

Mission Drift

On a Saturday afternoon Joe set out to run the errand of picking up a few groceries. Near the grocery store was a video rental, so Joe stopped in there. While in there he notices that his hair was getting a little long and the barber was right next door so he drops in for a trim. From there he returned home without the milk and eggs he set out to get in the first place. That is “Mission Drift”.

One of the remarkable stories of YFC is that in 61 years we have not changed our focus. We always were and continue to be about reaching lost kids. That is not to say that “Mission Drift” never occurs in YFC. It does in three ways.

First, Mission Drift happens when we start to develop programs that are good for kids but fail to engage them in the journey of following Christ. We want all of our kids to be drug free, to abstain from sex before marriage, and to graduate from high school. Those are good and right things to desire for our kids and our communities. If we have programs that stop at those goals and fail to bring the gospel to the young people we are drifting from the mission of Youth for Christ.

Second, and sneakier, is when we find our entire ministry focusing on Christian kids. To be sure, we engage Christian young people in our ministry and we help them to grow in Christ and reach their lost friends. But YFC is about bringing kids to Christ and if we find that our ministries are attractive only to those who are already in the Kingdom we are missing the uniqueness of YFC.

Third, and sneakiest, is the Mission Drift that happens when we put personnel ahead of mission. None of us would be a part of YFC if we were not relational people. Too often we have men and women who are great people with great hearts who are not strategic in accomplishing our mission of reaching lost kids. When we have staff that we love and care about we want them to succeed. They have families and sometimes they go church with us. We can't imagine that God would ever want us to do something that “hurt” them. As a result we continue to dump resources into them that were given for us to reach lost kids.

How do we keep our chapter from Mission Drift?

-Keep tabs on the ministries of the chapter and make sure that they are bringing the gospel to lost kids. Do ministry site visits. Usually ministry site visits confirm that remarkable ministry is happening, but occasionally they surface a mission drift that needs to be addressed.

-Keep the mission upfront. Every staff, board member and volunteer should know the mission of YFC (see below). It should be posted in the office, printed on the banquet material and included in all orientation material.

-The three most essential elements in developing staff is screening, screening and screening. Good training can't make up for poor screening. Know the profile of who you want to hire and then recruit to that profile and be willing to leave a position empty before you are willing to compromise with a bad hire.

-Help a poor fit discover God's calling in their life. One of the realities is that when it is not working for YFC it is not working for them either. Lend a strong and loving hand in helping them to find the place where they can flourish.

-Above all - View yourself as a steward of the YFC mission. Money is being raised, people are being hired and promises are being made that YFC is about reaching lost kids in your community. Make sure you are good to your word on that promise.