



# OVERFLOW

what would you give to change the world?

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# Welcome to the **OVERFLOW** Experience!

As a youth pastor, my heart is to reach students by equipping leaders. It doesn't matter if you're full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer—if you're a youth leader, you have the potential to make a huge difference in the lives of students! The Overflow Experience is a resource that will help you do just that.

**The Overflow Experience isn't about hype, buzz, or short-term gain; it's about developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.**

This booklet will help you and your students get the most out of the Overflow Experience, equipping you as a leader to motivate, encourage, and develop your students in the discipline of generosity.

**When our group got a hold of the principles that I wrote about in *Overflow*, the Lord helped us to give more than \$75,000 in less than three months!** The results of your missions project may not be identical to ours. My hope and prayer is that your results are even better. I can't guarantee that your first missions project will be picture perfect, but I can guarantee that, if you follow the principles outlined in *Overflow*, you will experience overflow... in your life, your students' lives, and the life of your ministry.

**Scotty**

P.S. When all is said and done, be sure to come back to [overflowexperience.com](http://overflowexperience.com) and share your stories!



## Table of Contents

Give the Book .....	3
Cast the Vision .....	4
Set the Goal .....	5
Encourage the Students ...	6
Celebrate the Results .....	7
What Now? .....	8

**The best way for your students to get on board with the Overflow Experience is for them to read the book for themselves,** learning the biblical principles, seeing the examples of other students, and responding to the challenge.

If at all possible, I'd encourage you to buy the book for your students rather than expecting them to buy it for themselves. It's an investment that will pay huge dividends down the road... in missions giving, in generosity, and in overflowing lives. And just so you know, **I have no problems encouraging you to buy it, because I don't make a dime from it. All of the profit from the sale of *Overflow* is going to missions!**

Next, encourage the students to read and respond to the book. Ask them what they think, how it's inspiring them, and what the Lord is teaching them through the process. Use the student resources on [OverflowExperience.com](http://OverflowExperience.com) to encourage your students and help them track their progress. If nothing else, go through the questions at the end of each chapter as a group, helping students process the material as they go.

The more time the students spend reading and reviewing the material in *Overflow*, the deeper it will sink into their hearts and lives. My hope is that *Overflow* would send a spark of generosity into your group—a spark that results in an overflow of giving. But my hope is that the overflow isn't limited to finances. **I want your group to be so overwhelmed by the ideas and concepts in *Overflow* that it affects every part of their lives.** I want your students to experience overflow in their love, their relationships, their leadership, their service. That's what the Overflow Experience is all about... and it starts with the book.

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Once your students have begun to embrace the Overflow Experience, it's time to cast the vision. Pick a project that you will tackle as a group, and set the need before the students. Give them some background information, show them the challenge, and **show them how their giving will directly impact the situation.**

It's almost impossible to go too far at this step. **The more you can show and tell the students about the project, the more likely they are to respond.** If the project is a water well, show the students pictures and videos of children who are dying for lack of clean water. Show them statistics on waterborne diseases. Then show them where their well will be drilled. Give them background on the area and the people. If at all possible, show them pictures of individuals in that area and emphasize that *this person will be impacted because of your sacrifice... this individual right here will have their life changed because of you.* If you're giving to a specific missionary, get pictures, videos, and letters from them. If possible, get them on the phone or have a video conference during a service so they can personally tell the students where the money is going, who it's going to impact, and how thankful they are for the students' help.

Whatever your project, do your homework. Don't go into a missions drive unprepared! **If you don't show the students the need, don't be surprised if they don't respond.**

Once you've painted a picture of the need, it's time to cast vision about meeting that need. Many of your students may never have never been involved in a project like this... so, **regardless of how well you show them the *what* and the *why*, they won't be effective until you show them the *how*.** I'd encourage you to use the ideas in *Overflow* and on OverflowExperience.com as a starting point. But don't stop there. **Do everything you can to develop a creative culture within your group, where students are having fun working to outdo one another by finding new ways to give.**

Once you've shown the students the need, give them an opportunity to respond. Encourage each student to pray about their involvement in the project, asking God what their goal should be. Lay out the timeline clearly so that the students know how long they'll have to gather money and turn it in.

**After you've explained the timeline and given the students time to pray, challenge them put feet to their faith.** Ask each student to write down an individual goal for the missions drive. Once they've written their goal, have them bring it to a central location. It's easier to have students drop their goals in an offering bucket, but I've found that there's something unique about having students get out of their seats and walk down to the front to turn in their goal. It's a simple action step that helps solidify their commitment.

Once all of the goals have been turned in, tally them up. If at all possible, have another leader do this while the service is still going so that you can announce the group's combined goal on the opening night of the drive.

Once you've tallied the group goal, you have two options. First, you can set the group goal exactly according to the student total. This may give you a weird number (we're gonna raise \$8,724 for God!), but there's nothing wrong with that. The second option is to adjust the total slightly to give the group a nice, round number to shoot for. Neither of these options is right or wrong... it's really up to you as the leader.

Once you've set the final group goal, tell the students! **Seeing the group come together for a project will encourage individual students to step up and do their part.**

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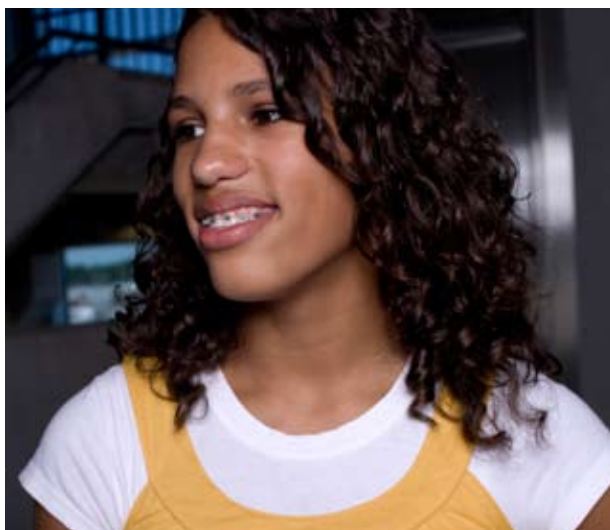
The first night of a missions drive is a blast. The energy, excitement, and passion makes you feel like anything is possible! But the hard truth is that the first night of the drive is the easiest by far. In the following days and weeks, reality will set in and the hard work will begin.

As a leader, this is an opportunity for you to shine. Keep the vision in front of your students, keep the momentum going, and encourage those who are having a hard time. **One of the best ways to maximize your impact is to identify key influencers in your group.** Look for students that are leaders in the group. Not just those who are loud or outspoken, but students who have followers. Look for the students who make or break your youth events and get them onboard. When other students see their influencers making sacrifices and raising money, they'll want to follow suit.

**It's also good for you to use discernment in how you communicate your progress with the students.** If the money is coming in fast, it may be a good idea to share your running totals with the group to keep the momentum going. But if it's coming in really fast, it may be good to keep the students in the dark until the final night so they don't stop once they've reached their goal. Similarly, if you're halfway through a \$2,000 dollar drive and you've only brought in twenty bucks, it's probably a good idea to rethink your motivational strategy.

I couldn't possibly begin to cover all the potential scenarios here. Some drives will start out strong and then just dwindle. Others will limp along until the end, at which point there's a miraculous, come-from-behind explosion of giving that enables you to hit the goal at the very last minute. Still others will be up and down from week to week, leaving you nervous about the commitment you've made as a group.

However your missions drive plays out, it's your job to keep the students on track. It's your job to continue to put the need in front of them. When they fail miserably, it's your job to encourage them and help them get back on their feet. **Above all, it's your job to remind them that ultimately, their giving isn't for a water well, a missionary, or even a missionary who digs water wells. It's for God.**



At the end of your drive, it's time to bring it in for a landing. At Realife, the last night of a missions drive is always crazy! We have students bring in their final contributions as they head into service; then, during the service, we've got a team counting the money. Throughout the night, I remind the kids that, before we leave, we'll announce how much we raised over the entire missions drive. The anticipation and energy in the room is always incredible!

**It's important to celebrate the results of your missions drive, whether they be incredible or disastrous.** As a leader, it's helpful to have a feel for how things are going before you go into the service. If it looks like you aren't going to hit your goal, you need to have something prepared to say about that. At the same time, I always think you should be prepared (and believing) for the possibility that the students will hit (and even exceed!) the goal, no matter how bad things look. It never ceases to amaze me how kids can come through when they're working for the Lord.

Either way, the last night of a missions drive is cause for celebration. **You may or may not have hit your goal, but the fact remains that there is a check going to a missionary somewhere because of your group... a check that wouldn't have existed at the beginning of the drive!**

If your kids fall miserably short, it's okay to challenge them. If you know that they didn't really try, it's even okay to let them know you're disappointed. But **don't throw the baby out with the bath water.** Make sure that those students who did try, who did contribute, don't leave feeling discouraged. **Make sure that the group leaves feeling like the missions drive was a worthwhile endeavor. Otherwise, you'll have a hard time doing one again in the future.**

If your kids hit their goal, go all out. Play music, throw confetti, make some noise for the kingdom of God! Make sure that, first and foremost, God gets the credit for everything that happened. Second, make sure to give the kids credit for all of their hard work and sacrifice. Remind them that although this was a group project, it would never have been accomplished without each and every person that worked hard to contribute. **The more you help the students feel ownership in the win, the more they'll want to give in the future!**

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So, what now? When the missions drive is over, do things go back to normal? Hopefully not!

At the end of a missions drive, your students will be closer to the heart of God than they were at the beginning. They will have a new understanding of generosity and sacrifice. Your group will have momentum. **Don't let those things go to waste!**

**I would encourage you to capitalize on the momentum generated by the project.** The last thing you want is to have a life-changing missions drive followed by a sharp decline in excitement and enthusiasm. Instead, you want to be intentional about what you do after the missions drive. If possible, let the Overflow Experience theme carry over into other areas of the students' lives. **Show them that Christ didn't just come to bring overflow in our finances, but in our service, our love, our worship, and every other area of our lives!**

My prayer is that the Overflow Experience exceeds your greatest expectations—that you and your students would be encouraged, challenged, and strengthened in your pursuit of Christ.

If there's anyway we can be of help as you pursue overflow in your student ministry, feel free to email us at [info@overflowexperience.com](mailto:info@overflowexperience.com).