

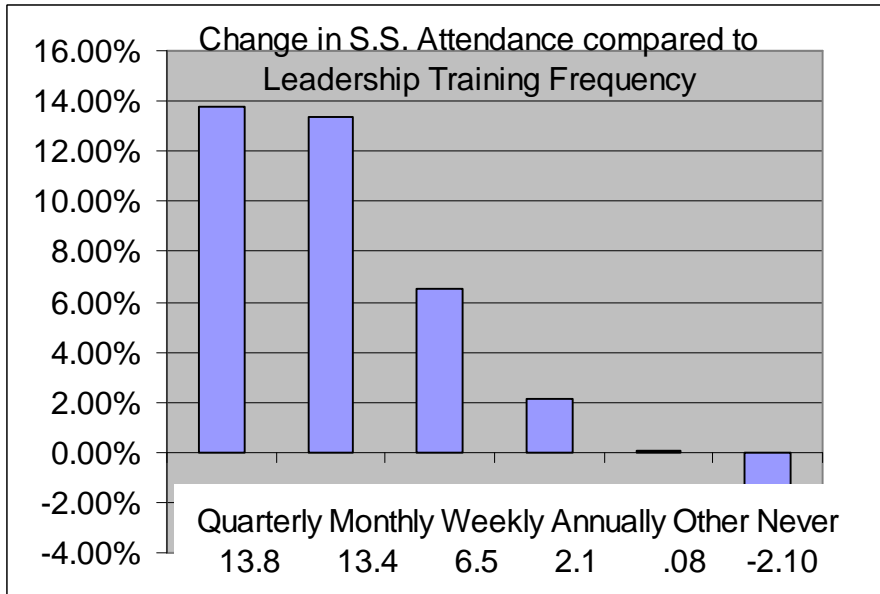
## Does Sunday School Training Make a Difference?

An untrained soldier is nothing more than a **target** for the enemy! –Andy Anderson

Bruce Rainey story about oxygen mask in a plan

1. **Training is required of all players.** Ball players spend years in learning and playing their favorite sport. The players that succeed to the point they make a living “playing their game” work out and practice regularly. Many baseball players have installed a batting cage at home that they share with team mates or have one close to home they use regularly. Spring training is an annual event that re-sharpens the players' "tools of the trade." Veterans and new players all report at the same time. The years they have played does not insure a consistently high level of performance. The manager of the Arizona Diamondbacks was asked by his parents when he turned 16 which would he rather have - a batting cage or a car? A.J. Hinch. Which do you think he chose? He chose the batting cage and his whole High school team enjoyed it.
  - a. Should it be any different for God's people? Successful workers will see the need of spending time in training. They see the need of the **workers'** meeting and the special training sessions that are offered by a growing, dynamic church. A dedicated worker will desire to **impact** the lives of the younger, newly-enlisted workers.
  - b. There is room for improvement is this for all of us! But none of us seems to have time for another meeting. NOT the leader, who has to **plan the session;** or the busy lay people **with their busy family schedule.** So we adopt the lazyfare approach of leadership. We try to encourage our workers, train them once a year and hope that they stay motivated enough to do some good.
2. **Training helps forge individuals into a team.** Championships won by ball teams usually take place because of a strong team spirit. Each player is a skilled professional who is not a loner, but a team player. Talent does not mean much if a cooperative team spirit is lacking.
  - a. Sunday School workers have a God-given task of reaching people for Bible Study. Their goal should be to **mold lives** and to meet needs in a loving, caring way. Training helps workers become competent in their **specific part** of the total task of the Sunday School.

**Does Training make a difference?** Georgia Baptist Convention studies their fastest growing churches and looks for ten key characteristics that made them different from their other churches.



Summary of results:

When 50 fastest growing Sunday Schools were surveyed for the common factors that could relate to their growth, the number one factor seemed to be training of leaders. Forty six (46) out of 50 churches returned the survey. Out of these, 45 churches said they involve leaders in regular training. Certainly this was their most common characteristic.

## I. Christ's Example of Recruiting and Training

- He prayed for more workers** to be called out – form His group - Matt 9:37-38 Then He said to His disciples, **“The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”**

  - He looked at His class and said to them – Pray that God will call more of you to go out and join the work. The need is great.
  - This is **the plan that** Jesus used **to call** His disciples –
    - He prayed all night before enlisting them.
    - He enlisted them one at a time.
    - He trained them.
    - He placed them in the proper place of responsibility.

**He did not stop at enlistment and go directly to assignment.**
- He taught and even trained His members** - Matt 10:1 – “Summoning His 12 disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to heal every disease and sickness.”
- He sent them out** - Matt 10:5 - Jesus sent out these 12 after giving them instructions:
- He warned them of trials and promised God's power and presence on their life as they sought to do His work - Matt 10:16-20** **“Look, I'm sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as harmless as doves. <sup>17</sup> Because people will hand you over to sanhedrins and flog you in their synagogues, beware of them. <sup>18</sup> You will even be brought before governors and kings because of Me, to bear witness to them and to the nations. <sup>19</sup> But when they hand you over, don't worry about how or what you should speak.**

For you will be given what to say at that hour,<sup>20</sup> because you are not speaking, but the Spirit of your Father is speaking through you.

5. He sent them to the people and DID NOT KEEP them for Himself - Matt 11:1 *When Jesus had finished giving orders to His 12 disciples, He moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns. He went in the other direction!*
6. He continually looked out for the welfare of His students - Matt 12:1- At that time Jesus passed through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick and eat some heads of grain.

**We need to Follow His Example and challenge our people to do so also.**

Eph 4:11-16 (HCSB) And He personally gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,<sup>12</sup> for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,<sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, [growing] into a mature man with a stature measured by Christ's fullness.<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit.<sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Him who is the head—Christ.<sup>16</sup> From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.

## II. THE VALUE OF TRAINING

The values which flow out of training a group of workers are many and varied. Training the workers produces many positive results for both the workers and the churches. We will list a few:

1. Workers no longer have any doubts as to what their role is in the life of the church.
2. Fellowship is developed during training time
3. They know what God expects of them as they serve in many varied capacities.
4. They know what the church expects of them and how to fulfill those expectations.
5. Workers become more concerned about knowing their pupils and meeting their needs.
6. There is a new vitality and thrill in serving the Lord. Many become excited about the Bible study hour.
7. Because of the enthusiasm of the trained workers, new workers come forward to serve.
8. There is a new concept of what it means to be a God-called, well-trained, and competent worker.
9. Serving the Lord takes on new meaning as people accept the need of training. Fulfilling the task of service becomes a rich blessing.
10. Promotion takes place during training time (But this cannot become why you meet)
11. **ASK: When have you had the best participation at training? - write on board.**

### III. How Often should Sunday School Workers meet for training?

#### **Phone power cord illustration**

Your church may plan and prepare the very best training that is available; but unless workers participate, the training is of no benefit.

These are some of those basic principles, plus practical tools to use in enlisting workers to participate in training.

#### **1. Make a commitment as a church to Sunday School leadership training.**

Commitment is an essential factor for a church to have a successful training program. In almost every instance, a church's high level of participation in training has been accompanied by a definite commitment to train leadership. This commitment is not just a priority set by church leaders; it is a commitment that is continually verbalized by the pastor, staff, and other key leaders.

This commitment begins with the pastor's recognizing the importance of training and verbalizing its priority and purpose to the people.

"... The pastor promoted training events from the pulpit."

This commitment to training is communicated to the people as a high priority.

#### **2. Secure a commitment from workers to train.**

Sunday School workers understand expectations for their positions when they are clearly explained. This communication is best verbalized at the time of commitment. Sunday School workers want to know the expectations for their positions of service.

#### **3. Demonstrate the importance of training and keep training before your people.**

Look for opportunities to make the importance of training visible to your people. Recognize those that attend training in print or power point and make special presentations in worship services or other gatherings of Sunday School leadership. After a training event, ask participants to share testimonies of what the event meant to them.

Find ongoing opportunities to mention training in the church newsletter and bulletin. Schedule for at least six months out training events and let your people know in advance what is coming.

#### **4. Set training goals that reflect the church's commitment to training. Develop a calendar of training opportunities well in advance.**

Set an annual training schedule much like a fast food restaurant those recognizing team members as they complete training. Let your Sunday School workers know what training opportunities are up-coming during the next church year. By so doing, Sunday School

workers can plan ahead. Also, sharing training opportunities well in advance will add to workers' anticipation of the events.

A well-planned calendar of training opportunities says to Sunday School workers that the training events are significant and important because the church has chosen to plan in advance for them.

**5. Express individual appreciation and praise to those workers who participate in training.**

One of the best ways to encourage individuals to continue to participate in training is to express appreciation when they do attend an event. Your expression says to them that you recognize their effort and are thankful for their presence. Your act of appreciation also "says" that their attendance at training not only was important for them and their service, but also to the church and Sunday School.

This gratitude can be expressed in many ways. A good way is to simply write a short note saying, "Jane, I saw you at the training last Tuesday night. Thanks for being there. It shows that you really care about your place of service in our Sunday School." Handwritten notes are even better than typed ones.

**6. Cultivate a reputation for quality training.**

If you want to have good participation in your training events, develop a reputation for quality. Tell participants in advance what they will receive from the training and then deliver what you have promised. Prepare well.

It is much better to have a few well-prepared times of training than several mediocre events. Future training is much easier to promote when past experiences have been positive.

New TRAINING SCHEDULE:

- Teach every Adult class ONCE this year - Teach Care Leader Training - Use Bible Study Like The story of the lady and ten coins. Class will be asked to pick week. The first opportunity to sign up will be August 16
- August 16 - One Day Sunday School Revival Alan Taylor in all morning services and Sunday Night Service. Special training time with adults at 4:30 pm with snack refreshments. (Goal here - the adults are the engine that pulls the train [.S. S. Express] down the track) He will major on sending out - Like Jesus did as opposed to keeping your good people/workers. Send them to work with Preschoolers, children, and youth and to start new adult classes. ALL adults in every class need at least one other place of service in the church; i.e., Greeters, Sunday door step visitations, Tuesday children's choir program, AWANA, or Wednesday night mission programs for kids etc.
- August 23 - FAITH One training begins on Sunday's nights at 6 p.m.

- August 23 - Sunday School Done Right" (series by Alan Taylor) led by Minister of Education (Aug. 23, 30; Sept. 13, 20, 27; and October 4. Faith Two people and Sunday School workers will be targeted for this class.
- Sept. 12 - Host Associational Sunday School and Outreach Training Event.
- October 18, 25, (Nov. 1 PM Class Fellowship Prayer meetings or Fall Festival Visitation) November 8, 15, 22 and 29. (First 6 weeks of Spiritual Food For Sunday School Leaders - the last four weeks will be completed after the first of the year). Faith two people and Sunday School workers will be targeted for this class.
- January 3 - One night Sunday School Training Night with each age group leader leading sessions for their age groups 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- January 10 - FAITH Begins and last 4 session of Spiritual Food For Sunday School Leaders.
- February 14 - Jesus the first Sunday School Teacher for all age group teachers (Except younger Preschool) led by Minister of Education.
- February 21 - The importance of Adult Class Organization
- February 28 - Care Leader Training
- March 4-5 S.S. HD at FBC Woodstock
- March 7 - Sunday School class outreach
- March 14 - Adult Class Fellowships and build fellowship, reach people and minister to members.
- March 21 - Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts and how to use them
- April 2-25 (Sundays) Better adult teaching (pastor leads one session)
- Another possibility - Develop Bible study that encourages everybody to be a part of outreach and evangelism and have another staff member teach it to every adult class once during the Sunday School year.
- Write series of lessons that promote Good Sunday School class organization and ministry. Have each adult class teach series.
- Have teachers teach one of David Francis series Connect Three the power of one Sunday School class to start year. September 13, 20 and 27