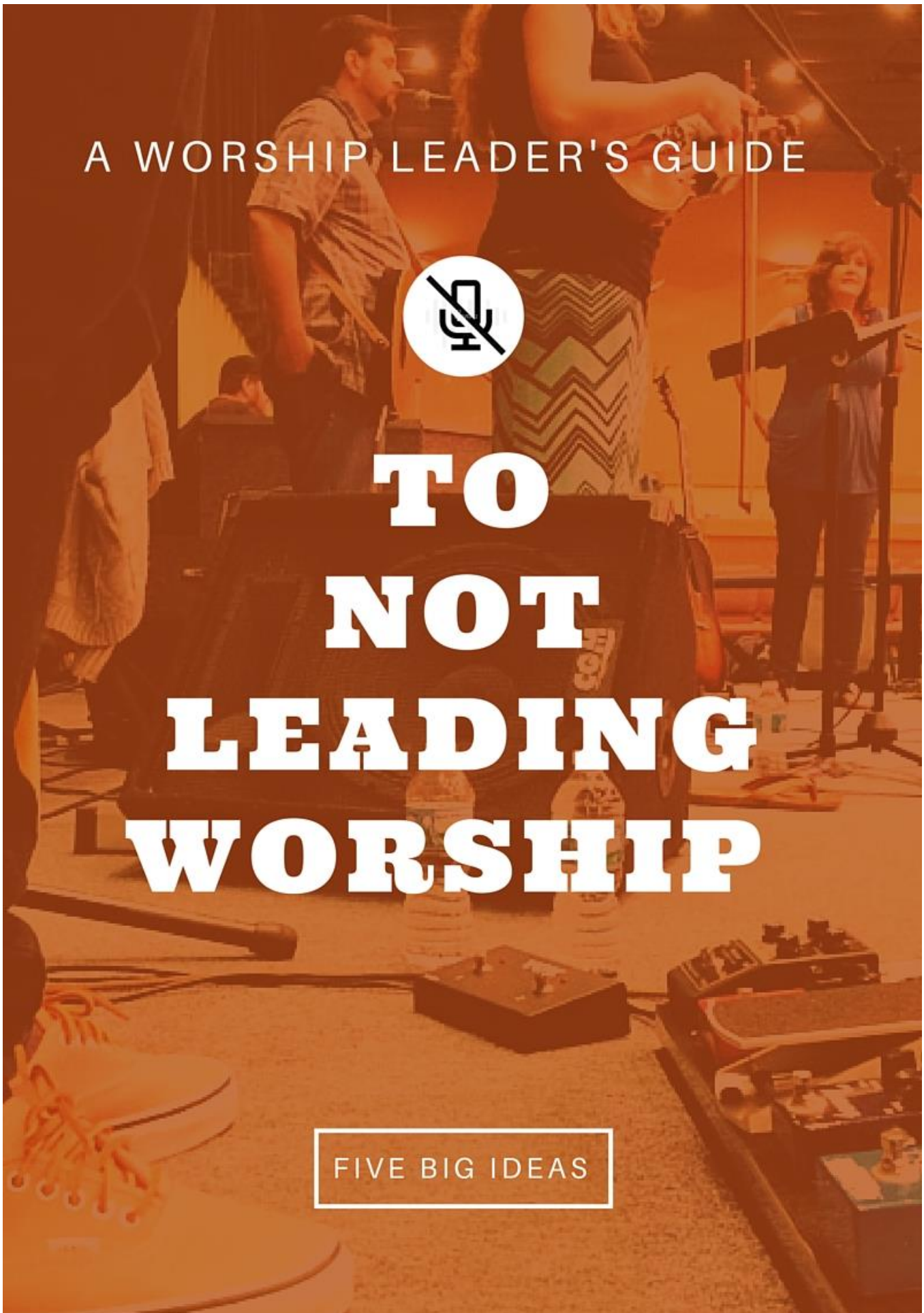

A WORSHIP LEADER'S GUIDE
TO NOT LEADING WORSHIP
FIVE BIG IDEAS

Whether you are a volunteer or paid worship leader, **your influence within the community is operating both on and off stage**. What you choose to do and don't do will impact your teams, future leaders, and your own family.

Let's consider a wider realm of influence for our key leaders, one that takes into account more than just the "worship leading" role, which is vital. Leaders, consider these questions:

- Do your teams get a chance to see you follow or are you always the boss?
- Do you intentionally plan time away from the stage?
- Does your church culture reward rest and simply being present?
- When was the last time you took communion or received prayer at the altar? Are you always playing music or fixing issues?

NOTE: Although, this eBook is worship leader focused, these concepts can work across the board in kids ministry, preaching teams, and any conceivable team in the church.

Here are 5 PLACES you can lead, by not "leading":

1. On the Stage, co-leading

This is all about developing those around you. Train others to do everything you do. You could ask up and coming leader to run the rehearsal, lead the opening prayer, or facilitate the communion invitation. If you are interested in

growth and discipleship, there should be several weeks throughout the year when you are simply supporting someone else who is leading. If music is your thing, form disciples as you make it!

BIG IDEA: *Always be training someone to do everything you do.*

2. On the Stage, just playing or singing

Simply serving on a worship team that **you are not leading** will benefit you in unexpected ways. Maybe you just show up and play bass, run sound, or play the piano without a vocal microphone. Model what a good team member does (show up on time, practice your part, do stuff you don't want to do…). Being under someone else's direction (or non-direction), will teach you how to lead better rehearsals. Take the opportunity to serve the leader and champion them at every turn. The most difficult part here is keeping your mouth shut.

BIG IDEA: *Model teamwork by being part of a team you are not leading.*

3. Off the Stage, on another volunteer team

Spend a couple weeks or more each year serving another area of the church that is NOT ON THE STAGE. Offer to fill-in for kids church, coffee bar or usher team. Instead of rocking the solo to "Oceans" you'll be changing the

diaper of a special needs kid or unclogging a toilet. Yeah, I know you already "paid your dues", but we should NEVER stop stooping to serve in the Kingdom of God. Encourage your worship teams to serve in other areas that are off the stage.

BIG IDEA: *Serve the church outside of the spotlight of the stage.*

"Instead of rocking 'Oceans' you'll be changing the diaper of a special needs kid or unclogging a toilet. Serve off the stage!"

4. On the Floor, with the people

When is the last time you just came to church like everyone else, Starbucks in hand? When is the last time your church saw you (the worship leader) model worship as a congregant? It is a place of influence like no other. It's good for your teams and the church at large to see what you do in that space. Respond to God with your body. Receive the Eucharist… slowly. Champion the worship team that is leading that day. It will be good for you to hear the sound, watch the band, and worship in your sanctuary as a congregant. Don't fix stuff; allow those you are training to sweat it.

BIG IDEA: Just coming to church should be in your job description. Get off the platform in in the trenches with the people.

“When is the last time your church saw you (the worship leader) model worship as a congregant?”

5. On your Bed, skipping church

Yep, I said it. In addition to your yearly vacation weeks (which I hope you take) and your flu Sunday, you could just plan a week where you sleep late and go to brunch with all the pagans! Lead yourself or family in a devotional and worship together. Visit another church. As a worship leader, you need to intentionally spend time away from the “work” of ministry and rest. Being absent is one of the best ways to train up leaders. The church will survive and Jesus will not fall off his throne, I promise.

BIG IDEA: Resist the idea that you can NEVER miss church; take a Sunday off.

Senior Leader/Pastor Tips

- Give your worship leaders a one-page job description. In it include expectations for how often you want them doing what. Example: 50% (26 Sunday’s a year) main-stage leading, 25% (13 weeks) building other leaders, 15% (8 weeks) just attending, 10% (5 weeks) gone from the building.

- Your creative and musical community will thrive if you actually direct, model and encourage rest. If that means there are no drums one week or you have just acoustic worship then so be it! People should be valued over production. In time, you will have more healthy souls than you have space for.
- It's important for the church to see the senior pastor taking notes during the sermon and "attending" church with the congregants. What happens when you just show up and attend church like everyone else?
- Instead of monthly schedules for volunteers consider 2-on/4-off or 2-on/6-off scheduling models that encourage people to just come to church, instead of always serving. Check out a recent trimester schedule for our worship team.



My name is Mike O'Brien and I am passionate about teaching and mentoring worship leaders and teams. My calling is to use my experience as a producer, worship leader, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist to come alongside musicians, helping them more fully worship God with their instrument and lives. Contact me to talk about how we can raise the bar through virtual or on-site training for your worship ministry.