

Breakthrough Guest Experience Ideas with Danny Franks

On a recent episode of the [My Ministry Breakthrough podcast](#), Danny Franks tells the incredible story of a parking lot volunteer that eventually became a church planter in China. It all started with a conversation with some visiting exchange students and a leader taking the time to do more than only help someone park their car. This ordained moment fuels Danny's calling as [Pastor of Guest Services at the Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham](#), North Carolina. And it also challenges him to ensure that, each weekend, there is always at least one more volunteer than he actually needs. [You can listen to the whole conversation here.](#)

Here are some key breakthrough ideas with Danny:

- When God says "I am doing something..." words begin to create worlds.
- Learn why nobody wants to give their life away to show up and help somebody find a parking space.
- Why serving on a hospitality team is a lot of fun for about three weeks but becomes a lousy hobby if there is no substance.
- If all we are calling people to do is show up to check off a box, they will only be excited for a short time. Train for this instead.
- How vital is a welcoming ministry in a church where there is so much emphasis on the gospel and missions?
- Is a First Impressions ministry essential? Answering this question with the Gospel is critical, here's why.
- Could it be that there roles in the church that we are presenting as family chores? Serving should never feel like taking out the garbage.
- There are plenty of opportunities to offend people and make them uncomfortable when you see with first-time guest eyes.
- We can do everything possible to make 60-75 minutes inside the worship service flawless, but if we are not thinking through what somebody sees first, it may not matter.
- Do we need to ask – what do they see first?
- Make sure that the messages from the stage hold up to the messages on the sidewalk.
- The gospel is offensive but nothing else should be, especially your welcome.
- Guests far from God may disagree with points of your sermon, but they cannot argue with the love of your people.
- There are all kinds of offenses on a Sunday that we can fix... the gospel is one offense we shouldn't try to fix.
- If we make it feel like we love people, we planned for them, and we cannot wait for them to come back, people hostile to the gospel will eventually take hold.
- Helping people understand the purpose behind needed changes is critical to keeping volunteer hearts engaged.
- The why behind The Summit's hospitality begins and ends with the gospel.
- The big win of the weekend is that everyone hears the gospel communicated.
- The Summit First Impressions Plumline: The gospel is offensive, nothing else should be
- The Summit First Impressions Plumline: The why is more important than the what.

- The Summit First Impressions Plumblines: Everything speaks.
- The Summit First Impressions Plumblines: The first visit should set up the second visit
- The Summit First Impressions Plumblines: Make it personal – every weekend is someone's first weekend, meet people where they are
- The why has to be more caught than taught. People should understand what matters most beyond just hearing words at a training meeting.
- Leaders must be present and in conversation to ensure that culture is stewarded well from campus to campus.
- Stories are the most significant indicator of cultural health.
- Asking guests about their experience is a way to hear from guests and listen for systemic issues in your hospitality experience.
- The first time guest experience is a health indicator for the entire church.
- Stats don't grab people's hearts the way stories do... tell stories to motivate and to cultivate the results you want to see.
- Gospel discipleship in every ministry means that people can move from parking cars to planting churches.
- The majority of guest services conversations are transactional, but are your people available to connect beyond the welcome and into the relational?
- The bare minimum number of volunteers result in the bare minimum number of gospel experiences.
- You always need more volunteers – more people engaged in the mission creates more opportunities to engage people.
- There has to be a passion for the guest experience... your volunteers need to see welcoming people as more than just family chores.
- Nobody dreams of being a guest services pastor, but the reality is that Biblical hospitality is a critical component of following Jesus.
- Guest Services are a biblical virtue expressed on an organizational level.
- Essential Qualities of a Great Hospitality Leader: People person, Attention to detail, Dreamer not afraid to take measured risks
- We don't always need to learn something new; we need to revisit the truth over and over again.
- Leaders sharpen their tools by reading – and not just leadership books.
- You can engineer EPIC moments to engage First Time Guests.
- Relax... let go of the perfect plan and the ideal event. Outside of salvation, there are very few things in ministry that are as life and death as we think they are.
- We can sacrifice people on the altar of our idol the plan.
- We are not here for the plans we are here for the people.

[Listen to the whole podcast here.](#)

If you want to learn how to create an exceptional Guest Experience at your church, check out Auxano's [Guest Experience Boot Camp](#) coming up January 29-30 in Newport Beach, CA

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