when He answers. Be sure to involve others to pray with you and make it known that prayer is an important component to your ministry.

Have a vision for your need

Volunteers are looking for a leader who leads. A leader who has the ability to inspire and influence the people they are leading can engage.

A great leader:

- ♦ Will create higher-performing teams
- ♦ Will foster loyalty and greater commitment
- ♦ Will have increased retention and reduced turnover

Plan and prepare for your need

Being prepared is so important as it communicates your vision and gives your volunteers a picture of what you are trying to accomplish. Allow your volunteers to help with the planning as this will create ownership and will help you to delegate!

Communication is a must

Your volunteers want to be kept in the loop. They want to know about changes, upcoming things that involve the ministry. They don't want to be blindsided if they are asked about something that has been made public but this is the first they are hearing about. Don't make public announcements until all your volunteers have been notified. Use multiple avenues to communicate: phone calls, texts, email, private FB group, etc.

Have a written job description

Written job descriptions provide for an avenue to communication to let volunteers know the scope and expectations about what you are asking them to do.

Provide training and mentoring

Once a volunteer says yes, be prepared to provide them with the needed training and mentoring so that they can do their role well.

Provide support

Make sure that your volunteers know that you are there to provide what they need to do the role you have asked them to. Provide curriculum, supplies and other needs. Try to anticipate their needs and communicate that well.

Show appreciation

Find regular and creative ways to show your appreciation and gratitude.