

# Creating Impacting Worship Services 2

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## Point 1: The Rationale– Why is this so important?

(This is a brief – 5 minute – intro)

In our time together, we want to focus on learning to provide ‘moments of connection.’ We have a sacred responsibility, and it’s not to put together a list of songs or a set of music and prayers; it is to take people by the hand and to walk them into the presence of the Almighty. And why is this important?

- Because it is right – Ps 33
- Because it changes people’s lives – Ps 89
- Because it gives people tools with which to fight their battles through the week
- Because it creates and sustains joy – Ps 150
- Because it eradicates depression – Ps 42
- Because it draws the lost...

## Point 2: The Lead Worshiper – Congregation Relationship

The 4 most important considerations for anyone leading worship who wants to create an impacting worship service.

### 1. **FIRST**, understand that **everyone** coming to your worship service has the following needs:

- To be captured and engaged.
- To experience “moments”.
- To be transformed.
  - a. 2 Chronicles 7:3 – “When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.”
    - i. In Chapters 5-6, the people do everything you’d think about doing in a worship service, they sang, had music (instrumental & vocal), prayed, etc., but the Bible doesn’t say they worshiped until this verse.
  - b. People don’t need to just sing songs, hear music, hear speeches, watch videos, etc. They need and want to be engaged in something that will transform them. They need to experience “moments” with God where they see Him face to face and are transformed.
  - c. Anything you do in your service: music, drama, videos, sermon, testimony, the sound gear, the fellowship before and after, etc. are tools for creating these moments for the people. Even the transitions from one item to the next are important for creating moments.
  - d. So the goal is not to sing or play perfectly...but to engage the people and create “transforming moments with God”. Most people are ignorant of music, but they understand people, communication, and relationships.
  - e. To help people be engaged you need to communicate your message clearly. Remember that communication is...
    - i. 15% Content – What you say or sing, the words themselves.
    - ii. 30% Tone or Emotion – How you sing or say the words.
    - iii. 55% Body Language – What the people see. (Haven’t heard this, but I believe it! Can we give a source?)
  - f. It’s not about “smiling more”, but communicate your message from the inside out and from head to toe.
    - i. Bono from U2 sings with such authority, it’s like, “Yeah! I agree! What’d he say?” The message is clear even if you can’t understand the lyrics.
    - ii. “O Happy Day”...if you were to just read the lyrics, it’s not that moving, but when you get a choir and a soloist singing this song with fearless conviction and joy, it’s incredibly moving, even if they don’t sing it perfectly!
  - g. Your content, tone, and body language should all match for clear communication. Any incongruencies will be confusing and break down your relationship with the audience.

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- h. Eye contact should reflect the lyrics and focus of the song – when we sing ‘horizontal’ songs, we should engage the people; remember you are building a relationship! Start in the back... With ‘vertical’ songs, we should engage the Lord – eyes closed, or lifted up, etc. (Example: “Breathe”, looking at the crowd, makes no sense)
- i. Engaging the people should drive everything you do, from the order of service, to who you have lead worship, to what gear you purchase...only use the tools you have available to engage the people and create moments.
- j. Whenever someone who has a good heart (and sometimes not) has come face to face with God, they were transformed.
  - i. Isaiah 6:1-8; Acts 9:1-19 (Saul’s conversion) are some examples.
  - ii. If you can create moments where the people are face to face with God, they will be transformed.
  - iii. It is NOT the music, it’s the moments, though often the moments come through music.

**IMPORTANT: Don’t invest in gear, or even your music skills...invest in being able to create moments.**

### 2. SECOND, love the people as yourselves

- a. Why do we hold back?
  - i. Because we are worried if people will like us.
  - ii. Because we are more concerned about what people think about us than just loving them.
  - iii. Notice it’s all about us? We need to stop thinking downward and inward, and start thinking outward and upward. **IT’S NOT ABOUT YOU; IT’S ABOUT LOVING AND HONORING GOD**
    - 1. First and foremost, love God. YOU must honor God with your praise and worship. Set the example, it’s the first rule of leadership.
    - 2. Secondly, love the people because you love God.
    - 3. If you set the example and fearlessly love God and love the people, they will follow you. Everyone on stage leading the people must do this!
  - iv. Insecurity is born out of selfishness and pride, and is sin to be repented of. (Philippians 2:1-11; 1 John 4:18)
- b. 97% of the people want to like you
  - i. 3% are either people who will be critical no matter what you do, or they are musicians insecure about their own skills. **They are almost always in the crowd, and they tend to be the most vocal.**
  - ii. It is wrong for us to allow the 3% (or less) control us and cause us to be full of fear. The 97% want you to be confident! They want you to fearlessly lead them into the Presence of God! And they don’t care if you are **perfect** or not, they won’t even know.

### 3. THIRD, walk in the authority God has given you

- a. God has chosen you to serve Him and the people with the talents he gave you. You are chosen by God to lead the people in worship at that given time and must walk in that authority. (2 Samuel 6:21; 1 Thess 1:4; Eph 4:11-13)
- b. People don’t know music, but they know when someone doesn’t have authority. You must lead them with the authority that God gave you. God calls you to have authority.

### 4. FOURTH, have the faith to take chances (Illustration: “The box”)

- a. Do you listen to faith or fear? (Matthew 14:22-32; 8:23-27)
- b. Be creative! Think “outside the box”; try anything that the Bible doesn’t prohibit to create moments.
- c. Creating impacting worship services means taking chances and not being afraid to put yourself out there.
- d. “They might say ‘Wow, that’s awful!’, but at least they’ll say ‘Wow’
- e. Some things may not work, but use them as learning experiences...don’t just do what you always do because it’s safe. Safety/comfort in this world and God do not go together very well.
- f. OK, one caveat to all this...in general, we come from a very traditional mindset, so we have to be considerate of that if you are trying to take your church through a transition.

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- i. Even though we cannot love our traditions to the point of nullifying the word of God, we do need to take any transition very slowly, or you risk alienating people from what you are trying to do and creating stumbling blocks.
5. These are concepts to be applied regardless of your specific situation. Regardless if you have a professional band that tours and records, a choir, a quartet, or just a lone song leader who can barely hold a tune. If you work on your skills as they apply to these concepts you are well on your way to creating impacting worship services.
6. Look at live performances...conferences like this one, other churches, concerts, plays, movies, etc. What moves you? What creates moments for you? Poll the congregation...what moves them? What creates moments for them? Use that as a starting point and think about how that can translate for your specific situation...then keep trying new things and keep the things that work.

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## Session 2: Creating Moments

1. Forget the music (**We can hit this quickly, but it seems redundant. We're a little pressed for time in session 2. I think the 2<sup>nd</sup> session should contain examples – perhaps we can put together a handout listing some impacting 'moments' each of our teams has created, and actually lead the group through them.**)
  - a. Music is not worship by itself, worship is anything you do that honors God and is directed towards God. Praise is when we talk about the great attributes of God, who He is and what He has done. Creating good music is not the goal. People don't need to sing songs...they need to have transforming moments with God.
  - b. Remember the needs of the people:
    - i. To be captured and engaged.
    - ii. To experience moments.
    - iii. To be transformed.
  - c. People are engaged when we:
    - i. Communicate from the inside out and from head to toe.
    - ii. Love the people as ourselves.
    - iii. Lead them in God's authority.
    - iv. Have the faith to take chances.
  - d. People are transformed when we:
    - i. Help them have face to face moments with God.

### **What are some practical ways we can create these "transforming moments with God" among the people?**

2. It begins and ends with prayer
  - a. Ask God to use you to meet those needs. Pray to love the people, pray that God will transform them.
  - b. You can still do everything "right" and the people will leave empty. We need God more than anything else!
3. Know your tools
  - a. Know the strengths of your team (singers, musicians, technical) and your gear. Play to your strengths. Don't try to be something you are not, but use what you have.
  - b. Also, know the limitations of your gear and your space, so you know what the challenges are going to be and can plan on how to work around them.
4. Get a vision
  - a. Pray about your service and get a vision for it...see it play out in your mind and actually see the service unfold and have a clear idea as to what the role of every song, speech, transition, etc. is in the service and where the "moments" will be. Think about "what if?" Make sure you clearly communicate your vision to everyone involved.
  - b. Plan ahead, but leave some room in your plan for the Spirit to lead - If you plan and rehearse to turn right, and then during the service the spirit tells you to turn left...you should be able to turn left.
5. Change the "Pressure"
  - a. Everything should not look or sound exactly the same.
    - i. Use different energy levels.
      1. Using all upbeat songs is just as bad as using all lower energy songs.
      2. Different song styles if you can.
    - ii. Rate all your songs 1-5 and use this rating to help plan sets
      1. 3 = Radio type songs, medium energy, nice groove.
      2. 5 = Blow the doors off high energy.
      3. 1 = Intimate and quiet so you can hear a pin drop afterwards.
    - iii. Treat your set as if it's a journey...where are people at in the beginning, and where do you want to take them?
      1. Treat every song as a journey as well. Where are the moments in a given song? What is the purpose of each song? Why's it in your set?

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- iv. Then think about how you can create different moments transitioning from one level to another.
    1. Always think through the transitions. Smooth transitions in general...avoid “pregnant pauses” or awkward transitions, unless you have a good reason for it. Have a reason for everything you do.
    2. According to “Habits of Highly Effective Churches” effective churches have 20-30 minutes of uninterrupted praise and worship time with continuous music.
    3. Make sure you set up the song keys to make easy musical transitions.
  - v. Everything shouldn’t sound or look the same. Do something different visually and/or musically as well throughout your set.
    1. Using mic stands or not.
    2. Sit on a stool or stand up.
    3. Change who the lead singer is.
    4. Change stage placement.
    5. Use different instruments.
    6. Kneel/bow vs. sitting vs. standing.
  - vi. Different things will move different people, not everyone connects with the same thing. You are just looking to create a few moments hoping that one or two different ones will move everyone.
  - vii. Use video, scripture reading, prayer, a testimony, etc. to break things up and create different “moments”.
6. Creating musical moments
- a. Find something simple musically that’s the people can really catch onto.
    - i. Use a rhythm, lyrics, vocals, chord progression, etc.
  - b. Strip it down so that the congregation knows to pay attention to it and grab onto it.
  - c. Build on it gradually.
  - d. Then when the tension on it is high enough...provide a “payoff”.
  - e. Always “tell” the congregation what you want them to pay attention to.
    - i. Stage lights can help with this, or use other visual cues.
7. Keep things simple!
- a. You don’t have to overcomplicate things to create moments. Sometimes the simpler the better.
8. Work at it
- a. You have to practice this stuff.
  - b. Don’t be afraid to try something...try it and tweak what doesn’t work to make it better.
  - c. Will you listen to faith or fear?
9. Other thoughts
- a. These are concepts, and the examples are just illustrations...every church is different. Learn to apply the concepts to your specific situation.
  - b. Your church leadership must be on board.
    - i. Need to build a great relationship with your church leaders and show them how this will support their overall church vision.
  - c. Try to be involved in planning the whole service and use this thinking to go beyond just the worship set. These concepts could be applied to the whole service.
  - d. Tom Jackson Productions “Expressive Worship” DVD and other resources are totally worth the investment!
10. Go through some examples
- a. 2 Andrew examples
  - b. 2 Dave examples
11. Q&A