

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

5 Mistakes You're Making With Your Weekend Services - Episode 303

Mistakes You're Making in Your Weekend Experience

In the last 4 years alone, our Unstuck consultants have been on the ground in 250+ churches helping evaluate their in-person Sunday experience—from parking and facilities to the message and production. And while there are many aspects of those services that are excellent, we often see churches of all sizes and denominations make similar mistakes.

That's why, this week, we're kicking off a new series unpacking "Mistakes You're Making in Your Weekend Experience." In today's episode, Tony and Amy discuss five common mistakes churches make when it comes to their weekend service—and how to fix them.

Mistake #1: There is no cohesive journey in the worship experience.

1. The service needs to flow together with natural fluid transitions between each element.
2. The service elements need to be intentionally placed to create a journey vs. just putting random segments right next to one another.
3. The journey needs to be continuously engaging.

In the short term, begin to take a few minutes to think through the transitions and order of your service. Be thoughtful about the service flow before you hit the platform on Sunday.

In the long term, shift towards **planning ahead**. When you plan ahead...

- You'll have time to gather ideas and stories, and more space to seek and hear from God.
- You'll have time to develop, rehearse, build graphics, and select music and video elements to complement the message.
- You'll have time to create an engagement strategy to help people stay plugged in throughout the series.
- You'll have time to create promotion strategies to encourage people to invite a friend or family member to join them.
- You'll have time to create more space to leverage the gifts and talents of volunteers.

It might take some adjusting of rhythms and thinking farther in advance than you're presently used to, but the results are worth it.

Mistake #2: There are no surprises.

The essence of Seth Godin's "[purple cow principle](#)" is that to avoid becoming invisible, what you offer must be "remarkable." Something remarkable is worth talking about and worth noticing... It's interesting—like seeing a purple cow. Boring stuff is invisible, like brown cows that you see so often you barely even notice them anymore.

Services that follow the same routine and rhythm week after week after week are a lot like a brown cow that becomes "background noise" over time. To avoid this pattern:

1. Assess your weekend. How long has it been since you offered something creative or "out of the box" in your service?
2. Pick a few upcoming dates to commit to doing something remarkable (we recommend every 6-8 weeks).
3. Put together a team dedicated to flexing your creative muscles again.

Mistake #3: The wrong leader is over the weekend service.

Especially in large churches, the senior lead pastor should not be the person over the weekend service. In most cases, neither should the worship leader. The most successful way to structure this is to have an off-platform leader who is designing the systems, leading the people, and overseeing the lead pastor's vision for the weekend service.

Someone has to be responsible for thinking about our weekends from a long-term, big-picture perspective, or we're going to be scraping by and running the same playbook every week. We have to have someone dedicated to designing the journey, coaching our on-platform teams, and owning and driving the systems that consistently create reliably excellent weekend experiences. Often this leader might already exist in your congregation. And in small/mid-sized churches, it may be a high-level volunteer.

Mistake #4: There is no real life application coming from the teaching.

Felt-needs teaching isn't just for unbelievers and reaching the lost. Felt-needs teaching is also critical for discipling believers and equipping the saints. Believers need to learn how to have difficult conversations within their homes and among their family and friends in a way that demonstrates both truth and love. In other words, **we need to help believers learn to love God and love others within our current cultural context.**

We recommend reviewing your messages (or having an outsider do so) and answering these questions to evaluate for applicability:

- Did the message provide ways to apply God’s word to everyday life?
- Was I challenged to believe, think or do something differently?
- Was it applicable to both Christians and first-time attendees?
- Was it memorable? Was the takeaway/next step clear?

Mistake #5: You’re not leveraging the weekend to preach the announcements related to the key next steps that Jesus followers need to take.

In other words, we’re giving *announcements* about groups, serving, giving, and inviting, and NOT preaching enough on them. If you really want people to take those next steps so that they look more like Jesus, just giving announcements about them isn’t going to move the dial. Sometimes it’s a series on one of those topics, sometimes it’s a message *within a series* on that topic, or sometimes it’s part of a message. When you do preach on these topics, give your ministry leaders a heads up so they can do something remarkable to come alongside the message.

Our people need to be inspired and reminded of why the Church exists and what bold moves your specific church is taking.

Listen to the full episode on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or at theunstuckgroup.com/episode303.

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B E L A Y

It’s easy to feel like we have to do it all. But doing it all is not only impossible—it’s a recipe for burnout. Great leaders know the secret to a long and healthy career in ministry is delegation. It’s about prioritizing what only you can do and finding trusted talent to take on the rest.

If you feel like you’re overwhelmed trying to do it all, our friends at [BELAY](#) can help. BELAY is a modern church staffing organization with fractional, U.S.-based Accounting and Virtual Assistant services. They’ve spent over a decade helping busy leaders just like you accomplish more and juggle less. To help you learn what you can start delegating today, BELAY is offering a free resource for our audience, the [Top 25 Tasks a Pastor Can Delegate to an Assistant](#).