



# BRIDGE DOC:

Building Healthy Volunteer Teams



CANADIAN  
BAPTISTS  
of Ontario  
and Quebec

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# INTRO TO THE BRIDGE DOC

## Objective

This document is to provide a framework for youth ministries (especially those in their infancy) to establish healthy volunteer teams in a sustainable environment. It is also a valuable assessment tool for established ministries.

## What's a bridge doc?

It's the starting point to help establish a baseline to build upon with other great resources. This is a guide to gather insights on what God is establishing and who to potentially include into this team. It is designed to be "fill in the blank" so you can capture and centralize your data<sup>1</sup>.

## How do I use this bridge resource?

1. Take an initial survey with the content of this doc. (Aim for approx. 1 hour).
2. Gather 3-4 other people to review your initial survey and to implement this.
3. Pray at each stage for God's clarity in this process.
4. For some stages, you may need to consult other leaders in your church (e.g. church treasurer about budgetary issues<sup>1</sup>).
5. If needed, consult with CBOQ Next Gen (cboqyouth@baptist.ca, 416-620-2946).

## Special acknowledgement

Many samples cited are from Canadian Youth Network who developed a series of resources called "Spiritually Healthy Youth Ministry".

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<sup>1</sup> Optional: Use the digital version (available at [cboqyouth.ca/healthyteams](http://cboqyouth.ca/healthyteams)) and store it in a cloud service. This allows your team to collaborate on your answers together.





A physical or digital calendar to track all youth-ministry-related items including weekly youth group meetings, leader meetings as well as other events that will affect the youth ministry (e.g. church Christmas dinner, school dance, major community events.)

## What's on the master calendar?

September	
October	
November	
December	
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	



(e.g. child protection policy, social media policy, etc.)<sup>4</sup> As a result, what considerations need to be accounted for? What specific segments need to be highlighted regarding this ministry?



Specify the breakdown of the budget and how it reflects the ministry's priorities. How does this budget reinforce the values of the church's mission?<sup>5</sup>

## What church policies impact youth ministry?

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## What is the ministry's budget?

What parameters surround how it can be used?

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<sup>4</sup>If you need to, consult other appropriate church leaders (e.g. the HR committee about the child protection policy).

<sup>5</sup>Check with your Church's treasurer (or financial committee) if you need help creating a budget spreadsheet



Who do you want “on the bus”<sup>6</sup> aka on this team? Identify why you selected that person. (Another way to think of it: without considering predefined roles, who would you want to serve in this ministry?)

E.g. church attendance, teachability, integrity.

## Who Needs to be on this Team?

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## What are non-negotiable character expectations<sup>7</sup> you have for this person?

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<sup>6</sup>“In fact, leaders of companies that go from good to great start not with “where” but with “who.” They start by getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats. And they stick with that discipline—first the people, then the direction—no matter how dire the circumstances...To decide where to drive the bus before you have the right people on the bus, and the wrong people off the bus, is absolutely the wrong approach.” [http://www.jimcollins.com/article\\_topics/articles/good-to-great.html](http://www.jimcollins.com/article_topics/articles/good-to-great.html) Nov 14/17

<sup>7</sup>Expectations are not solely about behavior; they include development to be more like Christ.



In the matrix beside, identify:

- The role(s) needed to carry out this ministry<sup>8, 9, 10</sup>
- The gifts/skills needed within that role
- Who in the list previous might be a good fit for that role

## What's Needed?

### Role Definition

ROLE	GIFTS/SKILLS	POSSIBLE PERSON(S)

<sup>8</sup>These roles may be adapted to suit the personnel available. Also identify which ones require a Christian faith and which can involve a non-Christian.

<sup>9</sup>See <https://canadianyouth.net/health/> "Roles"

<sup>10</sup>Be as specific with the role as you can. Clear role definition is critical to an effective team.

<sup>11</sup>For now, focus on the gifts/skills needed to fulfill that role without having a particular person in mind.



List the individuals you identified in “Who Needs to be on this Team” but do not currently have a tentative role in the left column.

What other role(s) that wasn’t listed above could you possibly see these individuals fulfilling given their skill/gift set<sup>12</sup>? Write these in the right column.

NAME	POSSIBLE ROLES(S)

<sup>12</sup>Be creative about the kind of role this individual could participate in, possibly outside the current youth ministry structure.



Redo the Role Definition Chart. This time, leave out roles that currently do not have someone assigned or persons who do not have a potential role.<sup>13</sup>

## Redo the Role Definition Chart. Role Definition Chart (round 2)

ROLE	GIFTS/SKILLS	POSSIBLE PERSON(S)

<sup>13</sup>The intention of this is to see if your structure may need to change based on the "assets" i.e. the potential personnel power.



Have 2-3 others be part of this process as the volunteer screening team.<sup>17</sup>



# RECRUITING

You now have a clear idea of who you'd like to have on this team.

## Before you start:

Who else will help you in the evaluation of the candidate? (e.g. Christian Education member, deacon/elder, pastor, HR specialist, etc.)

Here is a guideline when recruiting an individual.

1. Approach the person with an invitation to join ministry team.<sup>18 19</sup>
  - a. Share what the purpose and vision of this ministry.
  - b. Specify why you've approached them.
  - c. Give them an overview of what is involved including time commitment.
  - d. Allow person some time (e.g. 1-2 weeks) to come back with answer for interest. Remind them that you will be following up.

<sup>17</sup>This does not mean all 4 of you need to be at every meeting together. However, having a team of 3-4 to discern, screen and recruit these volunteers allows for shared accountability and affirmation of who God is bringing together for this team.

<sup>18</sup>Don't just rely on "blanket" invitation. In most instances, individuals do not respond. For those that do, do not automatically bring them on the team. Have them complete the recruitment process to discern if this ministry and person are an appropriate fit.

<sup>19</sup>Mark DeVries (founder of Ministry Architects) suggests sending an email first with the invitation for consideration, then follow up with a phone call 3-4 days after if there is no response.

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2. If the person is interested, start the process which should include an application, reference checks<sup>20</sup> and an interview.<sup>21</sup>
    - a. In the interview, have at least 2 of your screening team members involved.
    - b. Remind the candidate this is a 2-way discernment process.<sup>22</sup>
    - c. Before the interview, ask the applicant to prepare some initial thoughts (e.g. what they think should be their expectations, what gifts/skills do they see in serving with this team)
    - d. Review the youth ministry ethos and mandate (from section 1).
    - e. Review expectations (see above) and non-negotiables including expectations from policies.
    - f. Review how negotiables work.
    - g. Discuss what their role will be considering their gifts/skills.
    - h. Discuss what personal benefit they anticipate in serving with this team.
    - i. Set a mutual term for involvement (e.g. 1 year).
    - j. Review how either party can exit the arrangement.
    - k. Pray together.
    - l. Give both parties 1-2 weeks to finalize.
    - m. If both parties agree to proceed, complete the protocol in the child protection policy.

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<sup>20</sup>See Appendix E for sample starter questions..

<sup>21</sup>See Appendix F for sample starter questions.

<sup>22</sup>"It is better go without a ministry at all than have it filled with poor leaders (don't recruit simply because they have a pulse)" Ryan Marthinsen (Pastor of Family Ministries, Queensway Baptist Church)



# VOLUNTEER CARE

The volunteers on this team are not solely there to fulfill the mandate of the ministry. They are individuals who are symbiotically contributing and growing in the work God is already doing. Caring for them is not just good HR management; it's the team leader's responsibility and part of God's mandate in leadership.

## Here are some ways to care for your volunteers.

Know them: While you do not need to know every facet of their life, take interest in personal areas they are willing to share. One suggestion is to know how they receive appreciation.<sup>23</sup> Don't do this to increase productivity or effectiveness; do this because we are called to care for one another in community. One idea is, at the beginning of each year, have volunteers share their testimony with one another (whether as a large team or in smaller groups).

## Feedback culture:

We tend to either be afraid of critiquing or lean too much into critiquing. Creating a feedback culture establishes a regular rhythm for others to give input. What kind of input you're looking for will establish the formality and method for collection.<sup>24</sup> Some examples include:

- After each youth group meeting, the youth ministry leaders gather for 10 minutes to share 1 highlight and 1 consideration/concern/improvement.
- Every 4-5 months, email a details survey to parents for insights on key areas.
- After each major event, text students a short survey.
- Each year, meet each volunteer to debrief their own experience, insights with the ministry, you as a supervisor.<sup>25</sup>

The key with feedback culture is responding. Take the time to respond to the feedback others have taken the time to send you. This allows for a more open dialogue to work on the issues together.

<sup>23</sup> Gary Chapman's Five Love Languages is one way to understand this with the volunteer.

<sup>24</sup> With evaluations, there are 3 main areas you want to cover: areas for celebration (both in what the individual did and the ministry/event/program as a whole), areas for improvement (both the individual and the ministry as a whole) and suggestions for the supervisor to better support the individual.

<sup>25</sup> See sample evaluation forms for individuals and team at <https://canadianyouth.net/health/> under "evaluation".



### Three debrief questions for volunteers:

1. What are 3 things you did well?
2. What are 2 things you would have done different?
3. How can I better support you?

## Church Work Balance:

Sometimes, we are so focused on our own areas of ministry, we miss what others are doing elsewhere. An oft-quoted stat is “20% of the people do 80% of the work.”<sup>26</sup> Communicating with other church ministry areas about who’s involved where may help that person evaluate if their level of involvement is sustainable. If not, it’s an opportunity to help them evaluate where God wants them the most. Set aside the idea that you need to try to retain as many volunteers as possible. The key is to discern with the individual volunteer where God wants them for that period of time without feeling guilty about “letting everyone down”.

## Restoration Protocol:

All of us will fail in one way or another. Some failures may be easily rectified. Others may take a longer time for restoration. Outlining what that restoration process is in advance helps the ministry to recognize potential severity of failure, protects people in the ministry and the individual, and provides an opportunity to be restored as a person. This does not necessarily mean the person will automatically return to that ministry role; there are some instances where that role may not be available to that person anymore. It does ensure the person himself/herself is restored in Jesus.

## Professional Development:

Help the volunteer understand what their next step is and find opportunities for them to move forward. Each volunteer’s opportunity may differ from one another. For one person, it could be a specific conference. Another person may find an e-course. For another person, you might recommend a book for them to study. Part of helping your volunteers to grow is to help find opportunities that are specific to the individual.

## Celebrate Well:

Too many times in ministry, especially after a major project like a retreat, we tend to complete that project and move on to the next one. Take time to celebrate what God did. Indeed, there are reasons and moments why you can celebrate, so do it.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2009/february/biggest-sin-in-your-church.html>

## **Differentiate your check-ins:**

As mentioned before, taking a personal interest in another person's life is part of our Christian call. Every time you see that person, it doesn't always have to be about ministry-related issues, or always a personal focus. Sometimes, it's helpful to check in with your volunteer and specify what they can expect. Maybe this week, you want to see how they're doing personally without discussing any ministry issues. The next week, you discuss solely about their volunteer involvement. Recognize when those various check-ins are needed.

## **Sabbath Rest:**

Encourage your volunteers to rest regularly. Many of your volunteers may be high achievers. Help them recognize those rhythms of work and rest. This may include having a week off after a number of consecutive outings, taking a "sabbatical" after a number of years of service, etc. After all, it is a command.

## **Work through Disagreements:**

Inevitably, disagreements will happen. Having a feedback culture may mitigate some of the emotions in disagreements. However, there will be time when disagreements are highly charged. Ensure you have a process already outlined in how to handle those disagreements e.g. having agreed-upon ground rules for how dialogue will happen.

## **Be Together (sometimes):**

The more you spend time together, the more you get to one know another. Not just the facts, but also the nuances of the individuals and the chemistry within the group. It's helpful to have some leader meetings when the group solely prays together. Maybe another meeting is a team social (dinner together, bowling, etc.). A retreat could help bring the team closer together. That being said, be careful not to (inadvertently) make this group the primary support group for a volunteer (after all, the team members are called to invest in the next generation, not primarily for each other). God has other spheres of influence and community this person belongs to. The youth ministry should not be superseding other relationships e.g. those within a family.

When we consciously consider who's best to be on this "ministry bus", when we diligently discern with others in bringing those people on "the bus" and when we care faithfully not just for the work they do, but for who they are, we deepen our understanding of God, our bond with Him and our friendship with one another.



## FAQs

This document will continue to be revised. If there are questions you have as a result of reviewing this, please email them to [alau@baptist.ca](mailto:alau@baptist.ca). An online FAQ will be posted at [cboqyouth.ca/healthyteams](http://cboqyouth.ca/healthyteams) (and possibly printed in future editions).



## SUGGESTED READINGS

- <https://hbr.org/2013/12/building-a-feedback-rich-culture>
- One Minute Manager (<https://amzn.to/2woNXTb>)
- Be With Factor (<https://amzn.to/2PFa5S0>)
- Help! I'm a Small Group Leader (<https://amzn.to/2MAdGTB>)
- Youth Ministry Management 2.0 (<https://amzn.to/2wmGDYa>)
- Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry (<https://amzn.to/2oe1NEo>)
- Sustainable Youth Ministry (<https://amzn.to/2MBHsY0>)
- Help! I'm a Volunteer Youth Worker (<https://amzn.to/2ocYoFR>)
- Mentoring Leaders (<https://amzn.to/2wgtBMJ>)

If you have any recommended resources, please send them to Alvin ([alau@baptist.ca](mailto:alau@baptist.ca)).

# Appendix A

## MINISTRY MANDATE

FBC-Whoknowswhere equips youth to become mature disciples of Jesus through Biblical understanding, mentoring and service projects. We support parents, caregivers and other adults in their upbringing of their children.

- Connect each student to at least one adult mentor.
- Serve in meaningful opportunities to develop servant leadership.
- Engage with Scripture to understand God and his relationship with the world today.

# Appendix B

## YEAR-LONG CALENDAR

What's on the master calendar? [A physical or digital calendar to track all youth-ministry-related items including weekly youth group meetings, leader meetings as well as other events that will affect the youth ministry e.g. church Christmas dinner, school dance, major community events.]

September	1: kick off 2: "what is FBC-whoknowswhere youth min all about?" 3: "what's a faith community?"
October	1: thanksgiving 2: service project 3: debrief 4: "outreach 101"
November	1: planning outreach 2: laser tag outreach 3: outreach debrief 4: "Christmas"
December	1: service project 2: Christmas celebration
January	1: social media 1 2: social media 1 3: social media 1 4: Blizzard lead-in
February	1: Blizzard 1 2: Blizzard lead-out 3: global issues 1 4: global issues 2
March	1: commissioning 2: March break compassion experience 3: debrief 4: global issues 3
April	1: global issues 4 2: Good Friday 3: Easter 4: youth Sunday: purpose of worship and sermon
May	1: youth Sunday prep: outlining service, roles 2: youth Sunday prep: separate practice 1 3: youth Sunday prep: separate practice 2 4: Youth Sunday prep: "dress rehearsal"
June	1: Youth Sunday 2: year end celebration
July	1: VBS training 2: VBS
August	1: fun day

# Appendix C

## MINISTRY AUDIT RESULT

OBJECTIVES	ASSETS	STRUCTURE/PROGRAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect each student to at least one adult mentor.</li> <li>• Serve in meaningful opportunities to develop servant leadership.</li> <li>• Engage with Scripture to understand God and his relationship with the world today.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget of \$1000</li> <li>• 4 adult volunteers</li> <li>• 5 occasional adult volunteers</li> <li>• 10 adults willing to engage in 1-on-1 “sharing life”</li> <li>• Multi-purpose room</li> <li>• 10 students in youth ministry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Friday night program</li> <li>• 1 annual winter retreat</li> <li>• 1 regional/overseas compassion experience</li> </ul>

# Appendix D

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

### JOB DESCRIPTION (sample)

#### YOUTH TEAM MEMBER

#### PURPOSE

The mandate of FBC's youth ministry is to reach, train and develop young leaders in youth ministry within the community of First Baptist Church. The purpose of the Team Member is to assist in this mandate.

#### SCOPE

The incumbent will receive work assignments from and report to the Youth Director. The individual will be an integral part of the youth team and will relate to other staff as required. This is a volunteer position requiring an average of five hours per week (minimum two hours and maximum ten hours per week).

#### JOB FUNCTIONS

##### Responsibilities

1. lead and supervise in weekly youth meetings and special events
2. develop relations with youth
3. train young people and plan for special outreach to other teenagers within and outside the church as well as from other evangelical churches
4. arrange for regular visitations to active, inactive and prospective young people individually and (if possible) with their families
5. strongly recommended to attend workshops and personal growth conferences to stay informed on new and effective ways to implement youth ministry
6. assist in develop philosophy of ministry adaptable to FBC's context and in line with FBC's vision

## ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Youth Director will supervise the work of the Team Member
2. will meet monthly with Youth Director to debrief on past events and reflections
3. if the Team Member feels mistreated by any church member or committee in the church, he/she may discuss any grievances confidentially with the Youth Director, Senior Pastor or the Deacons Board
4. Youth Director and Team Member may dissolve this agreement by giving 30 days written notice

## QUALIFICATIONS

1. deep commitment to Jesus Christ with a definite calling to ministering with young people and their families
2. basic level administrative and professional
3. good interpersonal, relational skills
4. genuine love for people
5. significant depth of Christian maturity, empathy and good judgement and strength in interpersonal skills
6. candidate required to assent to Covenant and Statement of Faith of FBC
7. valid CPR and/or First Aid training
8. successful screening of child protection policy

# Appendix E

## SAMPLE REFERENCE CHECK QUESTIONS

- Describe your relationship with <name>.
- List 3 key strengths s/he possess or instills?
- Identify 2 areas of weaknesses s/he struggles with?
- From your own personal interactions, tell me about a situation (or incident) where you saw him/her excel?
- Again, from your own personal interactions, tell me about a situation (or incident) where s/he struggled? How did s/he handle it?
- How do you believe this role would benefit his/her ministry development?
- If you were to summarize him/her in 1-2 sentences, what would it be?

**Note:** Allow these questions to be discussion starters. If needed, ask the reference to elaborate if you feel their answer doesn't provide enough information for you.

# Appendix F

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What are your reasons for wanting this role?
- What are 3 specific strengths?
- What are 2 specific weaknesses?
- Give an example of how you handled a conflict with another person (you do not need to share their name).
- How would you know if you fulfilled the role successfully?
- What is the best way to encourage and support you both as a person and in this role?

**Note:** Allow these questions to be discussion starters. If needed, ask the reference to elaborate if you feel their answer doesn't provide enough information for you.

## CONTACT US

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