



PREPARE MODULE #1

LEADER :: GUEST ENGAGEMENT | EASTSIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

COMPETENCY: Initiates conversations with team members and guests in a way that empowers them to create Positive Unexpected Relational Experiences for our guests (P.U.R.E.).

OBJECTIVE: To build teams of people who consistently “wow” guests by engaging them in ways that exceed their expectations.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- *Assignment 1 // Read various portions from [Climbing the Assimilayas](#) blog post by Greg Curtis (all portions included in Assignment 1 below) and answer corresponding questions.*
- *Assignment 2 // Read John 4:4-42, Acts 16:19-34, & Acts 3:1-12 and answer the corresponding questions in each assignment below.*
- *Assignment 3 // Read The Difference between Guest Satisfaction and Guest Engagement (included in Assignment 3) and answer corresponding questions.*
- *Assignment 4 // Watch [Dan Heath: Build Peaks, Don't Fix Potholes](#) and answer corresponding questions.*

ASSIGNMENT 1

Read about a real guest experience” at a restaurant in these excerpts from [Climbing the Assimilayas](#) blog post by Greg Curtis) and answer questions listed below:

As part of my 30th wedding anniversary celebration, Michelle and I were given a gift certificate to go out to a nice dinner. We chose the Red O in Newport Beach. I made the reservation using the OpenTable app on my iPhone and when it asked the reason for the reservation, I typed in "My 30th wedding anniversary." I didn't think this would amount to anything because I wasn't dealing directly with the restaurant.

I was wrong.

When we got there, we walked through a fairly crowded entry room that resembled the Museum of Tequila and gave our name to the host. He caught me off guard by saying, "Happy 30th Anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. Curtis. Please follow me." I thought to myself, "I didn't know they actually read the fine print on those online reservation forms," as he cut through the crowd and immediately brought us to our table.

This table. A table for eight. As we scooted into the plush sofa side complete with pillows, I asked him if he really wanted to seat the two of us at this large table when there was such a crowd. He then removed all of the place settings but two and took away all the chairs. "There. A private table for two, Mr Curtis."

The surprises were not over. Our waiter brought us complimentary champagne to toast our anniversary. After an incredible meal, we ordered a dessert they were known for, Butter Cake, and the dessert was comped again in honor of our 30 years together. I had never heard of the Red O before. But as I waddled out of the restaurant, back through the Tequila Hall of Fame, I thought one thing: I want to go back there for Valentine's Day.

As one who envisions, trains and deploys teams of people who engage guests at our church, I am reflecting on what it was about the staff at the Red O that made such an impression on me. I have come to this conclusion: **If we want to help guests trust us and desire to become a part of our churches, those who serve them must become experts at creating *Positive, Unexpected, Relational, Experiences (P.U.R.E.)*.**

QUESTIONS:

1. *Have you ever been "wowed" at a restaurant in an unexpected way? What happened that left such an impression on you?*

2. *Have you designed a guest experience that allows your team the freedom to do the unexpected? What have they done? What could they do if you envisioned them?*

ASSIGNMENT 2

See P.U.R.E. encounters in Scripture.

I see the P.U.R.E dynamic at work in the New Testament when it chronicles what our movement looked like in the first century when....

- A woman came to a well in Samaria and asked a man for water and instead got a surprise relational encounter with the Messiah. **(Read John 4:4-42)**
- A Roman jailer expected to see an empty cell after an earthquake and instead found two prisoners willing to stay in their cell and share with him news that would forever change him and his family. **(Read Acts 16:19-34)**
- A paralyzed beggar asked Peter and John for some money but instead received, in Jesus' name, the ability to walk. **(Read Acts 3:1-12)**

QUESTIONS:

1. *Can you come up with three principles about "doing the unexpected" that these passages have in common when it comes to assimilating people into our faith community?*
2. *Identify one principle unique to each passage that could inform your team how to create positive, unexpected relational experiences with guests.*

3. Which examples of leadership here (Jesus, James and John, or Paul and Silas) do you find most helpful when envisioning positive relational experiences with guests? Why?

ASSIGNMENT 3

The Difference between Guest Satisfaction and Guest Engagement

Mark Waltz, in his book *First Impressions: Creating Wow Experiences in Your Church*, discusses the difference between guest satisfaction and guest engagement. He says:

“A guest can remain rather disconnected from the business or organization and be quite satisfied. Engaged guests have a relationship with the people who make up the organization.”

He goes on to describe the positive, unexpected relational experiences that move guests beyond satisfaction to fuller engagement. He calls it "wowing" them. He also says:

“The challenge is to create an environment that allows spontaneous happenings consistent with your desired outcome.”

The wait staff did that for me at the Red O. I would have been quite satisfied to wait five minutes to be seated, to sit at a table for two (not eight), and be served good food for the full price with no freebies. But I wouldn't be talking about them to you now had they merely satisfied me. The truth is, they engaged me, and that is why I am sharing the experience with you.

What might that look like at Guest Central in our church? I think it would look something like these two incidents when I saw a volunteer bring a guest from satisfaction to engagement.

Incident 1: A guest asks where our children's ministry is.

Guest Satisfaction: Our volunteer gives the guest directions with a smile.

Guest Engagement: Our volunteer introduces themselves to the child, tells her she is pretty, asks how old she is, and invites mother and daughter on a tour of the room where the child's program takes place. The volunteer introduces the child to her teacher while the mom meets the leader of that ministry. The room is incredible and the leaders winsome enough to win

mother and daughter over. They will be back next week, and the daughter will attend the children's program instead of adult worship, and she'll bring a friend with her.

Incident 2: A guest shares that she was moved by the message, confides some of her backstory, and wants to know how she can sign up to be baptized.

Guest Satisfaction: Our volunteer has the guest check the baptism box on her connection card and then turns it in for her.

Guest Engagement: Our volunteer calls one of the pastors to see if he can open the baptistry right now after church. Clothing is handed out, and a volunteer is asked to jump in and clean/heat up the baptistry. The guest has a conversation with the pastor to discern her readiness; she confesses her faith and is baptized with our Guest Central volunteer there to hug this tearful guest when she gets out of the water. Another volunteer grabs a bag and puts a new Bible along with an invitation to Next Steps in it and hands it to our guest when she leaves. One more hug and her first church experience in many years is complete.

What I witnessed in both these instances was a *positive, unexpected relational experience* that caused these first-time guests to return the following weekend. I experienced that at the Red O and want to return, not just for the food, but for the experience. Imagine what could happen when the spirit of God leads volunteers who are willing to go off script to go beyond just satisfying guests to more fully engaging them!

A restaurant. A well. The Beautiful Gate. A prison cell. Guest Central. A Kidside room. A baptistry. It can happen anywhere. And when it does, everybody wins.

QUESTIONS:

1. *What is a "wow moment" you've already seen between a Change Maker on your team and a guest at your church that could serve as an example to use with your team members?*

2. *What would you want a guest from your service to say to a coworker on Monday about their visit to your church? Are your guest services and worship experiences designed so that conversation will take place? What are three dial turns that could be made to begin moving in that direction within the next one to four weeks?*

ASSIGNMENT 4

Build peaks, don't fix potholes.

Watch [Dan Heath: Build Peaks, Don't Fix Potholes](#) and discuss the following:

QUESTIONS:

1. *"Service businesses and managers spend too much time 'fixing potholes' and not enough time 'building peaks.'" If you work in a service business, would you say that rings true? Do you think your organization is guilty of that? Is our church?*
2. *What is one peak you have experienced at Eastside that you wish everyone could have?*

What are at least two LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAYS from this module? Be prepared to discuss with your group.

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2.