



How to Host a Volunteer Huddle

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All good teams have huddles. A football team huddles to call the next play. A softball team huddles before a game to get focused. A rock band huddles before the concert to be inspired and to discuss any last-minute adjustments. The same is true for volunteer teams in the church. Often church-leaders are so sensitive to the time already being invested by volunteers, that they choose to forgo regular huddles and assume everyone will be OK on their own. This is a miscalculation. Huddles are important before Sunday services, before volunteers are mobilized for a day of community service, or before a large outreach or inreach event.

Huddles are essential for so many reasons.

- **Huddles are great for vision.**

One of the great rewards for volunteers is being part of a cause greater than themselves. The huddle becomes a visual reminder of the bigger picture volunteers are a part of. It is also an opportunity for a leader to cast a larger vision directly to each team member.

- **Huddles are great for unity.**

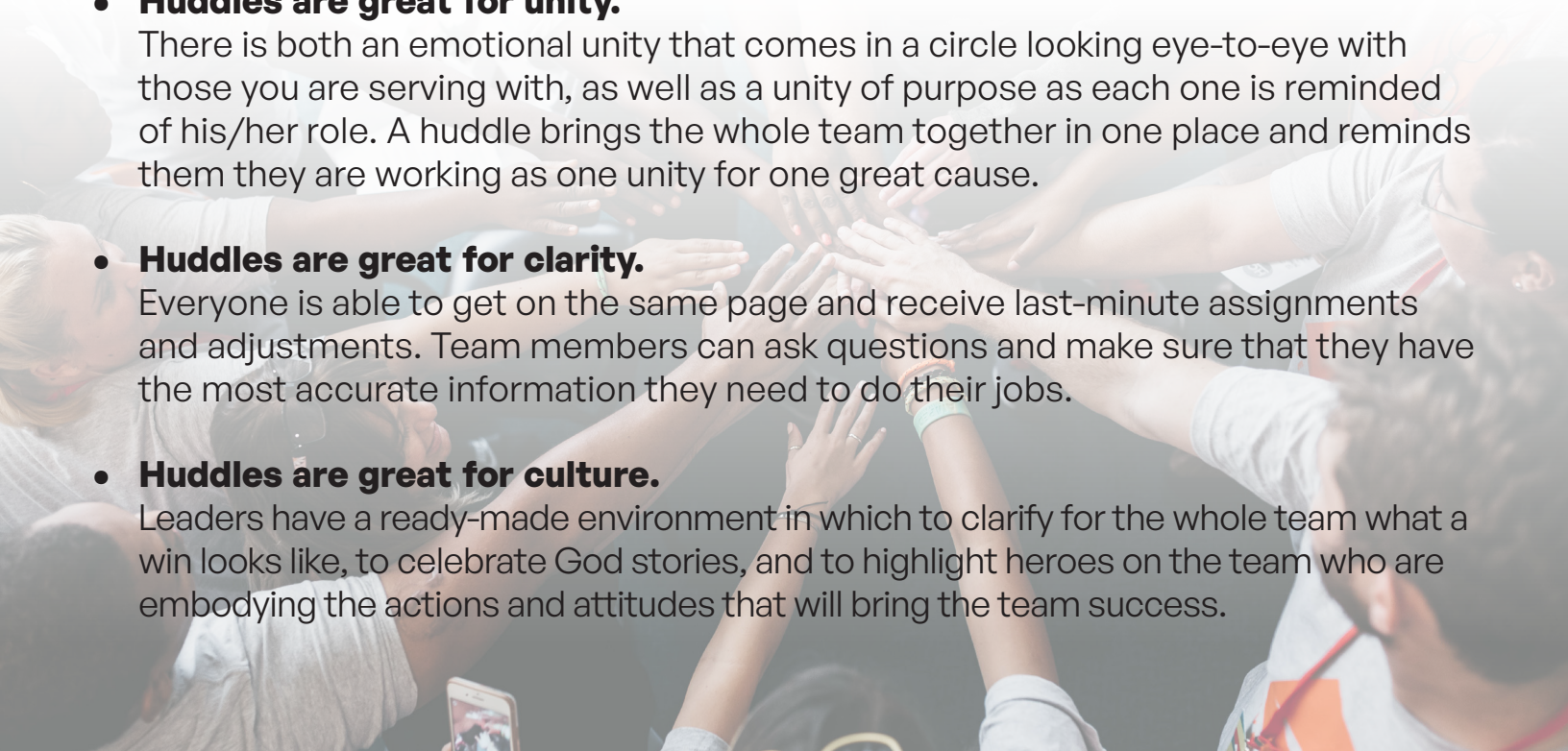
There is both an emotional unity that comes in a circle looking eye-to-eye with those you are serving with, as well as a unity of purpose as each one is reminded of his/her role. A huddle brings the whole team together in one place and reminds them they are working as one unity for one great cause.

- **Huddles are great for clarity.**

Everyone is able to get on the same page and receive last-minute assignments and adjustments. Team members can ask questions and make sure that they have the most accurate information they need to do their jobs.

- **Huddles are great for culture.**

Leaders have a ready-made environment in which to clarify for the whole team what a win looks like, to celebrate God stories, and to highlight heroes on the team who are embodying the actions and attitudes that will bring the team success.



- **Huddles are great for momentum.**

If momentum is a series of successive wins, the huddle becomes the vehicle in which to celebrate these wins. The team becomes aware of the mission and ministry that their acts of service are fueling. This becomes a source of motivation and even a space to recruit and expose new volunteers to what God is doing.

- **Before you get started, a few tips...**

Speak to team members individually to cast vision for the new huddle concept. Use the bullet points above to explain why this is worthy of their time and commitment.

- Send a text or email to the team each week for the first few months to remind people about the huddle. Give a teaser or a sneak peek into something that will be highlighted.
- Decide if you are going to do one big huddle for all volunteers, or if each ministry area will do their own huddle.
- Always keep the mission in focus. If the huddle becomes too inward focused instead of outward focused, it will become counter-productive.
- Keep them short! Under 10 minutes is best.
- Hold people accountable. Don't allow skipping the huddle to become a common practice.
- Choose the location of the huddle wisely. Make sure it isn't in the way as people are arriving, and that it's not disrupting the cleaning team, or setup team, etc.

Huddle Format...VIP

Vision

Keep it short! (3 minutes) Choose one of the following:

- Share a STORY.
 - A life that was changed as a result of the team's effort last week
 - A team member who exhibited a kingdom action or attitude
 - An example of how the efforts of this team are propelling us to our desired future.

- Share a STATISTIC.
 - When a new milestone has been achieved.
 - When the number illustrates the problem, the solution, or the benefit of the team.
 - When the statistic creates a sense of urgency, importance or curiosity.
- Share a SCRIPTURE.
 - That underlines a biblical value that is relevant to your team.
 - That highlights a biblical character that is an example for your team.
 - That exemplifies a biblical outcome that is a goal of your team.

Information

Keep it short! (4 minutes) Consider the following:

- Review the plan for the day.
- Give “insider information” about ministry happenings or the church (don’t over-share, but make people feel like they’ve received insights that aren’t available to others).
- Give last minute information or changes that your team should know.
- Supply a “cheat-sheet” of any talking points they may need to remember.

Prayer

Keep it short! (3 minutes) This isn’t the same as an intercessory prayer meeting.

Consider one of the following approaches each week:

- Invite a team member to pray that God would move today.
- Pray for a team member who has an urgent need. You can’t do this for everyone every week, but it sets the culture of care, by doing it for one.
- Match your prayer focus to the theme of the day.
- Pray for the team.
- Pray for the mission and the people the team is serving.
- Popcorn prayers. Allow time for the whole team to shout out one-word prayers for the day.

If you are not currently hosting volunteer huddles, give it a try. Use the tool on the following page to map it out. They are a great way to build community, build culture, and “call the play” for the day.

Print these Cue Cards on card stock, cut them out, and fill them in to guide you in your huddle leadership.

VIP Huddle Cue Card

Big Idea for Today's Huddle:

V - Vision:

Story, Stat, Scripture

I - Information:

In order to serve well, this team needs to be aware of the following information:

- _____
- _____
- _____

P - Prayer

Prayer approach

Who will lead

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