



Your Youth Ministry Makeover Effectiveness Inventory

At Faithtree Resources, we believe that the intentional and ongoing study of all we do is one of the most important components to a healthy and vibrant ministry. However, knowing how to accurately evaluate your youth program can be time consuming and for some, an exercise in futility that doesn't really yield any significant information to act upon.

This questionnaire is designed to help you clearly identify where your youth group currently succeeds and is effective, and also, where there may be some work to be done.

The best way to utilize this inventory is to make copies and have your priest, pastor or his designated lay leader fill out a copy, as well as the youth director and every member of your adult leadership team. Take time to really think through each question. When you're done, come together as a team and compare your answers.

Remember! A critical part of making this exercise useful is creating a safe environment where everyone on the team can speak freely (though God willing, with love) and in a way where any key issues may be identified

and ultimately reconciled. It will also allow you to see a snapshot of what you are doing really well and what you want to continue.

You will most likely find that not all members of your team value the same parts of your program, and maybe even don't agree on what is working and what is not. That's okay. In fact, it's awesome! The likelihood of your teens valuing different parts of your program is quite high. This discussion can help you better understand what different perspectives look like. It is in the freedom to openly and respectfully discuss everyone's perspective that real transformation can happen.

As always, our team reminds you to start each effort such as this with the diligent and hopeful prayer that you may clearly see what God's will is for your group. As St. Ephraim the Syrian said, "Open Thy door to our prayer, and may our service be pleasing to Thee."

Some Questions To Help You Evaluate Your Youth Ministry

1. Assess Where You Are

The first thing we suggest is that you break down the areas you are going to assess. That is, separate your ministry into several different 'sections' for evaluation. How you do this will be particular to your individual group, but some suggested 'sections' include:

- Staff
- Programs
- Volunteers
- Students
- Resources
- Support

Action Point

Ask yourself the following questions about each section you identify:

1. What is our overarching goal for this specific area in our ministry?
2. Are we succeeding in meeting our goals in this area? Why or why not? (What are we doing that is producing the outcomes we desire?)
3. What is working in this area?
4. What is missing in this area?
5. What is broken in this area?
6. What can be improved in this area? What opportunities exist?
7. Are all our needs currently important and/or relevant? Are there any identified needs that can be tabled temporarily (or forever)?

2. Gather Data

After your group members spend time answering the questions above, come together as a group to compare and contrast the responses. Make sure to question your parents and teens, as well as any other key stakeholders in the youth program.

Action Point

Spend 30-60 minutes as a team doing a SWOT analysis. List out Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Identify any critical issues and rank them in order of importance by which issues need to be addressed immediately, and which can wait.

Don't be afraid to embrace new technologies to help you do this work (at Faithtree, we use Survey Monkey all the time. It is an online service program that allows us to gather a ton of information online, and email out a ten-question survey to gather great info. It's easy and free. If you have more than ten questions, you can pay a small monthly fee to join and have consistent access to the software).

3. Dig Deep

Some of the most important questions your team should think about have nothing to do with programmatic details or budget constraints. More importantly, your team needs to have the gut-level conversations that help you determine the real health of your youth group or ministry program. Those include questions like:

Action Point

Ask yourselves the following questions that call for a deep understanding of where you are and where you can grow.

- Are we internally driven or outwardly focused?
- Are we built on our own human ideas and strategies, or are we regularly praying and looking to Holy Scripture to understand how God would have us focus our efforts?
- Are we interested only in attendance, or do we have a real desire to be in relationship with these teens?
- Are we creating a space that is safe, welcoming, and accepts our youth exactly as they are? Or do we want to feed them answers and beliefs and shut down their wrestling with certain issues?
- Is our group value driven?

Remember! Knowing where you are, and where you want to be, can help you determine where you want to go, and how you will decide to get there!