

How to Develop a Strong Women's Ministry Team

DOVE ILC at Sandy Cove

4/5/22

The Team

Pray - Pray - Pray! Pray about having the right people - different age groups and skill sets. Start with just a few people and add more as the ministry grows. When it starts to feel like a burden, either you need to add another person to the team to help share the load, or it may be time for someone to move on into something even greater for her personally.

Meeting Frequency

Meet monthly until you feel like you can meet less often. This all depends on the number of events you're doing per year and the amount of time your team members have to interact through text/email in between meetings.

Bonding Weekend

Have an annual "Bonding Weekend" where you bring the entire team together for a weekend away to get to know each other and hear their hearts on what their passion is or what each team member is excited about for the women of your Church. This ties your team together in a powerful way as you give them opportunity to share. The bonus is you can also get most of the details together for your annual retreat, so time the weekend away around the time you want to knock out most of the decisions.

Pleasing Everyone

You & your team will have to come to grips with the fact that it's not possible to please all the women, all of the time. You will have some who LOVE the very same thing others don't love AT ALL. Food is probably the biggest one for this. Some things you can accommodate...other things it's much more challenging to do so. Truly ask for God's wisdom on this as it can come down to a case-by-case basis with some of the requests you get. Just remember, what you do for one (especially if it's one who talks about it, brags about it or even just mentions it to a few), you'll need to be prepared to do for many.

Showcase Them

When you get to know the skill sets of the women on your team, you'll look for ways to showcase them. You'll want them to flow in their natural giftings. This takes some time and discernment as you may have someone who needs nudged and encouraged and you may have someone who needs some restraint. Encourage the strong-willed team member to not get ahead of God's timing, and encourage the timid team member to step out in faith.

Oversight

Typically, the Pastor gives oversight to the Women's Ministry. Initially, you'll run EVERYTHING by them as you're putting together the Women's Ministry team - planning your first events - making decisions that will be printed in a bulletin, using in an announcement at Church or on social media. This is key. Submit to this spiritual covering as it keeps you in check & on the right path. You want their feedback & their input. They usually see a much bigger picture than you're able to see, and could prevent a misunderstanding or offense.

Any questions, please reach out:

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How to Create a Powerful Women's Retreat

DOVE ILC - April 5, 2022

Planning a Women's Retreat is a lot like planning a Wedding. It can be done in a few months, but it will be so much easier on your planning committee if you take a minimum of 6-9 months to do it. This is set up for 9-12 months, but certainly can be tweaked to accomplish in a shorter time. The frequency of your meetings will depend on your team & the size of the event. Whether you have 10 or 100 women in your Church, the need to "retreat" together will be something that can be very life giving for all of you.

Disclaimer - these are simply the things I've learned from 15 years of Women's Retreat planning. There is always more to learn.

Goal - to connect with each other and to deepen their relationship with God.

MOST Important TIP - always, always, always have firsthand knowledge of a speaker, or watch her on social media/YouTube to see her speaking style and subject matter. At the least, make sure she is aligned with a Church who has the same belief systems & Bible focus as yours. Trust me on this one.

9-12 Months Before Retreat:

- Meet with your Retreat Planning committee of 3-6 women (depending on the size of your event) to discuss/pray about the Location of Retreat - Overnight or just during the day - Retreat Speaker(s), Theme & Title - Song & Bible Verse to go with the theme - Budget amount you want to stay within for your team and if you want to have any fundraisers to keep the cost manageable for the women. Note...you'll want to have either attended an event at the location or have a thorough tour of the meeting room/sound system & sleeping rooms/food they serve before having your event there.
- Clear all decisions you make with your Church Leadership Oversight person if they aren't part of your planning committee.
- Contact & Book location for Retreat. Ask when the initial deposit, and final payments are due & when they need a final count for meals or need names for rooms (if staying overnight). Find out if you can offer vegetarian & gluten free meals. Have them email you all the fine print for attendees that goes with their location. Email this to your team (& leadership oversight person) as it's good for a few sets of eyes to double check everything the first time you're working with a location.

6-9 Months Before Retreat:

- Confirm Speaker(s) and contact for availability - discuss theme/price & set up time to meet with her to fine tune details.
- Discuss table centerpieces & overall décor to go with theme & who is overseeing that.
- Discuss door prizes and donation options for giveaways to make the Retreat extra fun.
- Decide if you're giving out goodie bags or folders to each attendee when they register, or if you're going to have a small gift for them instead.
- Look at options like having breakout sessions with different subjects for different seasons of life or interests, or if you want to have small groups after the sessions with questions to discuss.
- Designate who your Worship Leader will be and give them your theme and song(s) you want incorporated. Ask her to get back to you on a few songs she'd like to add to the weekend.

- Designate who your Prayer Ministry Leader will be and give her some names to reach out to and form a team of people willing to pray the month leading up to the Retreat, during the Retreat & pray with people at the Retreat. (if your event is large, this can be several different teams of people)

3-6 Months Before Retreat:

- Meet with your speaker(s) and get on the same page with the format for the weekend & how ministry will work - what tech needs are necessary - if she's doing handouts, etc. Confirm the Retreat will be complementary to her, & she'll receive payment at the Retreat - reimburse her mileage or airfare if she's not local. Ask if she'd like to bring anyone with her to the event.

1-3 Months Before Retreat:

- Prepare rough draft of the Retreat Agenda & email to the planning committee to see if there's anything you haven't thought of.
- Confirm door prizes & add to the Retreat Agenda to do a drawing for several of them at the beginning of each session to help get them in their seats - must be present to win.
- Confirm meal choices and A/V needs with Retreat location. You'll want a mic for the worship leader & any other singers, as well as a mic for the speaker.
- Have a designated Registration person who is handling all the details around this. Can be done online and in person after Church on Sunday mornings. Consider offering full or partial scholarships to those not able to afford to come to the Retreat. (ask them to contribute at least \$20 so they are more committed, and not as tempted to not show up at the last minute)
- Ask the Prayer Ministry Leader to have the prayer team praying for those on the fence about attending.

Final Weeks before Retreat:

- Communicate any final updates/counts to Retreat location - to the speaker(s) & to the committee.
- Connect with Worship Leader to confirm last minute details & ensure she has all equipment needed.
- Email the registration list to the Prayer Ministry Leader to pray over a hedge of protection for the planning committee and any last attempts of the enemy to launch an attack on anyone attending the Retreat.
- Remind the planning committee to keep putting on their armor as they are preparing for battle. The enemy doesn't want freedom or restoration or forgiveness happening so he will be on the attack.
- Have a handout for attendees to give their feedback at the end of the Retreat, as well as any handouts or outlines from the speaker(s) for during the Retreat
- Make sure there is a brief schedule for the Retreat for each attendee to have as they check in.

After Retreat:

- Meet with your Retreat Planning Committee for a recap meeting within a few weeks after the Retreat to find out from everyone what went well, what needs improvement & any feedback they heard from other attendees. You will learn something new every year. THEN...start planning for the next year! 😊

Any questions, please reach out:

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Women's Event Ideas

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Events That Were Well Attended:

Soup & Bread Cook Off - every attendee has the choice of bringing a homemade soup, a homemade bread or simply being a taste tester. The best soup maker & the best bread maker get a prize.

Accessory Swap - bring 3 items there & take 3 different items home. This can be purses, scarves, belts or jewelry. We even added a few short testimonies to this event.

Book Swap - bring 3 books there & take 3 different books home. You can give instructions on what category books to bring & set up tables for different subjects to keep them sorted. You could add a few book reviews on how a book changed your life.

Pool Party & Yard Games - this is a big hit in the summer if you have a Church member with a pool. Set up yard games to play, then cool off in the pool. Top it off with homemade ice cream & all the toppings.

Fall Kick-off & Brunch - we held this on a Saturday morning from 9am-11:30 to talk about what would be coming up - have a speaker - have a bagel bar & a yogurt parfait bar - always a big hit!

Events That Were Less Attended:

Bingo Night or Movie Night - heavily depends on picking the right movie or having some fun prizes to win. If an amazing movie comes along, then this could really be a hit.

Knotting Comforters - this leans more heavily towards the more mature women in your group, but can also be a great teaching experience with the older teaching the younger...and blessing the homeless with the end result.

S'mores around a campfire - all depends on the weather that night. If there's a breeze, this can get cold outside and smoke will invariably be in someone's eyes. At the same time, it's fun to roast marshmallows or even hot dogs & sip hot chocolate or hot cider and share stories of how God's working in your life.

The most important thing you can do is get to know the women in your Church! If they love to do crafts, then that will be a hit. If they love to bake, then you could do a bake-off instead of a soup cook-off. Sometimes you don't know what's going to really resonate with them until you try it. Don't be afraid to ask them what they'd like to do, or ask someone if they'd share a talent or gift they have with the rest of the group to learn from them.

When your focus is to encourage and bless the women in your Church, to give them opportunities to strengthen themselves in the Lord and connect with each other, you won't go wrong.

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