

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

For Changing Sunday School Curriculum

Brought to you by:



EMBRACE CHANGE!

If you've changed Sunday school curriculum before, you know it can be challenging. But you also know that **the right curriculum can make a huge difference for your unique ministry** - your kids, your volunteers, and you!

So, even though change can be daunting, it's well worth the effort. We'd like to share with you a few simple and effective change management techniques that will help you through the process.

Start by taking a moment to focus on the goal and say these words to yourself:

- 1) God is with me.
- 2) He has prepared me.
- 3) With God's guidance, I've got this.

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand."

Isaiah 41:10 (Jesus-Centered Bible)



YOU CAN

DO IT!



STEPS FOR CHANGING SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Step 1: Establish the Need to Make a Change

Step 2: Create a Vision for Your New Curriculum

Step 3: Research (Form a Committee)

Step 4: Narrow Down the Options

Step 5: Prepare Your Presentation

Step 6: Celebrate the Change

Step 7: Keep Track of God Sightings

BUT WAIT! FIRST
STOP AND
PRAY



STEP 1: ESTABLISH THE NEED TO MAKE A CHANGE

Gather a team of people to have a healthy discussion surrounding your current curriculum. It may include anyone involved in Sunday school...from teachers to involved parents. Share with the team the reasons you believe change is needed.

As a group, work through a **S.W.O.T. analysis**, reviewing the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** related to your current Sunday school curriculum. This will help your entire team understand what you are trying to accomplish with a new curriculum. The worksheet on the next page will come in handy for this exercise.

Make sure everyone knows it's a safe place to share and that all ideas and input are valued.

Tip! Create smaller groups if needed. If you have a large group you may want to consider splitting people into small teams so that everyone can feel comfortable contributing. Each team can tackle an area of the S.W.O.T. analysis and present their findings to the large group.

The goal: Get team members motivated and in agreement that **pursuing a change is worthwhile.**

S.W.O.T. SUMMARY OF CURRENT CURRICULUM

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Opportunities:

Threats:

STEP 2: CREATE A VISION FOR YOUR NEW CURRICULUM

The second step to effectively implementing change is for the team to dream about the future and brainstorm what you want your Sunday school program to accomplish.

Brainstorming that involves the whole team creates buy-in. **When people are involved in a process and feel that their ideas are being considered, they are more likely to embrace and support a change...even if they don't get exactly what they want.**

Check out the next page for ways to host a great vision-casting brainstorm.



TIPS FOR CREATING VISION WITH A BRAINSTORM

Include the team...anyone who will be involved in any aspect of the new curriculum.

Present topics/questions. Here are a few possibilities; In our unique setting, what would the ideal Sunday school curriculum look like? Would there be benefits to changing class format (age-graded, one-room, large-group/small-group)? What steps can we take to help volunteers/teachers want to continue volunteering? What would a great Sunday school program look like, and what are some practical steps we can take to achieve it?

Set ground rules. Brainstorming should be a time to share individual ideas and spark new ideas in the group. There are no bad ideas, and no one should pass judgment on any other participant. EVERYONE should share their thoughts...don't let a few individuals dominate the conversation. Make sure everyone knows the rules before you start. The goal is to document ideas.

Divide and conquer. If the group is large, making it difficult for everyone to share, it's best to break into smaller groups to brainstorm and then report ideas to the entire group. This will also provide opportunity to capture ideas from those not comfortable sharing in a large group.

Document. One individual should be responsible for documenting all the ideas so you can review them later. Also, as a team, document some of your key discoveries. See the next section for tips.

Make it fun. Order food and beverages. Make it fun and festive...laughter is good. You may want to play some music, or set a timer and get people to come up with as many ideas as they can before the timer runs out.

HERE'S WHAT WE LEARNED

1. Key discoveries from brainstorming:

2. Top criteria for a new Sunday school curriculum:

STEP 3: RESEARCH (FORM A COMMITTEE)

Clear Criteria. Make sure everyone understands the basic curriculum criteria you are looking for based on your brainstorming discoveries. Doing so will help you to quickly narrow the options.

Split the workload. Engage a small group of people to help research curriculum options. **Allowing others to participate will result in more ownership of the decision.**

(Don't forget! Take time to invite Jesus into the process. Ask for Jesus' guidance and direction.)



RESEARCH TIPS:

Step 1: What's the goal?

Take a look at the scope and sequence. Choose only one quarter so you don't get overwhelmed. Based on the Bible stories covered and the points, determine what the goal of each curriculum is.

Step 2: What's the point?

Grab the scope and sequence and choose one quarter. Count how many points are strong—and how many are weak.

Step 3: What's the RELATIONAL quotient?

To determine if this curriculum promotes relationships, pull out the teacher guide. With a highlighter, go through the entire lesson and highlight any words that signal that relationships are happening, words like "Talk about" or "Share"

Step 4: What's the EXPERIENTIAL quotient?

People remember 90 percent of what they experience and only 5 to 10 percent of what they hear! Highlight where kids are actually doing something.



Name of Curriculum: _____

Annual Cost: _____

Time Length of Program: _____

Scope & Sequence:

- Monthly
- 1 Year
- 2 Year
- 3 Year
- New Content Annually

Age Ranges:

- Nursery
- Preschool
- Lower Elementary
- Middle Elementary
- Upper Elementary

Classroom Format:

- Age-Graded
- One-Room
- Largegroup / Small Group

Extras:

- Music Videos
- At-Home Materials
- Editable
- Lessons adjust to fit changing class lengths
- In-Class Videos
- Chronological
- Choose Classroom Activities
- Age-appropriate Bible depth
- Undated
- Teacher summary of each lesson
- Lesson options that fit all learning styles

Bible Translation: _____

Summary:

In what ways does this curriculum fit our established criteria?

In what ways doesn't this curriculum fit our established criteria?

STEP 4: NARROW DOWN THE OPTIONS

Utilizing the information from your S.W.O.T. Analysis, Visioning Brainstorm, and Research, you are now ready to pick your final candidate(s) to present to the stakeholders (whoever has the final say).

Utilizing your worksheets, find the curriculum that is best suited for the unique needs of your church.



STEP 5: PREPARE YOUR PRESENTATION

It's important when making a decision that includes key stakeholders such as pastors, deacons, or elders that you prepare a complete summary of your findings as well as your recommendations.

Be sure to present the need for a change, the vision for your new curriculum, and why the selection you have made is the best fit for your children's ministry.



5 KEYS TO A GREAT PRESENTATION!

1. **Review the process.** Take everyone back through why a change is being made. Review the steps that were taken to come up with the criteria for choosing a new curriculum and everyone that was involved.
2. **Present your findings.** Go through a step by step overview of what is out there and how you chose to narrow down your options.
3. **Show don't tell.** The best way to reveal your choice is to put it into action. (See the next page for details.)
4. **Ask for input.** Ask for questions from the selection committee. Provide answers that show you've done your homework.
5. **Give a strong recommendation.** You've done your research and know your children's ministry, so be sure they know what your choice is and why.

QUICK TIP: BE INTERACTIVE

There is no quicker way to get teachers, church leaders, your committee, and parents on board with your curriculum choice than to **teach a snippet from a lesson!**

You have already
fallen in love with the
curriculum—now show
why!

Don't forget to **highlight the features that are important to your ministry.** Does your church have a focus on singing? Highlight the musical elements! Are you looking for deep Bible content? Let your audience experience a Bible lesson for themselves. Most important show how this curriculum will move children into a closer relationship with God.



USE A PRESENTATION PACKET

Whether you are using a presentation packet from the curriculum publisher or compiling your own, make sure the following information is covered:



The Nuts and Bolts: It is easy to get caught up in the excitement of the big-picture impact our new curriculum will have in our ministry, but don't forget the nitty-gritty details. What are the age levels? Format? Scope and sequence? These are all key pieces of information to present.



The Building Blocks: What's in the curriculum? Does it include things like music videos, crafts, games? What Bible content does it cover? How long is each lesson? By answering these questions, you will help your church begin to understand how the curriculum fits into your children's ministry.



Additional Resources: Does the curriculum have any promotional videos, digital walk-throughs, or videos describing their philosophy? If so, use them! If pictures are worth a thousand words, imagine how much a video can enhance your presentation!

Looking for a sample presentation packet? Check out DIG IN's fully outfitted presentation at Digin.Group.com.



DIG IN TO THE DIGITAL "LESSON BUILDER" SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM THAT..

- ✓ succeeds in every **class format**...including yours!
- ✓ easily flexes to match your **classroom time**
- ✓ offers lesson activities tailor-fit for each teacher's **natural gifts**...and
- ✓ automatically adjusts to your **unique children's ministry culture**!

Learn more
at digin.group.com



Keep going for loads of
more information!



STEP 6: CELEBRATE THE CHANGE

Change can be scary, and according to experts, most people resist it. So by creating excitement and momentum around your change, you can get more people behind it.

Leadership experts suggest starting with small groups of key people and getting them involved and excited first. Allowing your most involved teachers and volunteers to be a part of the change will make for a smooth transition.

Now for some fun tips on implementing change!



BUILD A CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE SUCCESS!

Once you've decided on a curriculum, it's full speed ahead.

A new curriculum is **EXCITING!** Your church will think of it in the same way, so don't hold back!

This is your chance to get more kids—and parents—excited about Sunday school! This also means opportunities for new volunteers.

- **Start here:** Set a launch date! For the four weeks leading up to your launch, include small reminders of what's coming to ramp up excitement. For example:
- **One month before:** Put that pretty new curriculum logo in the bulletin with a note saying "Coming to [insert church name] on [insert launch date]!"
- **Two weeks before:** Show a promo video - Many curriculum have already created these for you, so you can just hand it off to your tech guy to play during announcements in the main service.
- **One week before:** Dedicate the curriculum - this is a big deal! The kids in your ministry are about to embark on a new heart-adventure with Jesus. Have your pastor lead the church in a special time of prayer to see transformation in the lives of your kids through this new curriculum.

STEP 7: CELEBRATE GOD

SIGHTINGS

Show your church that this curriculum was the best decision! Continue updating the bulletin with what is happening in your ministry. Maybe one of your kiddos had an **"ah-ha" moment**; share that story with your church family. Or perhaps there's a new song the kids learned in the curriculum that they just can't get enough of! Let them belt it out in front of your congregation - both parents and kids will be so proud of how excited kids are to shout their praises to Jesus.

"Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth!" - Psalm 100:1 (Jesus-Centered Bible)



Information from this download is brought to you by:

EMBRACING CHANGE

WORKSHOP

Thriving churches know that growth requires change. But fear of change often paralyzes leaders from leading the changes needed to move forward. It's keeping the church from fulfilling its potential.

This workshop will present a proven process for leading organizational change—without rebellion, resignations, or regret. You'll learn a 6-step process that will help you effectively lead change and create a culture that accepts change. We'll also help you examine the competencies needed to be an effective change-agent leader.

We're **coming to a city near you in Fall 2016**, so plan now to join us for a jam-packed day of training!

Sign-up at EmbracingChangeWorkshop.com to be notified as more detail and location information is available!

