

Lead With The Benefit, Follow With the Evidence When Promoting A Church Ministry

Written by Steve Marr

Wednesday, 13 July 2011 03:54

Churches promote new ministry opportunities every day with flyers, website postings, public announcements, e-mail blasts, or church bulletin messages. Then, why are people slow to sign up? Apply a lesson from business the next time you promote a ministry opportunity. **Lead with the benefit and follow up with the evidence**

Business calls the key benefit the Unique Sales Proposition. In ministry, it's the Unique Service Proposition or USP. You can see my article on USP here: <http://bit.ly/kCQ1N7> . Here's how business applies this principle.

First, the customer must understand the benefit of a product or service. Example: Roundup® kills weeds. Candy tastes good. A new air conditioner saves on your electric bill. You get the point. *Customers want some benefit from buying a product or service.*

Second, follow up with evidence that validates the product's claim. For example, an advertisement for Roundup® pictures weeds before and after application. Dead weeds demonstrate the product's effectiveness. The ad for the new air conditioner documents how much a buyer can save over other models.

Now consider how churches promote small groups. Announcements may highlight how small groups provide tremendous growth potential for those engaged. They may explain how small groups offer ways to connect, to give and receive fellowship or to prepare for church membership. While most agree these claims are true, they are unsupported.

When promoting small groups think about your audience. Market to those not currently involved. Think through key benefits instead of issuing a general invitation. Support your claim with evidence.

When Crown Financial Ministries wants people to join one of their small group opportunities, they issue a general announcement about how to apply biblical principles to personal finance. Although it generates a decent response, consider how much stronger this approach is: "Are you pressured with debt? Learn how to develop a plan to decrease debt and increase financial

Lead With The Benefit, Follow With the Evidence When Promoting A Church Ministry

Written by Steve Marr

Wednesday, 13 July 2011 03:54

freedom." Then, follow with a testimony from a couple who attended a Crown small group and became debt free. The **benefit** is reducing or eliminating debt. The testimony provides the **evidence**.

Growing Kids God's Way is another effective small group study. An announcement that says, "Learn effective parenting by coming to *Growing Your Kids Gods Way*" leads with the benefit without any evidence. A more effective invitation would state, "Learn how to raise obedient children, discipline effectively, reduce repeated behavior problems while encouraging your children to become Christ followers." Follow up with evidence from a couple who implemented the lessons with specific improvement..

Another example comes from the way many churches promote men's and women's retreats. Invitations explain the accommodations, identify the speaker, and promises a blessed weekend. But what is the benefit other than a weekend away? Instead lead with a specific benefit: Learn six steps to becoming a better husband or father. Then, follow up with a testimonial from last year's retreat as evidence that you can deliver the promised benefit.

The same principles apply when sharing your own spiritual transformation testimony. Lead with the benefits of a personal relationship with Jesus: peace, joy, salvation, and the empowerment of God's Holy Spirit. Then, offer personal experience as evidence.

No matter what the ministry opportunity is, always ask, "What is the leading benefit of this ministry?" Emphasize and repeat that **benefit** clearly and consistently. Follow up with solid **evidence** and expect participation to increase and life transformation to follow.

Steve Marr, Your Christian Business Coach

Subscribe to the free Business Proverbs e-mail here: <http://bit.ly/ncixc1>