

TITLE: Volunteers for Today's Church: How to Recruit and Retain Workers

AUTHORS: Dennis Williams and Kenneth Gangel

AUTHORS' CREDENTIALS:

When the book was published, Dennis Williams was dean of the school of Christian Education at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Kenneth Gangel chaired the Christian Education department at Dallas Theological Seminary, two top tier schools of church ministry. Their combined experience and expertise are hard to match.



FOCUSED ON CHURCH?

Yes, entirely.

BIBLICAL VIEWPOINT?

Yes. Williams and Gangel lay out the theological foundation of volunteerism in the church in the first chapter and weave Biblical concepts into every page.

STRENGTHS:

- This book is a classic in the field, still available in many libraries and from used book sources. Don't let the publication date (1993, 2004) fool you -- it is full of useful tips and wise counsel. More than anything, it clearly spells out the principles of working effectively with volunteers.
- Williams and Gangel remind us, "A church often enlists people to fill a position; it should enlist them to serve Christ through his body" (pg. 17, 1993 ed.).
- In their chapter on problems in recruitment, they lay out the qualifications for leadership and the New Testament principles for leading church volunteers. Above all, leading is serving, as the leader identifies with the volunteers and models behavior for them.
- The chapter on motivation includes helpful reminders and detail about communicating with volunteers. We need to communicate details and program information, communicate our awareness of their value as individuals and value to the ministry, and communicate our vision for their growth and ministry potential.
- You almost never hear about supervising and evaluating volunteers, so these authors devote a chapter to how it can be done in the church.

HOLES AND SOFT SPOTS:

- You won't find a mention of email or social media in this book. That's not a bad thing, but you do need to add them to the discussion of communication and how leaders keep in touch with volunteers and disseminate information.

- This is NOT an in-your-face book with sound bites and crisp, slang-filled snippets. It's the tone, not the info, that is slightly dated. For these authors, think of listening to two Christian gentlemen with impeccable credentials in church ministry.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR COMMENTS:

- New tech vs. Biblical principles. You got a problem with that?