

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

Predictable to Remarkable: Compelling Weekend Services

Episode 134

Creating Church Services People Want to Attend and Want to Invite Others to Experience with Them

In her book *An Hour on Sunday*, Nance Beach said, “The hour can simply be sixty minutes for attenders to survive; a time for minds to wander aimlessly and hearts go untouched. Or maybe, the hour on Sunday can be a time of wonder, a time of transformation, perhaps seen as a time of awe.” Are your weekend experiences remarkable enough that people both want to attend themselves and want to invite others to come along? This episode is part one in a conversation exploring how to create more compelling weekend services.

The Purple Cow Principle

- 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.
- People sometimes resist the idea of creating remarkable church services by claiming that it leads to consumeristic, “spectator” churches. And it can. But when we’re designing experiences, we have to remember that the goal is to help encourage a *response*, not merely entertainment.
- Jesus and his teaching was remarkable. People encountered Him and felt compelled to respond. A remarkable experience can compel someone to respond in a next step towards Christ. An invisible experience never does.

More Remarkable, Less Predictable

- **Choose excellence.**
Whatever you do, choose to do it well. Our competition is not other churches; it’s the culture. It’s baseball games, Netflix, weekend getaways, brunch, etc.
 - Choose excellence with **the message**: Dedicate your best time to researching, writing, rehearsing and delivering the message. Receive feedback before and after the weekend. Give people practical next steps they can apply in their regular life.

- Choose excellence with **the music**: Put the right people on the platform to lead the experience. Make the hard calls about who should be on your platform, and who shouldn't. Rehearse and plan in a way that enables the production team to be invisible. Keep the new person in mind. It's hard to stand and watch people sing for 20 minutes when you don't know any of the songs.
- Choose excellence with **the announcements**: Pick the most critical thing that needs to be communicated, and be sure to explain why it's critical.
- **Build time and space in your planning process.**
 - Creativity and remarkable experiences take time. To make room for both excellence and creativity, we all need to be masters at knowing what we should keep doing, and what we should stop doing.
 - The primary leaders of the weekend experience need to be given permission to relentlessly prune where they spend their time and energy, so that they can have space to plan and create amazing messages, worship sets, and tell stories of transformation.
- **Create a Purple Cow Plan.**
 - Once you've invested the energy to make your regular weekend experience remarkable, create an intentional process to identify opportunities.
 - Set a goal of how frequently you are going to go above and beyond to invest in something creative. We recommend at least every 6-8 weeks.
 - Dedicate some resources to look ahead. Purple Cow moments usually require more time and energy than we can create in the Monday to Saturday time frame. Give someone the job to look for stories, come up with ideas, and plan at least several months out.

Next Steps

- Make a Purple Cow Plan. Learn a process that reduces frustration and helps you become more effective. Beyond the steps listed in this episode, we also offered guidance in [Episode 105 - Sermon Series Planning](#).
- Secret Shopper: Are you frustrated by declining weekend attendance? If people aren't coming, your services may be less compelling than you think. In Phase 1 of the [Unstuck Process](#), one of our ministry consultants secret shops your weekend experiences to help you view your services through the eyes of an unchurched member of your community. Interested in learning more? [Let's talk](#).

Listen to the episode on iTunes or at theunstuckgroup.com/episode134.