

## Projects You Can Use: Using Intentional Linkers to Connect with Worship Guests

I attended a **Building Healthy Churches** conference **November 1-3, 2007**. **Paul Borden**, the author of *Hit the Bulls-eye* and *Direct Hit*, was the workshop leader. This event was sponsored by the Presbytery of Charlotte.

During the workshop, Paul Borden made a statement that has stayed with me. He said, "People aren't looking for a friendly church. People are looking for friends." I agree with Paul. Personally, I have yet to attend the second friendliest church in town.

Although all churches consider themselves to be friendly, the truth is that people are looking for friends. They don't just want to know if members of the church will be friendly towards them. They want to know whether or not any of the members of the church will actually become their friends.

Helping guest make friends requires having in place an assimilation process that connects people with guest, from their very first visit, until they actually decide to "hang their hat" and call your congregation their spiritual home. I want to share with you a project that you can use that will help you to effectively connect with guests during their initial visits. It will permit you to recruit and train intentional linkers, which is an essential first step in any assimilation process.



## Project/Action Items Summary

### "5 - 10 - Link" Rule

To build community, encourage regular attenders to initiate contact with people they don't know. The simple "5-10-Link" rule will help them follow through. Someone living by the rule sets this as a personal standard: "I won't initiate a conversation with anyone I know until I have attempted for 5 minutes after every meeting to reach someone I don't know. If, when talking to someone, I see an unfamiliar person within 10 feet, I will go to them or draw them in. I will not leave a newcomer without linking the person to another contact." Make it a priority for leaders and encourage the whole congregation to adopt this guide.

**Project Date - Not Scheduled**  
**Responsibility - Not Assigned**

**Time to Complete - 0.00 hour(s)**  
**Cost - \$0.00**  
**Category - Not Assigned**

| Complete Action Item   | Action Date<br>Responsibility                      |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>1 GAIN COMMITMENT</b><br>Talk with leaders about how living by the principle would be valuable in their area of responsibility, and how they see it being applied.   | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>2 APPOINT COORDINATOR</b><br>Ask a person who can model the 5-10-link rule as well as train and encourage others to coordinate the approach.   | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>3 ESTABLISH PLACE</b><br>Identify a list for involving people in living by the principle. Identify all the places and events where it would be workable.   | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>4 INTEGRATE WITH FOLLOW-UP</b><br>Work with those who do follow-up to establish a mutually agreeable follow-up plan.   | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>5 RECRUIT LINKERS</b><br>Recruit warm, open people to serve as intentional linkers. Recruit senior leaders to be role models.  | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>6 TRAIN LINKERS</b><br>In a short training session with linkers review the principle and role play the concept. Review the lists of events and situations that are ideal for applying the rule. Get feedback.                            | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>7 TRAIN SENIOR LEADERS</b><br>In separate sessions, review and role play the approach with senior leaders so they can model for the congregation. Discuss ways that less extroverted people can get comfortable with greeting strangers. | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>8 IMPLEMENT 5-10-LINK</b><br>Set a date to implement the use of the principle. Do it without publicity. At the end of the events, check with leaders and links on the outcome and for suggested revisions to process. | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>9 REVIEW FOLLOW-UP</b><br>Check with those assigned to arrange follow-up and with those doing it. Document non-confidential information to share with others for evaluation and for application in other areas.       | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>10 TRAIN CONGREGATION</b><br>Support the effort; use as an example in teaching on fellowship.   | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>11 ESTABLISH REMINDER PROCESS</b><br>Annually review the concept with congregation. Have ministry leaders review it with workers at the same time.  | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>12 EVALUATE</b><br>Annually (two months before the congregational reminder) review with linkers and senior leaders, the benefits and drawbacks, of using the guide. Revise as necessary.                              | Not Assigned<br>Cost: \$0.00<br>Time: 0.00 hour(s) |