

A woman with dark hair and glasses is looking thoughtfully to the side. The image is dimmed and serves as a background for the text.

# 5 WORD-FOR-WORD SCRIPTS FOR LEADING CHANGE

THE ART OF   
**LEADING CHANGE**

# 5 Word-for-Word Scripts for Leading Change

So you need to announce a big change.

You hope it will go well only to remember the last time when it didn't. Nobody signed up. Nobody showed up. Or you got a string of emails from confused and upset people.

At other times, you just know the announcement is going to be contentious—like announcing a staff member who was terminated.

How do you make the announcement so it paves the way for the greatest possible acceptance, the least amount of disruption and moves the mission forward?

First, the principles, and then 5 word-for-word scripts you can use or adopt to tailor them to your exact situation.

## **Bottom Line: Why Beats What and How**

The key to making effective announcements about change is to focus twice as much on the why, than you do on the what and the how of a decision.

In the Art of Leading Change course, I show you how to begin the announcement of change process by communicating in concentric circles of people. Once you've had a dialogue with the core, and a conversation with the committed, it's time to roll out the change to the congregation and community.

When you do that, here are some suggested scripts you can use for the announcement, be it written, video or verbal (during the announcement window).

Of the three main questions leaders deal with—why, what and how—only why unites.

The challenge is that when things are fractious, people always want to talk about what and how. Hence the endless debates about whether to open/reopen, masks, distancing, online, etc.

That's when the best thing you can do as a leader is pull the conversation back to why and elevate the dialogue to the level of the mission.

As a result, effective leaders talk about why twice as much as they talk about what and how.

With that said, here are some scripts you can use verbatim or adapt as needed.

# 5 Word-for-Word Scripts for Leading Change

## Script 1: Change in Worship Format

I love the fact that you're so committed to reaching the next generation. As you know, that takes many forms.

We've seen a lot of positive response to some of the newer worship and service formats we've been experimenting with over the last few months/years, and seen a spike in new families attending, teens coming to faith, and a rise in baptisms. I know that's as motivating to you and it is to me.

To that end, we're going to be making a change in our service format. Starting on X date, all of our services will feature X kind of music, and the style of the services will move to Y. We've seen so much traction in those areas and really believe it's going to make an impact for years to come.

I can imagine some of you are really excited for the change while others might be a little more uncertain about the change. I get that, and I want you to know I understand. I hear you.

But here's what I love about our church. I really appreciate that your commitment to the mission is even stronger than your commitment to the methods we've used.

You realize that as times change, it also changes how the next generation responds to what we do, and I ask that you would take your enthusiasm for some of what used to be (the music and the way things were) and pour that enthusiasm into the life-change we will see because of your willingness to change the methods to enhance our mission.

I'm sure some of you have questions. We're completely happy to talk about it with you. Simply email us at XXXX.

In the meantime, we're really excited to see us take our mission to the next level. It will be so exciting to see young families and new people come to faith because of your willingness to embrace them. Thank you for your heart for the next generation!

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## Script Two: Need for More Volunteers

It's pretty easy when you attend a church like ours to assume your role is to attend and to leave ministry to the staff and other people.

In fact, the reason some of you don't serve is because you're not sure you have anything to offer.

There's another group of you that's wondering why you're not growing faster spiritually. You read your bible, pray and maybe you're even in a community group. And maybe you think volunteering is something that isn't going to help you grow spiritually.

What if I told you nothing could be further from the truth?

Look directly at camera when saying this line.

Believe it or not, God has given you a gift. And when you use that gift, you grow.

So, if you've been sitting there Sunday after Sunday or watching online week after week and wondering how to grow spiritually and whether you have a role here, this is your moment.

One of the best ways to grow spiritually and discover your spiritual gift is to serve on a volunteer team here at X church. And right now, we have opportunities.

What kind of gifts are we looking for? Well, some of you are great at tech. You love setting up your new home theater system or fine tuning the EQ on your Sonos system at home. Believe it or not, we have a role for you here. I think you'd love our production team, and we'll train you on the equipment.

Some of you have started YouTube channels or you're just really great on TikTok or Instagram, or you're a budding photographer. Our social media team would be the perfect home for you.

Some of you are saying, I don't really know what my gifts are, but if we sat down and had a conversation, we'd quickly realize you're great at relationships. You're an amazing friend. You actually care about people.

Do you know how many opportunities we have for people like you? Our kids ministry team is built around relationships between adults and kids. So is our student ministry. Because we believe every child and every teen need an adult who believes in them. We have a pastoral care ministry that needs people with the gift of compassion. There's a place for you on our serving teams here at X church.

Some of you are great at hosting events. You love to set a table, cook, welcome people, entertain. We have roles

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## **(Script 2 continued)**

for you too on our guest services team.

Bottom line, you'll take your every day passions and use them for a greater purpose when you serve here at X church.

So how do you get involved? Just scan the QR code/fill out the card, check a box to let us know where you think you might fit, and we'll be in touch to figure out a great fit for you.

Best yet? You're not signing up for life. We'll train you and you can try it for two months/three months. If it's not for you, we can adjust accordingly or you can step back.

Interested? Let us know this morning. Here's what I'm excited about. You'll be helping make a difference together with dozens/hundreds/thousands of other people whom God is using to change peoples' lives forever, in the same way he's changing your life.

Just scan the QR code and fill out the form today, and we'll be in touch this week.

## **Script 3: A Change in Service Times**

We've got some exciting news for you. As you know, we've seen new people experience church for the first time, new baptisms and we're growing. Because we're committed to reach your friends, family and neighbors and the entire city, we're adding a new service option to Sunday mornings.

Starting next month, we're offering two identical services each Sunday to accommodate even more people. That will make it easier for you to attend on Sunday's where time is tight, but even more importantly, we'll have room for more people.

The new service times are X and Y. I know that will be a pattern change for some of you, but I'm so excited to expand the options we're able to offer.

So, pick a new service time and we'll see you all on Sunday X date for the launch of a brand new era.

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## **Script 4: Staff Member Who is Leaving Voluntarily**

I want to let you all know about a transition happening on our team. After many years of service, Jane Smith (whom we love) is moving on from our team.

While we're thrilled for her, we're sad to see her go and we're incredibly grateful for her service. There are transitions that are hard personally, and as excited as I am for her future, I'm really going to miss her as I know so many of you will.

I know many of you will also want to say thank you so we're holding a gathering for Jane on X date at Y time. I know you'll want to share your farewell personally and express your gratitude to all she's brought to our mission.

We'll let you know about next steps to replace Jane when the time comes.

In the meantime, can we express our gratitude to Jane (applause) and let's get ready to celebrate her on X date!

## **Script 5 Announcing a Staff Member who Was Terminated (Fired)**

Good morning! As you may be aware or soon notice, John Smith no longer serves with us at X church.

We're thankful for his service, and the transition plan is that Jane Smith will be temporarily taking John's place effective immediately.

We're excited about what Jane has to bring to the role and will search for a permanent replacement in the upcoming months.

While obviously, we will not share personal details, just as we wouldn't share yours, if you have any questions, please ask. We're excited for what's next in our church.

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Note: Unless you lead a very small church, only significant transitions should ever be announced. Essentially, my rule of thumb is if it's a senior leadership transition of someone who appeared on the platform regularly and was known by the congregation, announce it publicly. Beyond that, deal with it privately.

For example, the departure of a campus pastor, teaching pastor, well-known worship leader or student pastor or a senior pastor might deserve a public announcement. The departure of an executive pastor, associate director, or admin staff perhaps not so much.

This announcement also assumes this was not a voluntary resignation, but a termination.

There is more you can't say about a firing or involuntary termination than what you can say out of legal considerations, privacy and common courtesy. The goal is to keep conversations very short and minimal. If you don't give the gossipers fuel for their fire, the fire will go out more quickly. And there are, of course, the legal ramifications of saying too much. Please consult with an employment lawyer about what you can and cannot say. When in doubt, say nothing about the reasons.