

Evaluating The “Before” And “After” of A Ministry Program

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We have all seen great “before” and “after” comparison pictures that people post to prove the wonderful results of their efforts.

Home Renovation



Car Restoration



“Makeovers”



We can, and should, document the same transformation as we evaluate our efforts in children’s ministry. Of course, “ministry” is the work of God that isn’t always easy to “document”; but we should still ask God to show us “evidence” of the success of our work with people.

Identifying The “Before” Condition (Before you operated your program)

In all of the “before” pictures, the “condition” of the person, home, or car reveals something that might need some help. In ministry, the “before” condition represents “conditions of the heart,” attitudes, or the readiness to love God or to love others. Here are some “prompts” that might help you identify or document the “before” conditions that you want to “help” in God’s power:

“Conditions of The Heart” (Attitudes)

Conditions / Attitudes Before The Service Plan	Present In Children?	Present In Youth?	Percentage of Children	Percentage of Youth
1. Selfishness – Do the students display a “what’s in it for me?” attitude?				
2. Selflessness – Do the students “turn away from” or hesitate helping others?				
3. Willingness – Do the students lack a “how can I help?” attitude?				
4. Sacrifice – Do the students sidestep opportunities to sacrifice?				
5. Mentorship – Do the students avoid being mentored?				
6. Perspective – Do the students accept that serving others is a significant factor in being a Christian?				
7. Determination – Do the students work hard in all they do “as unto the Lord”?				
8. Faithfulness – Are the students dependable and committed to doing what is expected of them?				
9. Exemplary – Do the students look for ways they can be strong examples for other children or youth?				
10. Growing – Are the students involved in an expanding process of serving others?				

Documenting The “After” Changes

The efforts that you invest in ministering to others will always produce “fruit” if you are being led and empowered by God’s Holy Spirit. Yes, there is the possibility of doing things in your own power or strength, apart from God’s leading, that can result in no visible “fruit.”

There are scriptures that underscore the result of letting God’s work and His Word permeate everything we do in ministry.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For just as rain and snow fall from heaven and do not return without watering the earth, making it bud and sprout, and providing seed to sow and food to eat, so My word that proceeds from My mouth will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I please, and it will prosper where I send it.”

- Isaiah 55: 9-11

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil. This will bring healing to your body and refreshment to your bones.”

- Proverbs 3: 5-8

“...It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.”

- Philippians 2:13

Using the same “before” prompts, document what God has accomplished as a result your efforts in the service plan. Determine when and how often to evaluate the “after” results.

Conditions / Attitudes After ___ Months	Present In Children?	Present In Youth?	Percentage of Children	Percentage of Youth
1. Selfishness – Do the students display a “what’s in it for me?” attitude?				
2. Selflessness – Do the students “turn away from” or hesitate helping others?				
3. Willingness – Do the students lack a “how can I help?” attitude?				
4. Sacrifice – Do the students sidestep opportunities to sacrifice?				
5. Mentorship – Do the students avoid being mentored?				
6. Perspective – Do the students accept that serving others is a significant factor in being a Christian?				
7. Determination – Do the students work hard in all they do “as unto the Lord”?				
8. Faithfulness – Are the students dependable and committed to doing what is expected of them?				
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10. Growing – Are the students involved in an expanding process of serving others?				

Analysis of The Results

After documenting the “after” results, consider the following questions:

1. Did your efforts result in any noticeable changes in the “conditions / attitudes” of the children?
2. Did your efforts result in any noticeable changes in the “conditions / attitudes” of the youth?
3. What specific comments or reactions have you heard from parents of children or youth?
4. What specific comments or reactions have you heard from the children or youth?
5. Are there improvements that you can make that would improve the results or “fruit”?
6. Based on the “after” analysis, will you continue to carry out this service plan in the children and youth ministries?