

HOW TO BUILD A MINISTRY INTERNSHIP THAT ACTUALLY WORKS



Key Concepts with Timestamp Ranges

(All timestamps refer to Lead Ministry Podcast Episode 306)

1. Friction and Why Interns Reduce It (2:12–3:22)

Ministry is full of friction. One of the strongest ways to reduce friction is by adding the right people. Interns help solve problems, increase capacity, and reduce pressure points.

2. The Purpose of Internships: Defining the Role (3:59–4:34)

An internship is apprenticeship. A trainee. A young leader gaining practical ministry experience and spiritual formation in real time.

3. Internships Rewrite Someone’s “Ministry DNA” (4:42–7:10)

Interns are shaped deeply through hands-on exposure. Internships can create lifelong changes in calling, character, and ministry competence. This is the “CRISPR effect” Josh describes – intentionally depositing ministry DNA into someone.

4. Benefits to the Intern (9:41–20:07)

Spiritual Development (9:53–12:21). Interns grow through serving, not just learning.

Hands-on Experience (12:37–13:31). They see the real work behind ministry.

Calling Clarity (13:55–15:32). Internships help people discover what fits them.

Broadened Understanding of the Church (15:14–17:33). They see more than “youth pastor” as a default.

Mentorship + Micro-Mentorship (17:42–18:55). Interns get input from multiple staff.

Networking (18:55–20:07). Internships expand ministry relationships and influence.

5. Benefits to the Church (20:08–28:11)

Increased Productivity (22:06–22:24). Interns provide motivated help.

Developing Future Leaders (23:16–24:21). Churches create their own pipeline.

Fresh Perspectives (24:21–25:02). Young leaders bring new insights, tools, and ideas.

Community Impact (25:04–26:27). Interns can lead real outreach initiatives.

Greater Appreciation for Ministry (27:59–29:03). Interns see the unseen labor and become long-term, high-value volunteers.

6. Why You Must Start in December (20:17–21:14)

Internships require early preparation. College students look for summer positions in December. Waiting until March means all strong candidates are already committed elsewhere.

7. You Can Do This. It's Not That Hard (30:32–31:14)

Most leaders assume internships are complicated. Lead Interns provides complete job descriptions, scripts, interviews, forms, background checks, and a full 10-question staff interview packet. It's "print and implement."

How to Teach This to Your Team

1. Explain the friction principle.

Show how interns reduce pressure and increase impact.

2. Share the "DNA" metaphor.

Interns are shaped for life. Staff should see internships as discipleship, not labor.

3. Walk through the two benefit buckets.

Make it clear what interns gain and what the church gains.

4. Address fears.

Staff often think internships will add work. Explain Lead Interns resources that remove friction.

5. Emphasize timing.

Tell your team December is the window. If you miss it, you lose the best candidates.

6. Paint a vision of multiplication.

Internships produce future leaders, future volunteers, and future kingdom impact.

Exercises and Implementation Guidelines

Personal / Leader Exercises

- **List three friction points** in your ministry where an intern could bring relief.
- **Identify one major project** an intern could fully own this summer.
- **Write out a 4-sentence vision** of why your ministry needs interns.

Team Exercises

- **30-minute brainstorm:** What roles, events, or projects could interns lead?
- **Assign staff interview roles:** Who will provide micro-mentorship?

- **Draft your internship calendar:** Start date, end date, milestones, and the major project.
- **Select two candidates** you could invite personally.

Implementation Checklist

- ✓ Prepare internship structure this month.
- ✓ Build your “10 staff interviews” list.
- ✓ Assign a supervisor and backup supervisor.
- ✓ Choose the major project.
- ✓ Invite candidates by January.
- ✓ Onboard with clear expectations, training, and weekly rhythms.

Action-Oriented Closing

Stop waiting for the perfect moment. Stop assuming it's too big. Every church can run an internship. When you build one, you multiply your ministry, you shape future leaders, and you remove friction that's been slowing you down for years.

Start now.

Build the infrastructure.

Invite two candidates.

Give them a project that matters.

Watch what God does with your investment.

This summer can be different if you choose to act today.