



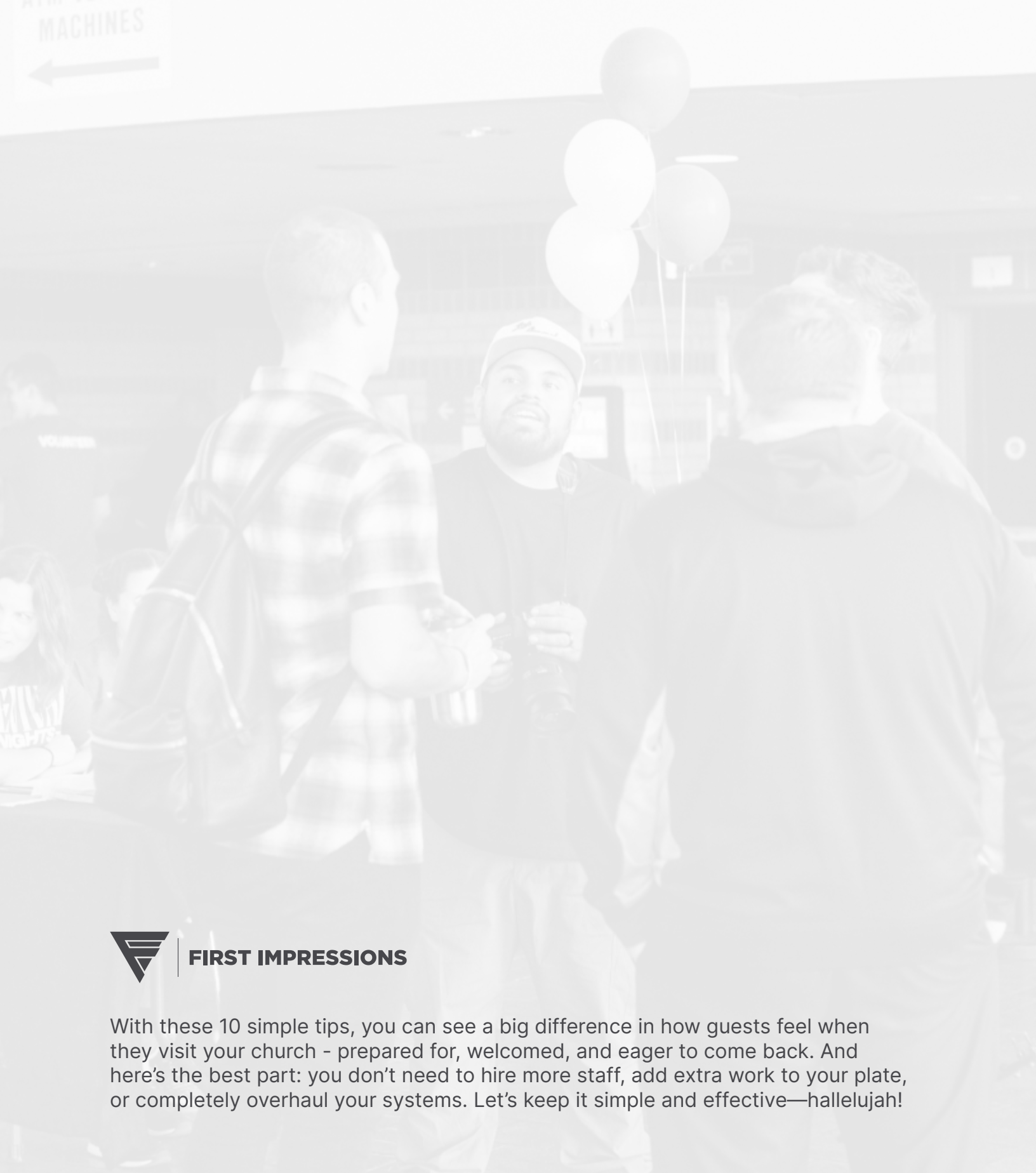
10

HOSPITALITY TIPS

**TO CREATE LASTING
FIRST IMPRESSIONS
AT YOUR CHURCH**

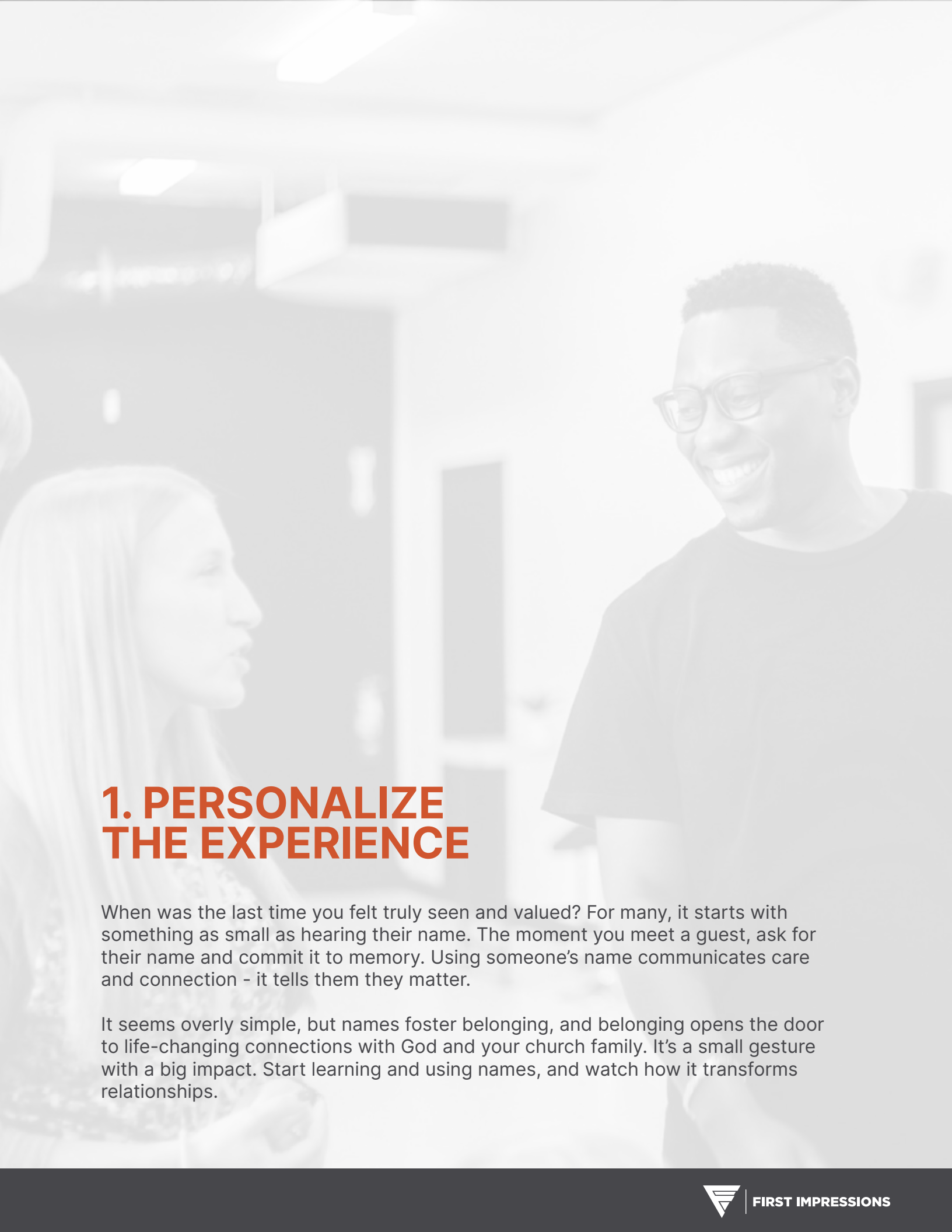


FIRST IMPRESSIONS



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

With these 10 simple tips, you can see a big difference in how guests feel when they visit your church - prepared for, welcomed, and eager to come back. And here's the best part: you don't need to hire more staff, add extra work to your plate, or completely overhaul your systems. Let's keep it simple and effective—hallelujah!

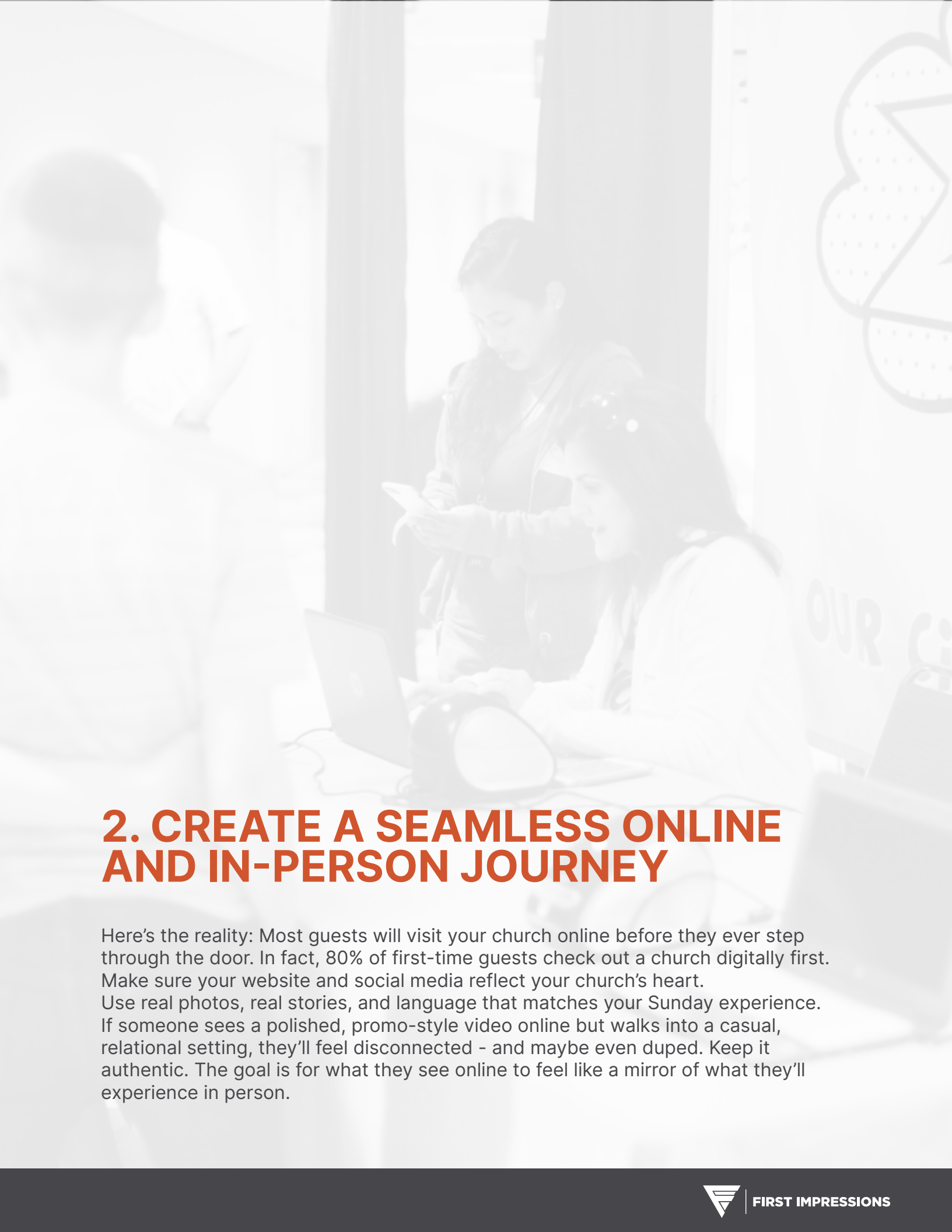


1. PERSONALIZE THE EXPERIENCE

When was the last time you felt truly seen and valued? For many, it starts with something as small as hearing their name. The moment you meet a guest, ask for their name and commit it to memory. Using someone's name communicates care and connection - it tells them they matter.

It seems overly simple, but names foster belonging, and belonging opens the door to life-changing connections with God and your church family. It's a small gesture with a big impact. Start learning and using names, and watch how it transforms relationships.

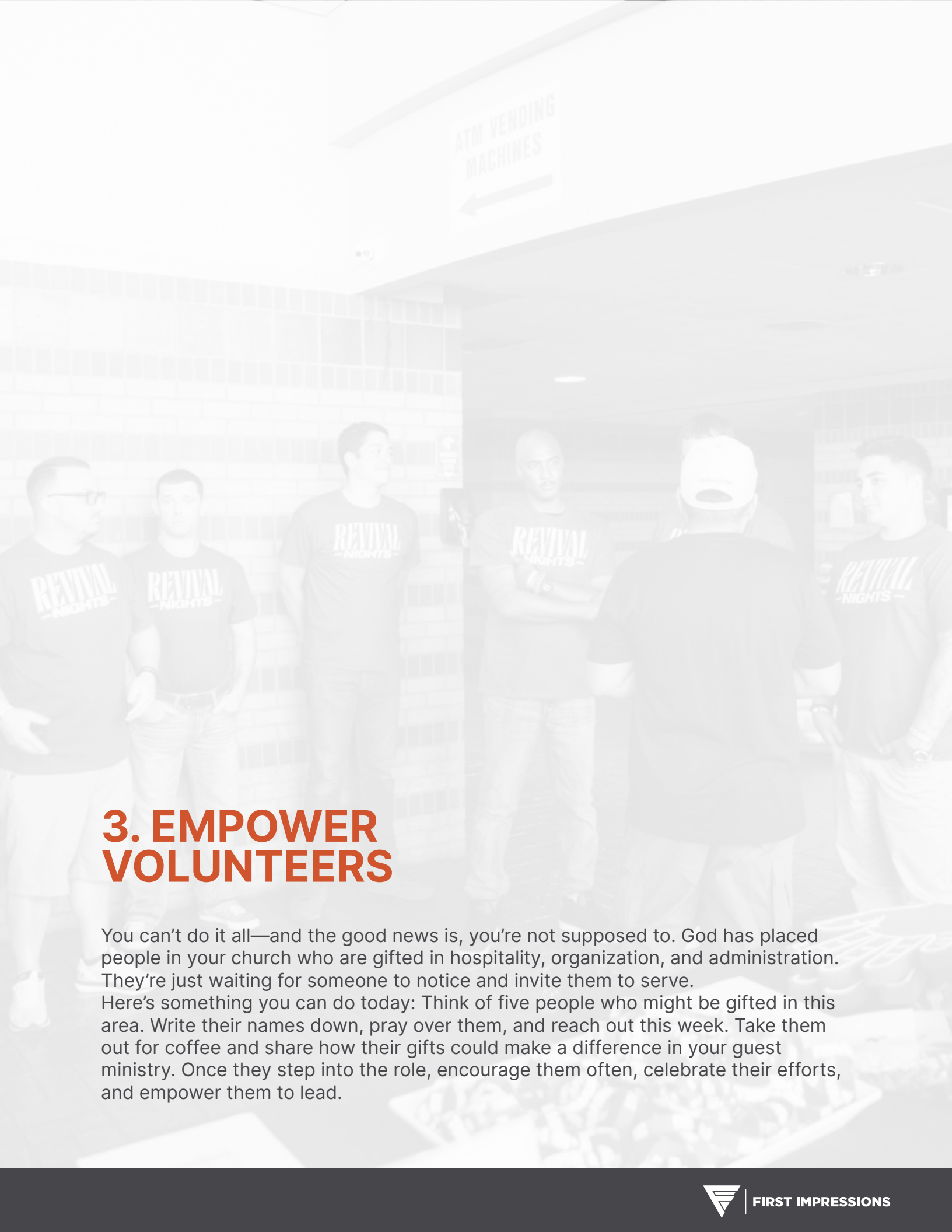




2. CREATE A SEAMLESS ONLINE AND IN-PERSON JOURNEY

Here's the reality: Most guests will visit your church online before they ever step through the door. In fact, 80% of first-time guests check out a church digitally first. Make sure your website and social media reflect your church's heart. Use real photos, real stories, and language that matches your Sunday experience. If someone sees a polished, promo-style video online but walks into a casual, relational setting, they'll feel disconnected - and maybe even duped. Keep it authentic. The goal is for what they see online to feel like a mirror of what they'll experience in person.



A group of men are standing in a hallway, wearing black t-shirts with the text 'REVIVAL NIGHTS' in white. They are engaged in conversation. In the background, a sign on the wall reads 'ATM VENDING MACHINES' with an arrow pointing left. The hallway has a brick wall on the left and a doorway on the right.

3. EMPOWER VOLUNTEERS

You can't do it all—and the good news is, you're not supposed to. God has placed people in your church who are gifted in hospitality, organization, and administration. They're just waiting for someone to notice and invite them to serve. Here's something you can do today: Think of five people who might be gifted in this area. Write their names down, pray over them, and reach out this week. Take them out for coffee and share how their gifts could make a difference in your guest ministry. Once they step into the role, encourage them often, celebrate their efforts, and empower them to lead.





4. PRACTICE INTENTIONAL HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is most impactful when it's intentional. What does that mean? Intentional means "done on purpose; deliberate." It's about going beyond what's easy or routine - like setting out coffee and donuts just because everyone else does - and thinking about what will truly make guests feel welcome in your community.

Ask yourself, "What would make people in our town feel at home here?" Maybe it's highlighting support groups, providing information about a food pantry, or organizing a new guest lunch after service. Hospitality will look different depending on your context. The key is to be thoughtful, creative, and deliberate. Hospitality on purpose - it's a game changer.





5. FOCUS ON FAMILY-FRIENDLY SPACES

Families are often drawn to churches because they want their kids to grow up with some faith. Did you know that most unchurched or dechurched people start trying churches again after having kids? Parents want their children to have a positive, meaningful experience - and when kids are excited, their enthusiasm spreads to the whole family. Make it easy for families to feel welcome. Provide clear signage, secure check-ins, and friendly volunteers to help guide them. Small touches like a balloon or a small gift for first-time visitors can go a long way. Remember, kids are the best hype team - they'll tell their parents how much fun they had, and that energy will bring families back!



BUILD A RADICALLY HOSPITABLE CULTURE

COMMUNITY

Join a thriving network of church leaders who encourage, problem-solve, and share strategies.

CONTENT

Plug-and-play scripts, templates, and plans you can use this Sunday.

COACHING

Expert coaching each month: group sessions, Q&As, and panels to move your church forward.

\$79 MONTH

SIGN UP

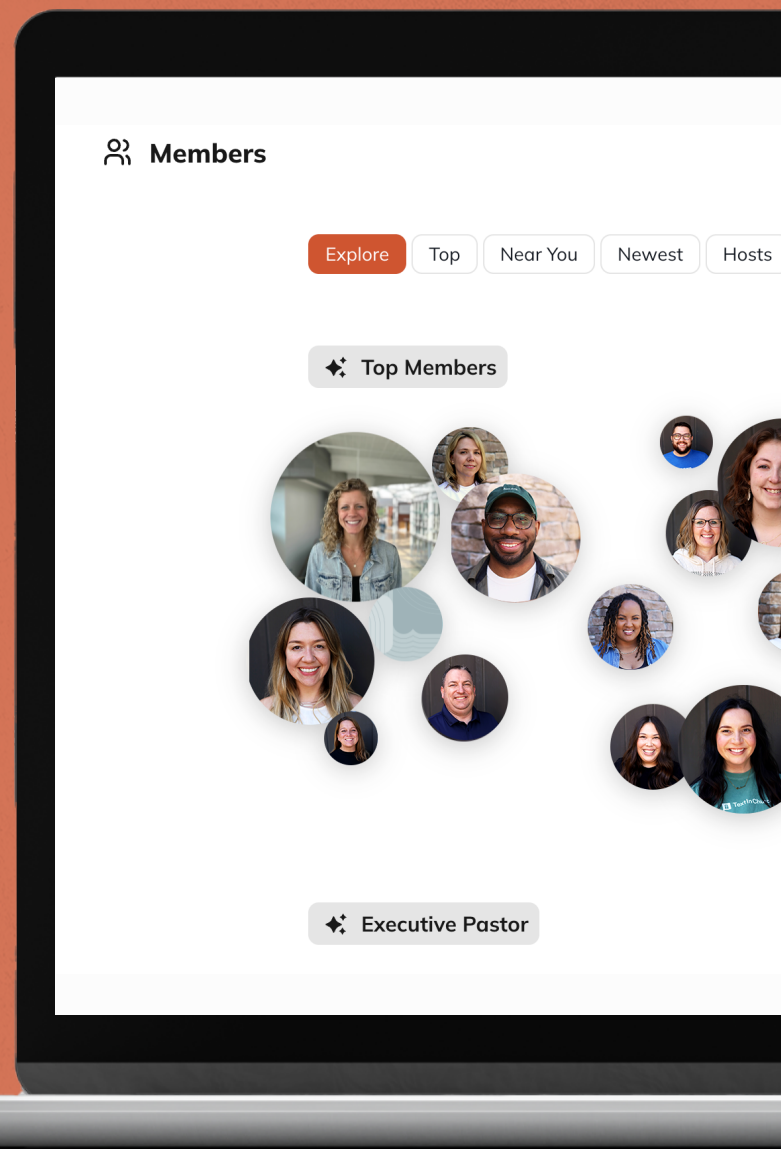
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Get 2 Additional Seats - FREE

Volunteer Resources

Huddles Talks + Volunteer Survival Guide + Volunteer Tract



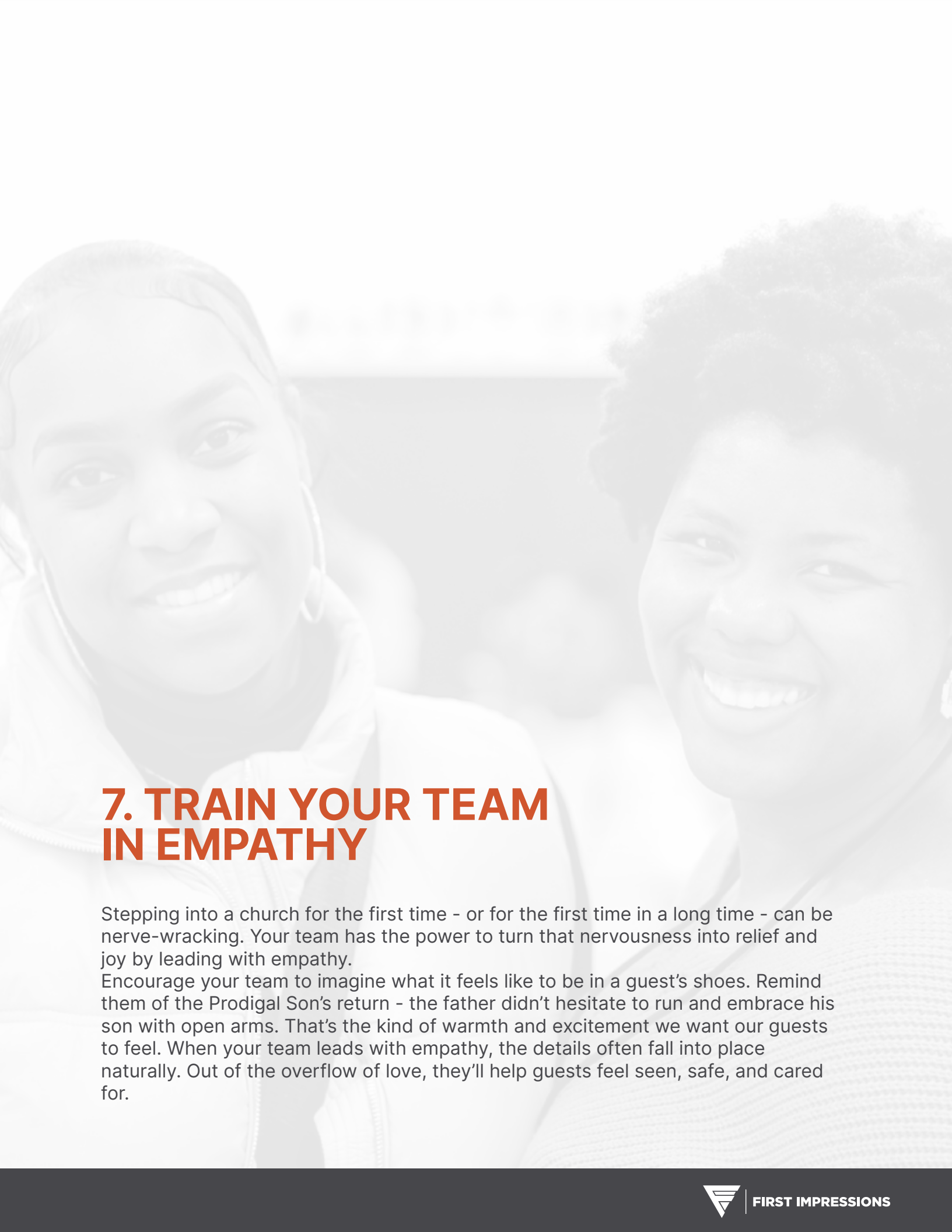
FIRST IMPRESSIONS
ACADEMY

A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a dark blazer over a white shirt, is looking down at a smartphone in her hands. She has a slight smile on her face. The background is blurred, showing other people in a social setting.

6. LEVERAGE DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Did you know that 98% of people keep their phones within three feet of them at all times? That's a huge opportunity to connect! Use tools like Facebook Live, text messaging, and social media polls to engage with guests both online and in person. Start small. Send a follow-up text to thank a guest for visiting or invite them to an upcoming event. The goal is to use the tools you already have to create simple, meaningful connections that keep people engaged.





7. TRAIN YOUR TEAM IN EMPATHY

Stepping into a church for the first time - or for the first time in a long time - can be nerve-racking. Your team has the power to turn that nervousness into relief and joy by leading with empathy.

Encourage your team to imagine what it feels like to be in a guest's shoes. Remind them of the Prodigal Son's return - the father didn't hesitate to run and embrace his son with open arms. That's the kind of warmth and excitement we want our guests to feel. When your team leads with empathy, the details often fall into place naturally. Out of the overflow of love, they'll help guests feel seen, safe, and cared for.





8. BE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT

First-time guests are often navigating a lot of unknowns, so consistency and clarity are critical. From parking lot signs to service invitations, ensure every part of their experience is easy to follow.

Imagine this: A guest parks in a space marked “New Guest Parking,” only to find the closest door leads to classrooms instead of the main worship area. They wander around until they finally find the foyer, only to encounter an unmanned “New Here” table. It’s frustrating and confusing - and that’s the last thing you want.

Walk through your church from a guest’s perspective. Are the signs clear? Are next steps easy to understand? Is someone available in key spaces to help? Clarity builds trust, and trust makes guests feel at home.

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

A faded background image of three young women with long hair, smiling and posing together. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a dark top. The woman in the middle has shoulder-length brown hair and is wearing a dark top. The woman on the right has long blonde hair, wears glasses, and is wearing a light-colored top. They are all smiling warmly at the camera.

9. INSPIRE YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Cast vision! Your team isn't just filling roles - they're changing lives. Regularly share stories of how their service has impacted guests. Show them how their efforts fit into God's bigger mission.

Also, here's a tip within a tip: take time to recognize and celebrate your volunteers. Whether it's a handwritten thank-you note, a prayer, or a shared meal, help them see how valued they are. When volunteers feel inspired and appreciated, they'll serve with joy - and that energy will overflow into the guest experience.



A smiling woman with long braids is holding a sign that says "RELEVANT". The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

10. FOLLOW UP WITH INTENTION

A guest's first visit is just the beginning. The way you follow up will shape whether they feel connected enough to come back. Whether it's a handwritten note, a text, or an email, let guests know they're valued. A simple 6-week follow-up plan can include weekly texts, an invitation to a small group, or a personal note from the pastor. Small, consistent touches like these make guests feel seen and encourage them to take the next step in their faith journey.





READY TO TRANSFORM YOUR CHURCH'S FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

Creating a welcoming atmosphere for guests doesn't have to feel overwhelming. With these tips, you're ready to build meaningful connections that leave a lasting impact. Want to take it to the next level? Join First Impressions Academy and access practical strategies, expert guidance, and a community of leaders who share your heart for hospitality.

[Click here to get started today!](#)

Don't wait - start building a first impressions ministry that's sustainable, effective, and full of life.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

BUILD A CULTURE OF RADICAL HOSPITALITY

COMMUNITY

Never do ministry alone.

CONTENT

Resources that deliver.

COACHING

Next Steps make clear.

\$79 MONTH

SIGN UP

Discounted Ticket to the Live Event -
at least 30% off for members every year

Free VIP Pass to all Online events -
free ticket and replay pass

Triple the Impact in Academy - bring
2 team members in free

Exclusive Volunteer Resources -
Huddle Talks, Volunteer Survival Guide
by Jason Young, Volunteer Learning
Tract in Academy



Volunteer Essentials Bundle

Step Up



WATCH: Step Up



VOLUNTEER EXPO C

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Build Up



WATCH: Build Up



**VOLUNTEER TO LEAD
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FIRST IMPRESSIONS
ACADEMY