

We are “building relationships through a community of small groups by creating environments that inspire growth to maturity in Jesus Christ.”

Table of Contents

Section One: Introduction to Coaching	3
The Importance of Coaching in Reaching our Vision	4
The Importance of Coaching in Our Ministry Structure	5
The Spiritual Life of a Coach	6
The Shepherding Role of a Coach	7
Equipping Leaders Through Coaching Relationships	9
Coaching Position Description	11
Section Two: Essential Skills for Coaching	12
Meeting One-on-One With Leaders	13
One-on-One Discussion Guide	14
Helping Leaders Develop Goals	15
Charting One-on-One Visits	16
Huddling with Your Leaders	18
Huddle Planning Guide	20
Evaluating Your Huddle	21
Visiting Groups	22
Group Visit Guide	24
Providing Feedback	26
Balancing the Roles of a Coach	27
Section Three: Developing Leadership Teams	28
Building a Leadership Team	29
Recruiting Leaders	30
Equipping Leaders to Develop Goals with Apprentices	31
Recruiting an Apprentice Coach	32
Section Four: The Coaching Conversations	34
The Heart of a Leader	35
The Vision Talk	38
Relationship with God	40
Relationship with Self	46
Relationship with One Another	47
Resolving Conflict in a Group	53
Relationship with the World	54
Reproducing Yourself	56
Reproducing Your Group	58
The Small Group Life Cycle	61
Section Five: Additional Resources	62
What To Look for in a Leader	63
Becoming a Small Group Leader	64
MBC's and Frontline's Vision and Values	65
What We Teach (MBC's Doctrinal Statement)	See Leadership Manual

Section One:

Introduction to Coaching

The Importance of Coaching in Reaching Our Vision

The Vision of Our Church

MBC's Vision: Impact secular Washington with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Frontline's Vision: Take each young adult to the next level in their spiritual journey.

Through the Small Group Ministry we are:

Building relationships through a community of small groups by creating environments that inspire growth to maturity in Jesus Christ.

Coaches unique role to achieve this vision:

- ❑ Build authentic relationships with leaders in their huddle
- ❑ Build healthy relationships among group leaders.
- ❑ Challenge leaders to grow personally, spiritually and in leadership.
- ❑ Equip leaders to inspire spiritual growth in their group member's lives.
- ❑ Equip leaders to build safe environments within their groups.
- ❑ Teach leaders to resolve conflicts within groups when necessary.
- ❑ Help groups multiply by encouraging leaders to develop a plan to "branch" out.
- ❑ Recruit new leaders and apprentices so that groups can multiply.
- ❑ Interview and approve new apprentice leaders
- ❑ Intentionally shepherd an Apprentice Coach so you are multiplying yourself.

The Four Core Relationships

Throughout this manual, you will see references to the "Four Core Relationships." These relationships are our framework for Spiritual Maturity. These relationships are markers for spiritual transformation in the life of a believer. As coaches, you will inspire growth both in the leader and in the groups you oversee in each of these areas.

Relationship with God: A **growing** relationship with God means that each person comes to know God in a personal way; it goes beyond just knowing facts about Him. Group member come to know God through studying the Bible, praying with others and alone, and practicing spiritual disciplines.

Relationship with Others: In relationship with others, group members **connect** and live out their relationship with God in context of their relationships with each other. Healthy, lasting relationships should be developed as one matures in faith.

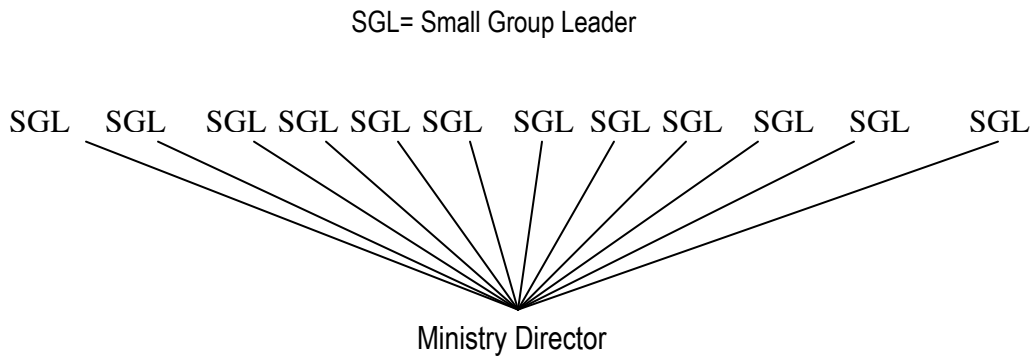
Relationship with Self: A proper relationship with self is found in understanding how God sees us. An identity based on who we are in Christ **equips** group members for success in all areas of life.

Relationship with the World: Relating to the world will spur every believer to realize that he or she is gifted to serve both within the church and among unbelievers. Members are **equipped** to serve through learning to share Christ, service projects, mission trips, and the SHAPE seminar.

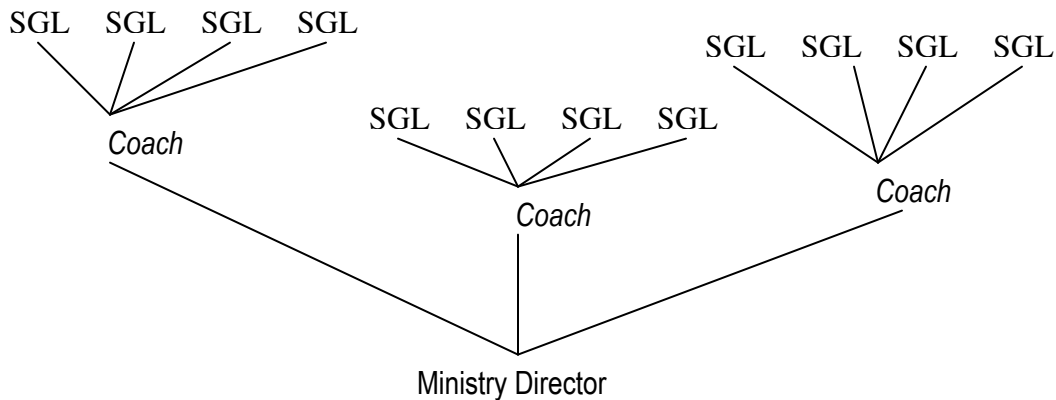
The Importance of Coaching in Our Ministry Structure

Why do we need coaches?

As we look at an organization chart of one of our current ministries, we may see something like this:



Quickly, you can see that it would be very difficult for the Small Group Leader to feel that the Ministry Director knows them personally, where they are enjoying successes, where they are struggling, and where they may need help. However, if you look at an organizational chart of the same ministry after coaching is in place, you may see something like this:



Coaches can shepherd a smaller team of Leaders by meeting One-on-One, in a Team Huddle and by visiting each Leader's small group. The coach has the distinct privilege of really getting to know a Small Group Leader by coming alongside them for the purposes of encouraging spiritual and personal growth, connecting with other leaders, and leadership development. Through this model, all leaders are cared for.

The Spiritual Life of a Coach

“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.” Acts 4:32-35

Your Relationship with Christ is the Foundation of your Coaching Ministry

“For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.” Ezra 7:10

Your personal spiritual relationship with the Lord is the foundation of your Coaching ministry. This important principle will impact both your own spiritual growth and your leaders'. Read it, practice it, and then teach it. Commit to your own walk with Christ first, and develop a spiritual life grounded in the word of God and the practice of spiritual disciplines i.e. prayer, solitude, etc.

Your Personal Walk with Christ is a Model to your Leaders

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 11:1

We teach what we know. We reproduce who we are. Encourage your Leaders to have a vibrant relationship with God by modeling it.

*“Leaders lead not by merit of temperament or gifts, but by living a life that is so compelling like Christ that others naturally want to follow them, to follow them to Christ. We may not have a lot of programmatic vision or affirmation for material accomplishments, but our lives as a result of the management of our relationship to Him will be a vision of the distinctiveness of Christ. We will see the affirmation of changed lives of those who, because they come under our shepherding, followed an exemplary model of what it means to believe.” Joseph Stowell, *Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century**

Is your walk with Christ so compelling that it encourages your Leaders to walk with Him as well?

Your Devotion to God Must Be a Priority

Jesus made spending time alone with His Father a priority (Mark 1:35) and we must do the same. When schedules get hectic, it is often the first thing to go. You have to be intentional about scheduling time to pursue a deeper relationship with Christ, and abide in His presence.

Group Activity:

The Shepherding Role of a Coach

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers, not because you must, but because you are willing as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory, that will never fade away.” 1 Peter 5:2-4

Be Shepherds – A shepherd cares for and nurtures the sheep. He knows his sheep. He feeds them, leads them to rest, seeks the lost, brings back the scattered, binds up the broken and strengthens the sick. (Ezekiel 34: 11-16)

Of God’s flock – The small group leaders are members of God’s flock.

That is under your care – Your 3-5 leaders that have been entrusted to you to coach.

Serving as overseers – Be aware, observant, present, know them personally and serve them.

Not because you must – You should have a genuine heart for your leaders.

But because you are willing – Have a desire to encourage their growth, connection and leadership development.

As God wants you to be – The coach shows signs of being a growing disciple of Christ, displaying evidence of gifts and abilities given by God for shepherding leaders.

Eager to serve – A good coach has an attitude of service that is contagious!

Being examples to the flock – The coach know that they lead by example and they are models of servant leadership.

“As he (a shepherd) cares for them (his sheep) he develops a heart of compassion for them and a desire to see them grow to maturity. That’s the mark of a good shepherd – and a great coach.”

-Willow Creek Coaches Handbook

Your goal as a Coach is the spiritual maturity of your small group leaders. Commit to understanding the responsibilities of a small group leader so you can help leaders accomplish their goals.

“You can love people without leading them, but you cannot lead people without loving them.”

-Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within you.*

Intentionally Shepherd Your Leaders

“And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.” Psalm 78:72

Intentionally shepherding your leaders will lead them to feed themselves. Equip them to faithfully pursue God on their own.

Intentional Shepherding is taking initiative to:

- Build a loving relationship,
- Discern the growth needs, and
- Agree on a development plan in order for them to become a maturing, reproducing follower of Christ.

Differences made by intentionality:

Shepherding	Intentional Shepherding
Caring	Developing
Encouraging	Equipping
Responding	Initiating
Relational	Transformational
Many	Few
Addition	Multiplication

“Shepherding people means to help them grow; it demands thoughtfulness about ‘how to make the other great’ and it implies nothing less than the act of true friendship for others.”
Transforming Leadership, Leighton Ford, p. 163

Equipping Leaders through Coaching Relationships

"This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone." Titus 3:8

Coach: One who comes alongside a growing person to help them reach their potential, to encourage and support them, and to challenge them to risk and take steps of faith.

COACHES...

- C are for the leader...
- O ffer input...
- A dvocate for the leader...
- C onnect with the leaders regularly...
- H elp them formulate a branching plan...
- I dentify with the leader an apprentice
- N otice their needs...
- G ive them an opportunity to share their spiritual journey...

C=Care for the leader and apprentice leader.

- Be available
- Offer encouragement, affirmation
- Challenge them to continue to grow and take risks for the kingdom of God
- People really don't care how much you know until they know how much you care
- Make their concerns your concerns
 - "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:
If one falls down, his friend can help him up.
But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!
Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*

O=Offer input after you have listened to their hearts and words.

- Active listening is one of the greatest strengths of an effective coach
- Be an equipper not an expert
- Coaching is 70% listening and only 30% speaking.
 - "My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry..." James 1:19*

A=Advocate for the leader. Be their champion.

- Work to establish a personal relationship and then nurture it
- People respond better after they know that you are for them
- Discern how God has uniquely wired them

C=Connect with them regularly.

- Pursue relationship with them
“He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.” Mark 3:14
- Visit with the leaders one on one, through e-mail and/or the phone
Weekly contact should be a priority for weeks when you don’t have a huddle or one-on-one appointment with the leader.
- Look for natural connecting times
- Visit their groups
- Facilitate connection among the leaders during the huddle time
As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3

H=Help them formulate a branching plan.

- Formulate goals for the group and a timeline that will move toward the branching process

I=Identify with the leader an apprentice.

- Help the leader identify, develop and equip an apprentice

N=Notice their needs.

- Offer a safe place where leaders feel loved, valued, and cared for, and are treated gently and respectfully.
- After addressing their needs, identify other issues to which you would like them to respond
And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

G= Give them an opportunity to share their spiritual journey.

- Encourage them to be committed to growing in their own personal walk with Christ as a priority

Small Group Ministry

COACH

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TIME COMMITMENT:	Depends on Number of Groups
LENGTH OF COMMITMENT:	One year
REPORTING RELATIONSHIP:	Ministry Staff and/or Senior Coach
SPIRITUAL GIFTS:	Any Combination of Leadership (Acts 13:1-3; 15), Teaching (John 21:15-17; I Tim.4:6,11; 6:17), Exhortation (Acts 9:26-30) or Administration (Acts 15)

EXPECTATIONS:

Your primary task is to be a model of Christian maturity who builds intentional relationships, equips leaders, and ministers as a part of a team.

Be a Model of Christian Maturity

- Exhibit an excitement about the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.
- Understand and incorporate the basic disciplines of the Christian life, having a vibrant walk with God.
- Live a life of integrity that avoids the appearance of evil and is above reproach.

Build Intentional Relationships With Leaders, Coaches and Staff

- Make your leaders and team a priority so that you can be available when needed.
- Proactively pursue your leaders: meeting with them one-on-one on a regular basis—every 4 to 6 weeks.
- Huddle with your leaders at the monthly leadership (VHS) meeting.
- Visit their small groups on a regular basis for encouragement and development—every 6 to 8 weeks.
- Build community among your leaders.
- Actively participate in Coaches meetings, Coaches small groups, and one-on-one appointments with staff.

Equip Leaders

- Work with leaders to develop and/or enhance necessary skills for leadership.
- Encourage your leaders to minister according to their SHAPE.
- Help leaders develop in all areas of life.
- Equip leaders to resolve conflict within groups.
- Set and evaluate goals with your leaders on a regular basis.
- Assist in recruiting and training leaders for new small groups and assist in the branching of new groups.
- Screen and approve potential apprentices for your groups.

Be a Team Player

- Embrace the vision of small groups and cast the vision to your leaders and their groups.
- Foster a positive attitude toward change so that you and your leaders can accept change with grace and excitement.
- Multiply your ministry by training an apprentice coach.
- Model servant leadership.
- Demonstrate an attitude of encouragement and support towards all team members, Frontline and MBC.

NECESSARY SKILLS:

Equipping, encouraging, vision casting, strong interpersonal skills, problem solving, conflict resolution, community building, time management, discernment and ability to speak the truth in love

Section Two:

Essential Skills for Coaching

Meeting One-on-One With Leaders

“He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” -Acts 11:24-26

The Purpose of One-on-One Meetings

The purpose of one-on-one meetings is to build an authentic personal relationship with each leader. These meetings are opportunities connect with them personally and spiritually, as well as provide teachable moments to further develop them as a leader.

Creative Ways to Meet One-on-One

With full schedules, creativity is a must in connecting with leaders.

- Mark open times on your calendar and let leaders sign-up for meeting times at your huddle
- Have lunch with leaders that work near you
- Meet with leaders before or after their small group meeting
- Meet with leaders before or after a church service
- Do life together, bringing them along with you to participate and/or observe things you're already doing
- Show that you value your leaders by making time for them

Content of One-on-One Meetings

Preparation:

Plan meeting with a focus and purpose in mind.

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with your leader, before, after and during the meeting.

Personalization:

1. Get to know what is going on in their day-to-day life
2. Listen and respond to pressing needs first
3. Discuss leaders spiritual growth and leadership development
4. Suggest specific action steps to work on together
5. Challenge them on specific, personal areas of discipleship
6. Find out what is happening in their group and in their apprentice relationship
7. Discuss group's branching plan
8. Equip and encourage them in ways that they can better lead their group
9. Let them get to know you and how you live your life
10. Discuss matters not appropriate in larger settings

Evaluation:

- Did my leader feel listened to?
- How are they growing spiritually, personally and in leadership development?
- What follow-up is needed?

Inspire them to be all they can be!

One-on-One Discussion Guide

Guide your leaders to apply the 4 Core Relationships to their lives. Use the following as a guide.

Relationship with God

- ❑ God's Activity
In what areas is God working in your life and the life of your group?
- ❑ Spiritual Disciplines
What are you doing to grow toward maturity?
How is your time with Him?
- ❑ Current Struggle
Is there a way that I can pray for you and your personal devotion with God?
What aspect of your life has God changed recently?

Relationships with One Another

- ❑ Relationship with Members in Group
Is there any unresolved conflict among people in your group?
What are you doing to foster closer relationships among your group?
- ❑ Relationship with Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Spouse and Family
Is there balance in your relationships?
With your spouse, are they feeling honored, loved, supported, and encouraged?
Are you spending time with your spouse? Children?
Are you balanced in the time you spend on relationships (if dating, friendships, family)?
Are your relationships honoring to God?

Relationship with Self

- ❑ Trials of Life
Do you face any ongoing trials that I can pray for?
What are you doing to deal with these trials in a God-honoring manner?
- ❑ Leadership Growth
How are you growing as a leader?
How are you equipping your apprentice?

Relationship with the World

- ❑ Relationships with people outside the group
What are you doing to have an impact on your community?
- ❑ Servants Heart
How are you leading yourself or your group to serve people around you?
What does your group do to serve the world together?

Helping Leaders Develop Goals

Use these questions as a guide to develop personal and leadership goals.

What are your goals for your own spiritual growth?

- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Scripture Memory
- Sharing Your Faith

What are your goals for developing the four core relationships within your group and group members?

- Relationship with God
- Relationship with Self
- Relationship with Each Other
- Relationship with the World

What goals do you have for leadership development?

- Relationship Building
- Facilitating Group Discussion
- Conflict Resolution
- Discipling and Mentoring Your Apprentice
- Vision Casting
- Serving

How would you like to improve your relationship with your coach and your apprentice?

- How can you best spend time with your coach or be cared for by them?
- What areas of your relationship with your apprentice can be improved?

What is your plan for “branching out”?

- Every group needs a branching plan.
- Who have you spotted and recruited as an emerging leader or apprentice in your group?

Charting One-on-One Visits

Use this chart to monitor the regularity of your one-on-one visits with leaders. Enter the name of your leaders and the date when you meet with them each month.

Group Leader	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

Use this chart to record the big idea of your conversation or any key issues covered in the meeting. This would also be a great place to record discussing the Coaching Conversations.

Date	Leader	Notes

Huddling with Your Leaders

“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers; Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” - Acts 11:1-3

The Purpose of Huddles

Huddles exist to build safe community where leaders can connect with each other, grow and learn from each other, along with realizing that they are not alone as they lead. This is their source of encouragement, training and contact with their coach and other leaders. The coaches' primary role is to provide leadership, cast vision, and facilitate such interactions among the leaders.

Essential Elements of A Huddle

- Vision Casting
- Relationship Building
- Participation and Learning (Peer to Peer and Coach to Team)
- Prayer

Content of a Huddle

- Celebrate victories that happen in group life
- Model small group leadership
- Pray together for each other and their groups
- Recast the vision for small groups
- Help group leaders brainstorm answers to the problems they are facing in their groups
- Discuss good curriculum choices
- Pass along important information to group leaders and receive information from them
- Provide spiritual growth opportunities as leaders need them
- Equip leaders with leadership skills
- Provide opportunities for leaders to use different gifts
- Care for the leaders and encourage them to care for one another

Creative Ways to Huddle

Each coach should be creative to discover the best way to huddle with their leaders. This will be determined by a combination of factors including time constraints and the needs of leaders. Consider the following as ideas for forming huddles:

VHS (Vision, Huddle, Skills)

At VHS, a regularly scheduled leaders meeting, time is designated for coaches to huddle with their leaders. Some coaches use this as their primary huddle for the month and meet with the leaders outside of VHS for their one-on-one meetings.

Team Huddles

Many coaches are meeting with their leaders together once a month outside of a VHS meeting. Meeting in this way allows extended conversations in a relaxed environment. Some coaches meet in homes or at church, while others meet in restaurants. Coaches who meet like this don't use VHS as their primary huddle, but use that time to check in with their leaders and pray.

Building Consistency in Your Huddle

The challenge of having a huddle is consistent attendance. This can be difficult for a number of reasons:

- Leaders may see this as just another meeting and not something they need
- Leaders don't know each other
- Schedules can be hard to coordinate

Even though building a huddle can be difficult, be persistent. There are some things you can do to help build a consistent huddle:

- Personally invite leaders and apprentices to attend
- Let them know of the importance of the huddle and what you will be doing together
- Be prepared even if you are unsure of who will attend
- If only one person shows up, still meet and enjoy your one-on-one time together
- Schedule far enough in advance to avoid conflicting schedules—at least 4 weeks
- Prepare carefully and prayerfully in advance, so the huddle effectively meets leaders' needs and is an efficient use of time
- If leaders see a benefit to huddles, they will make them a priority

Huddle Planning Guide

Huddle Date:	Time:	Place:
Questions to Consider: What are my leaders' needs? (spiritual, emotional and leadership) How can I meet their needs as part of this huddle? How can leaders apply or live out what we talk about?		
Prayer: How can I pray for them both in the huddle and outside of the huddle? How can we authentically pray for each other at the huddle?		

Topics to Address	Past Discussions	Time	Future Steps	Time
Vision				
<i>Remember: You can never cast vision too many times.</i>				
Prayer				
<i>Is this the same way you prayed last month? Are you committing enough time to prayer?</i>				
Relational Needs				
<i>Every huddle must contain a relational aspect.</i>				
Problem Solving				
<i>Don't force them to create problems just so that you have a problem to solve.</i>				
Things to Celebrate				
<i>Be sure to celebrate at least as much as you problem solve. This will keep your huddle positive and your leaders hopeful even if they are facing tough issues. Look to celebrate the little life change as well as big changes.</i>				
Skills Teaching & Modeling				
<i>They will teach as you teach. So model healthy teaching techniques.</i>				
Information To and From You				
<i>What announcements do they need to know about? Do you have a recent copy of their roster or branching plan?</i>				

Evaluating Your Huddle

Following each huddle (or series of huddles) ask yourself these questions:

Evaluating the Essential Elements

- Did I cast vision to my huddle?
- How are my leaders showing that they are catching the vision of McLean Bible Church and the small group ministry?
- How were relational needs addressed?
- How did we celebrate God's activity in our lives?
- Which received more attention in the huddle: problem solving or celebration?
- What skill did I teach or model?
- Am I intentional with the skills taught in my huddle?
- Did we pray for each other and those in their groups?

Evaluating Impact and Process

- What can my leaders apply and live out as a result of the huddle?
- Is there an appointment with a leader that needs to be scheduled?
- Should I write an encouragement note to someone in my huddle?
- Is there anything that I need to pass along to Staff?
- Did each leader get a chance to participate or share?
- Was it worth the leaders time?
- Did the leaders feel encouraged and challenged?
- What different learning styles did I include?

Follow-up Notes

- What are ideas for our next huddle?
- What appointments need to be scheduled (next huddle, visit to group, one-on-one time)?
- What ideas do you have by way of long range planning?

Visiting Groups

The Purpose for Group Visitation

The purpose for visiting a group is to affirm the leader and observe the group dynamics, in order to provide better leadership and resources. Visiting a group gives the leader a new perspective on their group. You can help your leaders see things in their group dynamics that they may miss because they are used to the way their group interacts with each other. You can help them see things in their teaching style and can help them improve their discussion leading abilities.

Planning Ahead

- Talk to the leader and gather information concerning the meeting and group members such as:
 - What is the group studying?
 - What is the culture of the group?
 - What are the group members' names?
 - What time would you like me to arrive?
 - Do you have any concerns for the meeting?
 - What role would you like me to play?
- Think through your goals for the visit and how you can best support this leader and group.
- Remind the leader to tell the group members that you will be visiting.

Before the Meeting

- Meet with the Leader and Apprentice before the meeting time and ask them how they are doing.
- Reassure them that you are there to support them.
- Spend time in prayer for the group time.
- Remind the leader to introduce you to the group.

Overcoming Challenges of Group Visitation

While group visitation is essential, it does have some unique challenges. Group visits can be challenging because:

- Your presence in the group may limit sharing of group members
- The leader may be nervous with you in the group meeting
- Group members may look to you instead of the leader when you visit the group

Here are some tips for overcoming these challenges:

- Let the group leader know that you are there to support and encourage them and your visit should not be viewed as a threat
- Have the leader remind the group that what they say in the group stays in the group and that you are not there to investigate the secrets of their personal life
- If group members turn to you rather than to the leader, redirect their question or comment to the leader
- Participate in a service project or social with your groups, to see how the group interacts outside of the teaching setting
- Prepare the leader and have the leader prepare the group with an overview of coaching and purpose of the group visits

- ✓ Remember this: The best way to overcome these challenges is to consistently visit groups. Regular visits will show the leader and the group that these visits are essential.

Observing the Group Time

Observe how the leader interacts with the group and shares ministry with the Apprentice and members. The group visit guide on the following pages will help you think through what to observe during the meeting. Take the opportunity at the end of the meeting to affirm the Leader and tell the group how much you appreciate him or her.

Evaluating After the Meeting

Meet with the leader and apprentice as soon as possible after the meeting. Be encouraging! Tell them the qualities you appreciate about them and the skills you observed. Be prepared to give practical ideas to help Leaders improve in specific areas where growth is needed. Be a resource for your Leaders. Determine how you can pray for this group, its Leader, and Apprentice

How effective were you as a coach in meeting your goals for the group visit and affirming and supporting the leader? Is there anything you would have done differently? If your Apprentice Coach was with you, talk over the visit together. Record your observations on the group visit guide and review before the next visit.

Group Visit Guide

<i>Group Leader Name</i>	Date	Time to Arrive
Location		Time Group Starts

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Environment</u></p> <p>Did the leader manage time well? Did the group start and end on time? If not was it appropriate for the needs of the group?</p> <p>Where there distractions that kept the group from reaching its full impact? Consider these things: people late, phone ringing, parking difficulties, irrelevant discussions, space for the group, proper lighting, pets, privacy from housemates.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Relational Health</u></p> <p>Evaluate group dynamics (openness, comfort level, honesty, laughter, power struggles)</p> <p>Do group members seem to genuinely like each other? Why or why not?</p> <p>Would you want to be part of this group?</p> <p>Are group members openly sharing their needs to each other? If so, how? If not, why?</p> <p>Is there any open conflict that must be resolved? If so, what action steps will you take?</p> <p>Is the group following the leader?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Leader's Action Steps</p>
--	---

	Leader's Action Steps				
<p data-bbox="625 268 889 304" style="text-align: center;"><u>4 Core Relationships</u></p> <p data-bbox="378 342 1107 415">Which of the four core relationships was focused on during this meeting?</p> <table data-bbox="428 453 1097 554"><tr><td data-bbox="428 453 667 485">Relationship with God</td><td data-bbox="834 453 1068 485">Relationship with Self</td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="428 518 683 550">Relationship with World</td><td data-bbox="834 518 1097 550">Relationship with Others</td></tr></table> <p data-bbox="511 625 1024 661" style="text-align: center;"><i>How was this value presented to the group?</i></p>	Relationship with God	Relationship with Self	Relationship with World	Relationship with Others	
Relationship with God	Relationship with Self				
Relationship with World	Relationship with Others				
<p data-bbox="662 772 852 808" style="text-align: center;"><u>Teaching Style</u></p> <p data-bbox="358 846 1016 877">What was the primary teaching style used by the leader?</p> <p data-bbox="428 919 1024 951">Have you seen the leader vary their teaching style?</p> <p data-bbox="358 1031 1089 1062">Did the leaders miss a potential teaching or caring opportunity?</p> <p data-bbox="358 1142 662 1173">Was the leader prepared?</p> <p data-bbox="358 1253 946 1285">Was the study a facilitated discussion or a lecture?</p> <p data-bbox="428 1327 1154 1358">How can this leader improve in their discussion leading ability?</p>					
<p data-bbox="605 1465 909 1501" style="text-align: center;"><u>Apprentice Relationship</u></p> <p data-bbox="378 1539 1097 1570">How did the leader equip their apprentice during the meeting?</p> <p data-bbox="378 1650 854 1682">What skills is the apprentice developing?</p>					

Providing Feedback

“As iron sharpens iron so one brother sharpens another.” Proverbs 27:17

The Feedback Model

Providing feedback is done through a personal, constructive and encouraging conversation with an leader. The conversation might generally go like this:

- What do you feel went well? Leader is posed question and then Coach validates answers and provides other positive observations as appropriate. The focus here is encouragement.
- Is there anything you might do differently next time? The focus here is correction or challenge as needed.
- Overall, how do you feel it went? What are you planning for next time? The focus here is to summarize and create an action plan for the future.

Why is it essential that we provide feedback?

The leader looks to the coach for guidance, suggestions for improvement and encouragement. The feedback session provides the leader with something constructive upon which to build, as well as direction and guidance.

Things to Consider Before Providing Feedback

Were the expectations clearly defined prior to the leadership experience?

Am I balancing any challenges with positive statements on their leadership ability?

How can I say things the leader might not want to hear in constructive way?

Balancing The Roles of a Coach

Knowing what to do when will help you effectively apply the Four Core Relationships to the lives of your leaders. Using this chart will help you effectively balance your roles and the leader's needs.

4 Core Relationships	Huddle	Group Visits	One-On-One Meetings
Relationship with God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage leaders to grow spiritually <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate God's activity in personal and group life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for ways that the group can better inspire each other toward maturity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the leader's personal walk with God <input type="checkbox"/> Pray with the leader
Relationship with One Another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Model care and concern <input type="checkbox"/> Build healthy relationships with leaders and apprentices <input type="checkbox"/> Teach group facilitation skills <input type="checkbox"/> Give ideas groups can use to better share life with each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assist in conflict resolution, if needed <input type="checkbox"/> Look for ways to encourage group sharing <input type="checkbox"/> Let them know that you are available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the leader's relationship with their apprentice <input type="checkbox"/> Check on their personal relationships (Friends, Dating, Family)
Relationship with Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Help leaders to realize who they are in Christ <input type="checkbox"/> Equip them to be more effective in group leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for ways to incorporate or improve group accountability <input type="checkbox"/> Look for authenticity in the group and brainstorm ideas to improve it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for ways the leader needs a healthier relationship with self <input type="checkbox"/> Is the leader too arrogant or too humble?
Relationship with World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pray for each other as a team <input type="checkbox"/> Train them to share their faith <input type="checkbox"/> Continually vision-cast the need to "branch out" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to see how the group relates to the world <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage the group to have a consistent service project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Talk about the leader's relationship to the lost <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge the leader to set the example in serving the world

Section Three:

Developing Leadership Teams

Building Leadership Teams

In the Book of Acts, we see that teams are being formed to do ministry work. We see recruiting, training and sending off occurring. Barnabas found Saul, trained him, and sent him soaring to the point that after chapter 13, they were referred to as “Paul and Barnabas”

A Small Group Leadership Team will likely consist of:

- ❑ A Leader
- ❑ An Apprentice
- ❑ A Host (some teams)

This team serves an assigned group of believers in striving toward maturity.

A Coaching Leadership Team will consist of:

- ❑ A Coach
- ❑ An Apprentice Coach

The coaching team serves assigned Small Group Leadership Teams.

The Purpose of Leadership Teams

1. Multiplies ministry by raising up new leaders.

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” –2Timothy 2:2

2. Provides leaders with opportunities to share the ministry and equip others to accomplish their God-given ministry.

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ” –Ephesians 4:11-13

Recruiting Leaders

Identifying Apprentices for Your Assigned Groups

With a decentralized ministry, new leaders can be recruited by current leaders. It is key that you as the group's coach approve of the apprentice candidates. Here are some ways that you can get to know the apprentice.

- Talk to the leader about the apprentice's strengths and weaknesses
 - Observe the apprentice leading the meeting or parts of the meeting
 - Invite the apprentice to attend your huddle
 - Have dinner with the leader and apprentice
 - Connect outside of group time
- ✓ Remember this: Apprentices will soon be leaders of their own group. Recruiting qualified apprentices now will insure stable leadership in the future.

What are qualities to look for in apprentices?

Look for the following qualities:

- F – Faithful, Consistent Walk with God
- A – Available to Invest Time and Energy in the Ministry
- I – Initiative to Live Out the Small Group Mission
- T – Teachable Attitude Toward Church's Leadership and Teaching
- H – Honesty in Relationships

Approving Potential Apprentices

- Have candidate fill out leadership application. The application can be found at www.smallgroupresources.org under Leadership Interest.
- Interview the potential apprentice.

Interview Questions to Ask

- Share your conversion experience (God story).
- Are you a member of McLean Bible Church?
- Have you read "What We Teach"? Do you endorse both in belief and practice the doctrinal statement of McLean Bible Church?
- How would you explain salvation to someone?
- If single, what is your current roommate/housing situation?
- Is there anything we should know about that would hinder you from effective leadership?

Recommendation by Staff and Coaches

Following meeting with potential apprentices, coaches should update staff on the potential apprentice.

The following process should be followed:

- Pray and seek God's direction
- Discuss leader's strengths and weakness (if known) with staff
- To staff, suggest an invitation to leadership or suggest a growth plan for those who are not extended an invitation to leadership
- If not invited to serve, meet face to face to explain why invitation is not extended and give a plan for growth so that potential leader can grow from the experience

Equipping Leaders to Develop Goals with Apprentices

Use these questions as a guide to develop personal and leadership goals.

What are your goals for your own spiritual growth?

- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Scripture Memory
- Sharing Your Faith

What goals do you have for leadership development?

- Relationship Building
- Facilitating Group Discussion
- Conflict Resolution
- Vision Casting
- Identify gifts and serve based on SHAPE

What is your plan for moving into group leadership?

- Develop a branching plan
- Have you recruited an apprentice that can begin a new group with you?

Recruiting An Apprentice Coach

"I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith.... What you have heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us." 2 Timothy 1:3-5a, 13-14

Your primary responsibility in recruiting leaders is to recruit an apprentice coach. Here is what to look for in an apprentice coach:

- Passion and love for groups and ministry
- Experience with groups especially branching out
- Mature –spiritually and emotionally
- Evident character and integrity
- Ability to resolve conflict in groups
- Strong people skills
- Desire to disciple leaders one-on-one
- Availability to achieve the vision for coaching
- Team-player attitude

- ✓ Remember this: Look for someone that leaders want to follow and someone with whom you have a natural relationship and a desire to invest in them.

"There is no success without a successor."

The Difference Between Coaching and Leading

One of the first things that an apprentice coach needs to understand is the difference between being a coach and leading a small group. This is especially true if the apprentice coach was a small group leader before pursuing coaching. If the differences are not understood and discussed along the way, new coaches can become frustrated and disillusioned with coaching. Helping them understand the key differences will aid them in determining if they're being called to coaching.

- Shift from teacher to equipper
- Coaching requires a person to take more initiative because you must pursue leaders instead of a group simply showing up every week
- Increase in responsibility and authority
- Close working relationship with staff must be established

Essential Skills to be Passed on to Apprentice Coaches

- One on One Meetings
- Ability to Organize and Lead Huddles
- Confidence to Make Group Visits
- Conduct leader and apprentice interviews
- Giving feedback to leaders

These skills should be passed on in a fashion similar to that of the Leader/Apprentice Relationships in small groups. Here are the basics on passing along skills:

- Prep Meeting to Discuss the Skill to Be Learned
- Apprentice Observes Coach Doing the Skill
- Follow-up Conversation to Discuss How the Skill Was Done
- Apprentice does the Skill While Coach Observes
- Follow-up Conversation to Discuss How the Skill Was Done

This process can be repeated until skills are learned.

“Mentors are people who can readily see potential in a person. They can tolerate mistakes, brashness, abrasiveness, etc. in order to see people develop.”

Robert Clinton, The Making of a Leader

Section Four:

The Coaching Conversations

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #1: The Heart of a Leader

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ Humility
- ❑ Servant Leadership
- ❑ Personal Walk with Christ
- ❑ Leading from Quiet
- ❑ Results of Godly Leadership
- ❑ Being a Lifelong Learner

Scriptural Support:

- ❑ Humility – John 15:16
- ❑ Servant Leadership – John 15:13
- ❑ Personal Walk with Christ – John 15:5
- ❑ Leading from Quiet – John 15:4
- ❑ Results of Godly Leadership – John 15:8

Questions Concerning The Heart

❑ Humility

- Where does the authority of leadership come from?
- Where do you see God at work in your ministry?

“Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which I was also laid hold of Christ.”

Paul had a proper understanding of maturity. Maturity is not something that can be obtained. We must all continually pursue God. In this passage, Paul said that he had not taken hold of God's righteousness. He, just like us, had not been made perfect.

- What do you do to remain humble in your walk with God?
- How have you seen pride damage your walk with God?

☞ KEY: We were chosen and appointed by God to bear fruit. Ministry begins not with human activity but with God.

❑ Servant Leadership

- Why is servant leadership essential to Christian leadership?
- How does a good leader lay down their life for others?
- Discuss examples of Jesus living this out.

☞ KEY: When we sacrifice our lives, egos and even ministries for the sake of others, we show them our love for them and for God.

❑ Personal Walk with Christ

- What do you do to abide in Christ daily?
- What are some things that pull you away from Christ?

☞ KEY: If you think that you will naturally grow toward Christ, you are wrong. You must be intentional to grow in your walk with Christ.

❑ **Leading From Quiet**

- What role does prayer play in your life?
- How do you feel that God speaks to you?

🔑 KEY: Never underestimate the power of prayer.

❑ **Results of Godly Leadership**

- What does a fruitful ministry look like?
- Where do you feel that God is bearing fruit in your life and ministry?

🔑 KEY: God has a plan and a dream for your ministry. It is His glory and fruitfulness that He desires.

A Continuous Learning Attitude

- ❑ We must remain humble as we look at what we know.
- ❑ We Must Press On Toward Maturity

Pressing on is a life long process. Paul challenges us to have the same attitude as his in Phil. 3:15. Pressing on is not always easy, but we must not give up. Pressing on does not only mean facing obstacles, it also speaks of consistency, persistence and a life of learning. To press on, we must learn how to continue growing in all stages of life. Each of us face similar situations in our faith journey.

We face exciting times of growth and God's activity. We wish all our times were like these. However, we need to be careful that during these times we don't get spiritually lazy.

- When did you last experience a time of growth and God's hand actively working in your life?
- What did you do to not grow lazy or did you grow lazy?

We face times of suffering and faith challenges. These are times we wish we could avoid. While these times are tough to live through, they are fertile ground for spiritual growth. The key to continued growth during these times is to search for God's hand and purpose in the suffering or faith challenges.

- When is the last time you experienced a time of suffering or faith challenges?
- What helped you to see God's hand through your struggles?

We face times of feeling distant from God. These are the times that we feel distant from God. In the midst of these times, we long for God's activity in our lives. The key to continued growth during these times is to pursue God even if he seems as though he cannot be found. Changing your routine can help refresh your walk with God.

- When was the last time you felt distant from God?
- What did you do to restore the closeness?

Maturity is Found In Pursuing God for the Long Haul

If the Christian life were a sprint, many could run to win. But the Christian life is more like an up-hill marathon than a 50-yard dash. It is going the extra distance to pursue God and to apply his Word to our lives that results in ministry. For runners to finish strong, they picture the finish line. The finish line provides a reason to keep going. For us, the finish line is two-fold: the righteous life that God wants for us on earth and our perfection in heaven.

- What legacy do you hope to leave at the end of your life?
- What distracts you from seeing the finish line?

“...I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing knowledge of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and may count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in him...” Philippians 3:8

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #2: The Vision Talk

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ McLean Bible Church's Vision/ Frontline's Vision
- ❑ Vision for Small Groups
- ❑ Core Values
- ❑ Being a Vision Caster

Moses, Vision, and MBC

❑ **Moses caught a God-sized vision.**

God gave Moses a vision of a new life in a land of milk and honey in which they would be free from oppression and connected to the greatest power in the universe.

MBC, and Frontline too, have a God-sized vision. That vision of MBC is to Impact secular Washington with the message of Jesus Christ. Frontline's vision is to take each young adult to the next level in their relationship with Jesus Christ. To help achieve this vision, small groups exist to "build relationships through a community of small groups by creating environments that inspire growth to maturity in Jesus Christ".

- How is our vision similar to the vision God gave to Moses?
- Why is our vision considered God-sized?
- What about our vision catches you just as Moses was caught?

❑ **Moses articulated the vision.**

In Exodus 3 and 4, Moses debated the vision with God because of who he was and his apparent lack of abilities to lead the people. But God gave him Aaron to articulate the vision. God has given us tools to articulate and stay tied to our vision as well. The core values exist to flesh out our vision and to ensure that we do not sway from God's call.

- Which of the core values do you find to be most important to achieving our goal?
- One of our values is to build Biblically functioning communities. What are some qualities of a Biblically functioning community?
- Another value is to create a safe place to experience God. How do small groups fit this?

□ **Moses implemented the vision.**

As Moses took action on God's vision, he met much opposition. His followers were not strong in their faith. They complained continually, doubted and resisted God (and Moses). He had to confront the Pharaoh to release his people. He was forced to flee from the Egyptian armies and then he and his people lived in the desert for decades. When Moses faced each of these difficulties, his personal will vanished as he surrendered his personal goals, desires and dreams in favor of those provided by God. As you face the challenges of implementing the vision, you must surrender your goals, desires and dreams to those provided by God just as Moses did. One way to stay convinced of God's vision for us is to share it with others. Sharing the vision does two-things: 1. It is a reminder to you and 2. It spreads the vision to others.

- What can you do to continually remind yourself of the vision that God has given us?
- How can you continually cast the vision of small groups?

“Moses caught the vision, articulated the vision and implemented the vision based on his faith and wholehearted trust in an omnipotent and loving God.”

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #3A: Relationship with God

“If you take care of the secret stuff, all else will break open in its own time.”

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ Worship
- ❑ The Word (choosing curriculum)

Nurturing Life’s Most Important Relationship – Ephesians 5:1-10

- ❑ **The Basis of Our Relationship (Ephesians 5:1-2)**
Our relationship is based on God’s love and Christ’s sacrifice for us.
- ❑ **The Nature of Our Relationship (Ephesians 5:1-2)**
Because of Christ’s love and sacrifice, we relate to God as a dearly loved child who seeks to imitate Him and his Son’s actions.

Building the Value of a Growing Devotion to God in Your Group

Share With Them What You Do in Your Personal Time with God

- ❑ Let them know what works for you.
- ❑ Admit your struggles.

Invite them to Sit with You at Frontline

- ❑ They will see and follow your example in worship.

Build the Value of Accountability in Your Group

- ❑ Consistently ask them where they are growing in their personal devotion to God.

Choosing a Study

As a coach, you will help groups to choose curriculum. This is a difficult role at times because you do not know the group members and their needs, but it is essential to help the leaders choose curriculum.

Considering God

Encourage groups and group leaders to pray about the study they should begin. This process should begin weeks in advance to the actual need.

Considering the Group

- ❑ Where are group members in their lives? What issues are they struggling with?
- ❑ What is the background and knowledge of the group?
- ❑ What is the groups overall spiritual maturity? Are they mature Christ followers, new believers, seekers?
- ❑ How long have group members been together? Have they bonded?
- ❑ What are group member’s interests in type and content of study?
- ❑ What focus did group choose in their covenant that could help in choosing a study?
- ❑ Does the group need to study something they don’t want to?

Groups that are new might want to begin with a topical study or book. In time, groups should move to more frequent study of books of the Bible.

Considering the Leader

- Previous experience
- Strengths, life experiences, interests
- Personality and gifts

As the leader's leading ability grows, studies should move toward more in depth inductive study.

Considering Logistical Constraints

- Number of weeks you want to spend on a study
- Time you want to spend each meeting
- Amount of homework group members are willing to do

Shorter studies with less homework work better as the group is forming and building relationships

Guidelines for Choosing a Good Study

- Doctrinal purity
The study should be Christ centered. Avoid topics or studies that will polarize your group.
- Relational in nature
Every study must have a personal, sharing component.
- Application oriented
Remember the goal is action and accountability not just knowledge.

Creating a MAP for Your Meeting

Me first: Study preparation begins personal preparation.

- Pray and ask God to teach you first.
- Study the lesson.
- What is the author's main point?
- What was the one key thing that hit you?
- How does it correlate with the rest of your study material and/or Scripture?
- Apply the study to your life.

Aim: Develop a plan for your lesson with an aim in mind.

- What speaks most directly to what you and your group members are struggling with?
- What in this lesson will enable group members to relate to God more deeply?
- What do you want group members to take away from the lesson and apply to their life?
- What questions will best help you reach your objective?
- What Bible passages will you use?
- How long do you want to spend on each section of the study?
- What supplies will you need for the study?

Knowing where you're going with a lesson will help you to stay focused through the midst of discussion.

Place: Prepare a proper place for small group meetings

- Comfortable
- Conducive to authentic, transparent communication
- What does the seating arrangement at your small group say about your teaching style?
- Consistent with start and end time
- Orderly yet flexible

Sample Small Group Schedule:

7:00-8:00	Eating and Hanging Out
8:00-8:45	Bible Study and Sharing
8:45-9:00	Prayer
9:00-whenever	More Hangout

A Word of Caution: Just because you've planned a great lesson doesn't mean that's where God is going to take the lesson. Be prepared to follow God's lead in the meeting itself. If something in the passage really speaks to several of the group members and the group wants to explore that aspect of the lesson, be flexible enough to guide discovery in that area.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #3B: Relationship with God

“If you take care of the secret stuff, all else will break open in its own time.”

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- Prayer

Why is it important to pray for one another in small group?

- Prayer helps us know God and experience spiritual growth in Christ so our relationship with God and each other will deepen as we pray.
- Faith grows as God answers prayers.
- Scripture commands us to pray for one another.

Prayer in small groups can be one of the most terrifying experiences for group members who are not accustomed to praying out loud in groups. As the group leader, there are several things you can do to help the prayer and sharing time be more meaningful to all your group members, regardless of whether they are afraid of praying or sharing aloud or not.

1. Never make anyone pray out loud.

- Avoid “going around the circle,” especially when your group is new. Ask for volunteers to pray to open the meeting or to pray for a specific request. Don’t assign people, until there is safety in the group.
- If you have someone in particular that you would like to pray, ask him or her before the meeting.

2. Vary your prayer and sharing time.

- Creativity and variety will help your group from getting “stuck in a rut” and will help group members explore variety in their personal prayer lives.

3. Help group members understand prayer better by talking specifically about what prayer is and what it is not.

- Incorporating spontaneous prayer into your meeting will help group members be more likely to incorporate prayer spontaneously through their day. Prayer is not confined to a specific time, either in our personal lives or in the group meeting. NEVER be afraid to stop and pray for the lesson or a need that comes up. Never be afraid to stop to praise God.
- Encourage group members to share their feelings with God. Just as a good friend likes to hear about both good and bad things that happen throughout our day, God wants us to share everything with Him.
- God delights in prayer that is in His will. Study prayers that people prayed in the Bible. What did Paul pray for the churches he wrote to? Pray the prayers in scripture for group members by inserting a name in the prayer or close or open your group prayer time with a psalm or prayer from scripture.

4. Encourage group members to pray for each other outside of the group.

- As requests are being shared, ask for volunteers to pray for that request throughout the week.
- Pick prayer partners so that each group member knows that someone is praying for them.
- Ask for a volunteer to e-mail group requests and praises to the entire group. It can be encouraging to look back over a month of requests and praises and see all that God has done in your group.

Creative Prayer Ideas:

Sign-in Prayer Requests: If your time is limited, a sign-in system can help the group spend less time explaining prayer needs and more time praying. Have a sheet of paper ready and ask people to write down their requests as they arrive or before the meeting begins. During prayer time, read each item aloud and ask someone to pray about it.

Popcorn Prayer: Short one-word or one-phrase prayers that “pop” around the group meeting like popcorn in a popcorn popper. Start the group off by explaining popcorn prayer and then choosing a focus, for instance, attributes of God or ways He has provided for the group that week. This is especially effective if you have group members who are afraid to pray because no one is saying long prayers, no one is forced to pray at a certain point, and people can share exactly what is on their heart. They also don’t have the pressure of having to remember everything they have to pray for.

Focused Prayer: Instead of praying for all the requests intermittently, focus the group’s prayers by guiding them through focused prayer. Pray for all the requests that relate to people’s family relationships and then move on to work relationships and then move on to your group members’ relationships with God. You can start each section by saying something simple like, “God, we lift up our family relationships to you”. Group members can then insert specific prayers as God lays them on their heart.

Pray Scripture: Some of the most effective, confident and empowering prayers that can be prayed are straight from Scripture. Choose a passage of scripture such as Colossians 1:10-12, Philippians 1:9-11, or Ephesians 1:15-19. Use the passage as a pattern for intercession and pray through the passage for each member of the group. By using Colossians 1:9-12, for instance, you may pray that Sue would “bear fruit for the Lord in her work, grow in her knowledge of Him in her study, and be strengthened with endurance and patience in her family and home.” God is committed to working in our lives; by praying His commitment back to Him, we can be assured that our prayers are in His will.

See the results: Help group members to see God’s ultimate purpose by visualizing what answered prayers will look like. (Be careful, though, that you don’t perpetuate a “name it and claim it” philosophy of prayer.) For instance, if someone your group has been praying for is struggling with eating disorders and self-confidence, ask them what it would look like for your group’s prayers to be answered. Five years from now, what will this person look like? Group members may list self-confidence, a growing relationship with God, and a willingness and eagerness to use what God has taught them to help others who struggle with identity. With a renewed vision of what God is doing in this person’s life; group members will be re-energized to pray for this situation. They will also move away from more superficial prayers to prayers through which God will work to bring about lasting life-change.

Prayer Walk: Take a walk with your group through an area of town and pray for that area. You can pray aloud as you walk or pray silently and stop periodically to pray as a group. Either way, God will use the prayer walk to open your eyes to the needs around you and to involve you more directly in His work. Go to the Capitol Building and pray for our legislators. Go to the White House and pray for the president. Take a walk through Adams Morgan and pray for the people who have come from other countries: pray for their adjustment to life in the US and that they will have the opportunity to come to have a relationship with Jesus. If you’re helping out at a homeless shelter, take some time before or after the service project to walk the surrounding streets and pray for the area.

Prayer Vigil: Participate as a group in a prayer vigil, either something organized throughout the MBC community, or something you do as an individual group. If you’re doing it as a part of the larger community, arrange to all come pray at the same time. If you’re doing it by yourselves, arrange for a different person to pray at each specific time during the vigil. You can be flexible so people can sign up for anywhere from 10 minute to 1-hour slots.

Show God: Have a “show and tell night” when group members bring a symbol of a prayer request they have. When Hezekiah received King Sennacherib’s letter threatening Israel and blaspheming God, Hezekiah took the letter to the temple and laid it out before God (2 Kings 19:14-16). Your group can do the same thing by bringing medical or car repair bills that are overwhelming them or a picture of a family member who is struggling. Bring those things before God and show Him.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #3C: Relationship with God

“If you take care of the secret stuff, all else will break open in its own time.”

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- Disciplines that Lead to Life Change

Nurturing Life’s Most Important Relationship – Ephesians 5:1-10

Disciplines That Lead to Life Change (Ephesians 5:9-10)

In Ephesians 5:3-7, Paul lists many things that can damage our relationship with God. Things such as obscenity, sexual immorality, greed, and idolatry eat away at this relationship. Because of this, we must pursue in life the things that please God. Disciplines such as prayer, Bible Study, worship, giving, solitude, accountability and others can all help you to pursue God. The proper pursuit of God will lead you to avoid fruitless deeds and to expose your never-ending need for God.

Questions to Consider Concerning Spiritual Disciplines...

- What do you do to keep growing in your walk with God?
- When it comes to life change, how effective are these disciplines?
- Are these just habits or are they disciplines that lead to life change?
- What is your biggest distraction to this growth?

Building the Value of a Growing Devotion to God in Your Group

Study the Spiritual Disciplines

- Many people do not practice spiritual disciplines because they do not know what they are or how to do them.
- John Ortberg’s, The Life You’ve Always Wanted, is a good life application study.
- Richard Foster’s, Celebration of the Disciplines is a good resource for a classic study.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #4: Relationship with Self

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- Identity in Christ

Who You Were Before Christ – Ephesians 2:1-3

- **You were separated from God. Ephesians 2:1-2**

Here is what the Bible says about you before you knew God. You were:

- Dead in your sins
- Walking in the ways of this world
- Living according to the lust of the flesh
- A child of wrath

As a result of our separation from God, we did things and had things done to us that affect our relationship with self. This damaged relationship with self is a result of many things. These may include:

- Broken or damaged family life
 - Addiction to any number of harmful things
 - Improper self image due to not understanding how God sees us
- What factors, good and bad, do you think have shaped the way that you see yourself?
 - What have you done to overcome or build upon these images?

Building a Healthy Relationship with Self Begins by Understanding Who You Are in Christ - Ephesians 2:5; 1:3-14

Our identity in Christ begins in God's mercy. *"Because of God's mercy and rich love for us has made us alive in Christ."* Ephesians 2:5

- How have you seen your new life in Christ affect how you see yourself?
- Where does the mercy and love of God need to impact you now?

Ephesians 1:3-14 serves as a good reminder of who we are in Christ. Here is what the Bible says about you after you know God:

- You have been given every spiritual blessing
 - You have been chosen to be holy and blameless
 - You have been predestined in love to be adopted as sons
 - You have been redeemed for the forgiveness of your sins
 - You have an inheritance from God
 - You have the seal and the pledge of the Holy Spirit
- Which of these things stands out to you?
 - How can realizing who you are in Christ help you have a healthy image of yourself?
 - What is holding you back from having a healthy identity in Christ?

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #5A: Relationship with One Another

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- Biblical Community
- Commitment

“The most effective way to produce Biblical community in young adults lives is through their active participation in small groups.”

Fellowship Defined

What different contexts have you heard the word fellowship used within the church?

Our all-inclusive word falls short of true Biblical fellowship or community. The early church set the example for the community that we desire. It included:

- Self Sacrifice and Giving – Acts 4:32
- Obedient Christ Followers – 1 John 1:7
- Confession of Sins – James 5:16
- Breaking Bread – Acts 2:46
- Praise of God – Acts 2:47

- How does your experience of community meet or fall short of this standard?

Biblical Community

What role do small groups play in producing Biblical community?

Small groups provide:

- A Place to be Known
- A Place to Share Needs Both Personal and Community Wide
- Accountability
- People to Do Life With
- Personal Care and Concern for All Involved

- How do you measure your group's understanding and application of Biblical community?

Commitment Breeds Community

Hebrews 10:23-25 encourages believers to hold fast by spurring each other toward love and good deeds. It challenges believers to continue meeting and not give up as some have done. Instead, they are to encourage each other. Commitment is essential in developing community.

- How have you seen the commitment level of a group affect its degree of Biblical community?

- What type of commitment is fair to ask for?
 - ❑ You can ask for commitment to the group meetings. Set this commitment in your covenant.
 - ❑ You can ask for commitment outside of group times. It is the commitment outside of group times that differentiates a great group from a good group.
- Are you setting the example when it comes to commitment?
 - ❑ Are you committed enough to the group to be prepared for meetings?
 - ❑ Are you willing to sacrifice your own needs to meet the needs of others even outside of group time?

Realize this: The amount of commitment that you ask for and live out is the amount that you will receive. If you ask for commitment and never live it out, then no one will follow. If you never ask for commitment but live it out, then no one will know what he or she is to do.

- How can you adjust the commitment level of your group so that Biblical community is evident in your group's life?
 - ❑ What can you do to live out a life committed to community?
 - ❑ What can you do to call your group to be committed to community?

Building the Value of Relationships in Your Group

Choose Curriculum that Promotes Sharing

- ❑ Remember that your group is not just a Bible study.
- ❑ Allow group members to share their "God story" as a part of the group.

Plan a Social for Your Group on a Regular Basis

- ❑ Male and Female groups can mix for socials.
- ❑ A consistent social reminds the group that they are more than a Bible study.

Protect the Groups Confidentiality

Lead your group to understand that what is said in the group stays in the group unless it is illegal or it is harmful to them or to others.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #5B: Relationship with One Another

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ Group Dynamics
- ❑ Creating a Safe Environment

Dealing with Dangerous Group Dynamics

One Person Talks All the Time:

- Ask, "What does someone else think?"
- Use body language to address other people
- Direct questions to other people by name
- Talk privately with the person and ask them to help get other involved

Some People Never Talk:

- Ask easier questions
- Direct easy questions their way
- Enlist the help of your apprentice or other group members to draw them out
- Express appreciation (both publicly and privately) for the contributions they make

The Group is Not Interested in the Topic:

- Play "Devil's Advocate" (take the opposition and make them defend what they believe)
- Ask "Why?" questions
- Drop the topic and find what interests them

A Group Member Reaches an Obviously Wrong Conclusion:

- Ask, "What does anyone else think?"
- Redirect their attention to Scripture which leads to a correct conclusion
- Speak with them one-on-one if the wrong conclusion is still held

The Group Drifts Into Irrelevant Tangents:

- Be flexible; sometimes the issues need to be discussed even though they are not scheduled
- Explicitly bring the discussion back on topic
- Agree to discuss the topic at a later date

A Difficult Question is Raised:

- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know"
- Agree to research the question and bring the answer next week

A Controversial Question is Raised:

- Set ground rules before the discussion begins
- We acknowledge that Christians hold different views on a variety of topics
- Scripture must substantiate all viewpoints
- We are not going to settle this question for all Christians for all time in this one discussion
- Focus on what the divergent opinions have in common

Creating a Safe Environment

The Definition of a "Safe Environment"

- A place where people feel loved, valued and cared for
- A place where they will be treated with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)
- A place where men and women feel free to let down their defenses and learn to be vulnerable
- A place where "masks" are removed without the fear of rejection
- A place where people feel safe at any place in their Spiritual Journey

Intimacy Stages of a Small Group

Create a Safe and Trusting Environment

As people share, leader affirms the one who shared and encourages other members to do the same.

Group Learns to Care for Each other

As group members get to know each other, they begin naturally caring for each other. If this is not happening naturally, the leader needs to model it.

People Begin Taking More Risks

As people begin to regularly care for each other, intimacy will continue to develop in such a way that deeper sharing begins to occur.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #5C: Relationship with One Another

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ The Inevitability of Conflict in Community
- ❑ Conflict Resolution vs. Conflict Management
- ❑ The Call to Forgive

Conflict Does and Will Happen Even in the Best Group

- ❑ Conflict is a result of our fallen sin nature.
- ❑ When sinful people relate to each other, conflict is inevitable.
- ❑ Conflict is not to be avoided.

The Difference Between Conflict Resolution and Management

“Loose ends are those interpersonal problems between Christians that remain unresolved.”

Jay Adams, The Christian Counselor's Manual, p. 52

- ❑ **Conflict management can occur in minor or short-term conflict situations.**

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13

- ❑ **Conflict resolution takes place if the offense cannot be overlooked or if there is no repentance.**

“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive them.” Luke 17:3

- ❑ **Steps to Biblical conflict resolution**

1. One person must go to the other person privately. (This may be more than one meeting.)

“If it possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Romans 12:18

If there is repentance, then the relationship is restored and a brother is won back.

2. If there is no repentance, one or two others come along side and seek reconciliation.

These people serve to mediate the conflict and make every effort to see resolution.

This may be multiple meetings over an extended period of time.

If there is repentance, then the relationship is restored and a brother is won back.

3. If there is no repentance, then the leaders of the church seek reconciliation.

These mediators come with the authority of the church and use every means possible to resolve the conflict.

If there is repentance, then the relationship is restored and a brother is won back.

If there is no repentance, then fellowship from the offending party is cut.

“Reconciliation is the answer to loose ends in interpersonal problems between Christians.”

Jay Adams, The Christian Counselor’s Manual, p. 53

Keys to Confronting Others to Resolve Conflict

- ❑ **Deal with the Conflict One-on-One**
“If a brother sins against you, go to him privately and confront him with his fault. If he listens and confesses it, you have won back a brother.” Matthew 18:15
- ❑ **Check Your Motives to Ensure That You Are Speaking the Truth in Love**
“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom...” Colossians 3:16 (LB)
- ❑ **Treat Others with Respect**
“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...” Matthew 7:12
- ❑ **Be Gentle and Ready to Forgive**
“Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Most of all, let love guide you...” Colossians 3:13-14

Resolving Conflict in a Group

Because people are central to our ministry, conflict is bound to occur.

Conflict may arise in groups for a variety of reasons:

- Group members have different expectations or feelings as to how the group should be led
- Leader and apprentice are not communicating to each other or the group
- Individuals in group have unresolved conflict among themselves
- Members of the group are not living up to the commitment they agreed upon in the covenant
- The leader, apprentice or a group member may be living in an unrepentant sin pattern

Matthew 18 serves as our authority and guide to resolve conflict.

In Matthew 18, Jesus explains what we are to do:

1. Go to the person individually
2. If they do not respond the first time, then take someone else with you to win them back.
3. If situation is not resolved, take it before the church.
4. If still unresolved, restrict fellowship.

While the process outlined in Scripture is straightforward and seemingly simple, it can get complicated.

Remember the following as you apply Matthew 18 to group life:

- Visit Group
Visiting the group will allow you to see what is going on first hand. This is essential if there is conflict between a leader and apprentice or between group members.
- Hear Both Sides of the Story
Hear both sides of the issue before you take action on the presumed conflict. Sometimes the basis of the conflict is from misunderstandings or from incorrect assumptions about another's thoughts or feelings. Many times, the issue is clarified by simply hearing from all parties involved.
- Seek God's Direction
Pray that God will show you what he is doing in this situation. Study scripture to see how others dealt with similar issues.
- Act When the Iron is Hot
Meet with leaders soon after dealing with conflict so that the issues are still fresh. Those involved will be motivated to change if you meet quickly rather than allowing time for the situation to "cool down."
- Guide the leader as he or she resolves the conflict.
- Keep Staff Informed
Keeping the staff informed provides two things: 1. Their prayer and support of you as you deal with the conflict and 2. Awareness of issues should their involvement be necessary in any way.

Encouraging the Leader in the Midst of Conflict

A few encouraging words from the coach can help the leader properly respond to conflict:

- Remind them that conflict is not a sign that they don't have the skills to lead
- Let them know that even the best groups experience conflict
- Help them to see the benefit of properly dealing with the issue

Preparing the leader with this before conflict occurs will help them better deal with conflict when it does arise.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #6: Relationship with the World

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ Evangelism
- ❑ Service
- ❑ Gifts
- ❑ Open Chair

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age” – Jesus Christ, Matthew 28:19-20

Your Life Mission – 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

God has shaped you to serve him:

- ❑ You have been created for ministry. (Eph. 2:10)
 - ❑ You have been saved for ministry. (2 Tim. 1:9)
 - ❑ You have been called into ministry. (1 Peter 2:9-10)
 - ❑ You have been gifted for ministry. (1 Peter 4:10)
 - ❑ You have been authorized for ministry. (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - ❑ You have been commanded to minister. (Matt. 20:26-28)
 - ❑ You are to be prepared for ministry. (Ephesians 4:11-12)
 - ❑ You are needed for ministry. (1 Corinthians 12:27)
 - ❑ You are to be rewarded according to your ministry. (Colossians 3:23-24)
- How have you seen God’s hand shaping your life to serve him?
 - Where is God currently working with you to shape you to serve him more?

Our Common Mission – 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Even though each of our ministries is unique, we do have a common, central mission. We have been commissioned as Christ’s ambassadors.

- What does it mean to be Christ’s ambassador?
- How would our lives be different if we lived in this way?

Our Motive and Methods – 2 Corinthians 5:14

We are motivated by love. Small groups are created to be a safe place for people to think through faith issues. Frontline is also motivated by love to go out to the world in service projects, mission trips, and evangelism opportunities.

- When is the last time you reminded your group of the need to share Christ’s love with the world?
- When is the last time that you modeled this love by leading them in a service project?

Our Message – 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

Our message is controversial, foolishness to some, divisive, and risky but at the same time, our message is life changing, hope giving, and worth the risk. The fact that one died for all is a message that our world must hear.

- How can we tell God's story to the world around us? What works for you?
- When is a verbal witness required rather than a lifestyle witness?
- What roles do small groups play in sharing this message?

Building the Value of Evangelism in Your Group

Choose Curriculum that Promotes Evangelism

- Do a study on grace
- Study contemporary issues in evangelism
- Study Jesus' reactions to various people groups

Continually Apply the Bible to the World Around Us

- Continually look for ways to show Christ's love and example to the world around us.
- Ask good questions, "How would you explain grace to a non-believer?"

Lead Your Group in Service Projects

- You must set the example in showing Christ's love for the world.
- Consistency is the key. Service projects are not reserved just for the holiday seasons.

Pray for Lost People by Name

- An empty chair in the room can be a simple reminder to pray for those who don't know God.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #7: Reproducing Yourself

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ Discipling
- ❑ Mentoring
- ❑ Apprenticing
- ❑ Application Process (Has Apprentice completed?)

What is the Role of a Leader in Working with an Apprentice?

- ❑ Assess the apprentice's strengths, weaknesses, and motivations.
- ❑ Encourage, develop and utilize areas of strength in the apprentice.
- ❑ Address areas of weakness and devise a plan for development.

How Can I Assess My Apprentice?

- ❑ **Observation**
 - Observe your apprentice's interaction with others at group and outside of group time.
 - Note your apprentice's leadership style.
 - Discover your apprentice's love language or motivation to serve.
- ❑ **Have Intentional Conversations**
 - Ask them what they consider to be their strengths and weaknesses.
 - Help them to develop goals and strategies to develop leadership and interpersonal skills.
 - Dig into group life and personal life issues as you are building your relationship.
- ❑ **Use Tools Offered Through Frontline**
 - Encourage them to attend SHAPE if they have not done so.
 - Ensure that they have completed a leadership application.

☞ KEY: Look not only for ways that they can add to the group's leadership. Look also to ways that you can help them grow as Christ followers.

How Can I Encourage, Develop and Utilize Areas of Strength?

- ❑ **Delegation**
 - First tasks delegated to them should be in the area of their strength.
 - Challenge them to train someone who is not strong in those areas (maybe you).
 - Encourage them to stretch and continually develop and use their strengths in ministry.
 - Point out to them the strengths you see in them.
- ❑ **Help Your Apprentice Find Someone That They Can Invest In**
 - Remember, you cannot disciple everyone in your group. Share the task.
 - The person that your apprentice chooses may become their apprentice at some point.
 - Every group needs multiple apprenticing so that "branching" can occur.
- ❑ **Use Tools Offered Through Frontline**
 - Encourage them to attend VHS and Small Group Leader Training.

☞ KEY: Use your apprentice's strengths to feed your group and help them discover God's dream for their life.

How Can I Address Areas for Development in the Apprentice?

- ❑ **The Necessity for Evaluation**

Addressing Development Points:

- ❑ Builds the apprentice's confidence because you are investing in them and they are working on their weaknesses rather than ignoring them.
- ❑ Sets the example for other group members to address and deal with their weakness.

- ❑ **Require Apprentice to Apply What They Have Learned**

This will allow you to re-assess your apprentice. Their confidence will be built, as their weaknesses become their strengths. Remember that one of the most important things that a leader and apprentice can do is pray for and with each other.

Lifecycle of Leader Apprentice Relationship

- ❑ Leader Tells – Leader Does
- ❑ Apprentice Tells – Leader Does
- ❑ Apprentice Tells – Apprentice Does
- ❑ Apprentice Does – Leader Evaluates

- Which stage of the lifecycle are you and your apprentice in?
- Which stage would you consider your strength?
- What is your plan to move through the lifecycle?

⚡ KEY: Roles of leader and apprentice become the same and then reverse.

The Coaching Conversations

Conversation #8: Reproducing Your Group

Keys to Include in This Conversation:

- ❑ Importance of Branching Out
- ❑ Developing a Plan for Branching Out
- ❑ Tips to Making Branching Easier

The Challenge to Branch Out

- ❑ **We must branch out to obey the command of Christ.**

Jesus' call to reach and teach the world today still stands. We must continually reach out to new people so that our groups share life rather than becoming holy huddle cliques.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"- Matthew 28:19

- ❑ **We must branch out to share community.**

Branching out allows new people to connect to community. With the key role groups play in the life of MBC, branching out will keep others feeling accepted and welcome and will ensure life change is happening throughout the church.

- ❑ **We must branch out to see life change in others.**

Branching out brings life change on many levels. New leaders are challenged as they accept the call to group leadership. Current group members are energized as they see new life infused into their group as a result of branching out. New group member's lives are enhanced as they experience community, maybe for the first time.

☞ KEY: The call of Christ cannot be ignored especially in light of the benefits of branching.

The Process of Branching Out

- ❑ **Know the proper time to branch out.**

Branching out at the proper time is key to the health of both the existing group and the newly formed group(s). The best time to branch out is during the "growth phase" of your small group. It is strange to think that just when your group begins to "click" you should be talking about branching out, but it is the best time to talk about sharing community with others. The time to branch out should come only after the group has spent time in prayer about it.

➤ Where is your group in the small group life cycle? (see page 62)

- ❑ **Understand your leadership needs.**

Branching out takes leaders and leadership. For two groups to form from one, 2 leaders and two apprentices are needed. A leadership structure like this allows for both groups to start with a full leadership team.

➤ What potential leaders do you see in your group?

- ❑ **Realize the emotional trauma of branching out.**
Realize that when you ask people to branch out, you are not only asking them to reproduce their Bible study group. You are asking them to change their biblical community, which provides their encouragement, accountability and spiritual feeding. This will cause people to react differently. Prepare yourself to deal with reactions so you can make the process as positive as possible. See the “Tips for Easing Branching Pain” for ways to help deal with this emotional trauma.
 - How will the members of your group respond to the idea of branching out?
 - Who in your group will have a severe reaction to branching out?

Developing a Plan to Branch Out

Use the following time line as a guide for creating your own plan.

- ❑ **Continually Cast Vision (Throughout the group’s life)**
When the group forms, cast vision for branching out. Once the group is established, every time the purpose of the group is discussed, the concept of branching out should be presented as something that will happen in the future so that others can connect to community.
 - When is the last time you cast vision to your group concerning branching out?
- ❑ **Recruit Leaders to Branch Out (6 months before the group branches)**
Recruiting this far out will allow you to test their leadership and it will allow other group members to trust them before the transition of leadership occurs.
- ❑ **Shared Leadership of Group (6 months before the group branches)**
At this time, the leadership of the group should be shared between leader and apprentice. Consistent leading by the apprentice will help the transition be less painful when it occurs.
- ❑ **Communicate with Coach (Continually, but especially 2 months before branching)**
Let your coach know of your plan so that the small group staff can know when your group plans to branch out, to provide names of potential new group members.
- ❑ **Begin to Prepare the Group (3 months before the group branches)**
Let the group know that the time for change is approaching. A study on sharing community or making a difference in the lives of others can spiritually prepare the group. Ask the group to pray about their attitude and role in making this transition happen.
- ❑ **Set a Date to Branch Out (2-3 month before the group branches)**
Setting a firm date will be tough but it will allow the group to enjoy its last month together and it will help the group look forward to the change. This is important to making it happen.
- ❑ **Celebrate the Life of the Group (evening of the branching out)**
Use this time to thank God and each other for the difference that the group has made. This will also serve as a great night to pray for the new people that will join the group.

Tips for Easing Branching Pain

Pray Personally and as a Group

Cast vision of Great Commission

Plan Ways to Stay Together After the Group Branches Out

- ❖ Schedule a service project or social one month after branching.
- ❖ Branch more gradually, but having both groups meet in one location for the first month, fellowshiping and praying together, but split into different rooms for the study.

Take Time to Listen to Group Members Who Have Issues With Branching Out

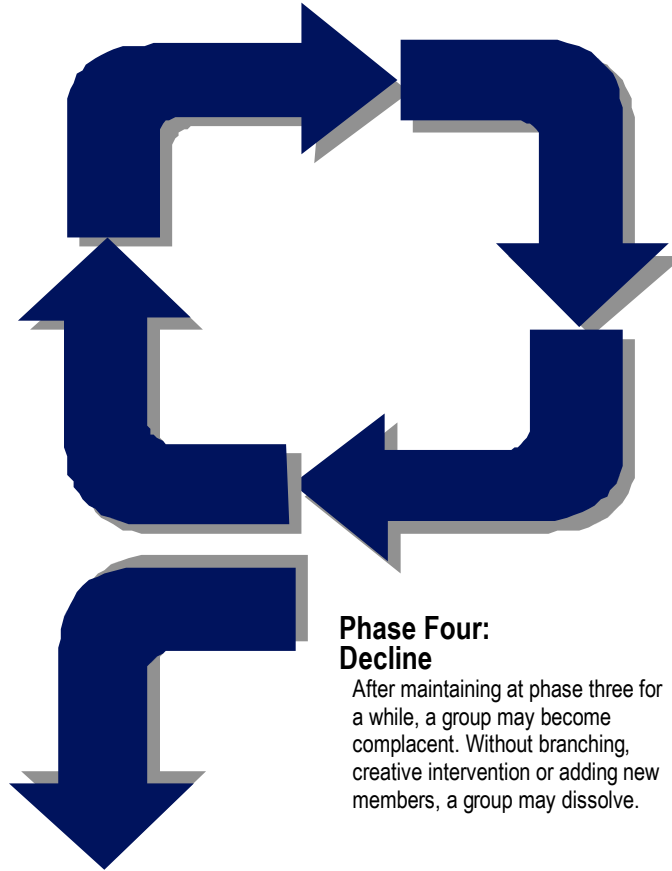
The LDG Life Cycle

Phase One: Get to Know

Your group is brand new. Group members are excited but do not know each other yet. Morale is high.

Phase Two: Risk

Someone in the group takes a risk, shares something painful, confronts another member, etc. The members distance themselves or decide to move deeper as they count the cost.



Phase Four: Branching

The group multiplies to include more people and to begin the life cycle again.

Phase Three: Growth

The group's goal is to reach and maintain this phase. It is characterized by direct honest communication, expression of authentic feelings, loving confrontation and faithful support.

Phase Four: Decline

After maintaining at phase three for a while, a group may become complacent. Without branching, creative intervention or adding new members, a group may dissolve.

Implications of the LDG Life Cycle

- | Community takes time to develop.
- | Risk taking can either build your group or destroy it.
- | Risk taking leads to authentic, Biblical community.
- | Groups who refuse to branch cannot avoid the decline phase.

Additional Resources

What to Look For In a Leader

Guidelines for Leadership

1. **Dependence Upon God**
Is this person's life marked by their devotion to God? What disciplines do they practice to continually grow in their walk with God?
2. **Positive**
Does the person have a positive outlook on life? Do others view them as positive? Is that outlook anchored in their trust in the Lord?
3. **Teachable**
Does this person have a teachable heart? Are they in any way contentious or rebellious against authority?
4. **A Desire to Learn and Grow**
Along with a teachable spirit, do they desire to know God better...to grow in their spiritual life...to develop their gifts, skills and abilities?
5. **Good Character**
Is this person known for their character by both Christians and non-Christians? Are they above reproach, sexually pure, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, able to manage their household, not conceited... (1 Timothy 3)
6. **Exhibit Fruits of the Spirit**
Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.
Not the Fruits of the Flesh
Sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness... (Galatians 5)
7. **Able to Work with Others**
Are they able to correct and guide others with gentleness and love? Are they themselves able to be corrected?
8. **Interested in Reaching Out to Others**
Do they take a genuine interest in others? Do they desire to reach out to others?
9. **Have they been responsible with little tasks?**
How have they served God in the past? What have they learned from those experiences?
10. **Able to forgive others and work through conflict?**
When it comes to conflict, do they run from it or run to it? Are they "minimizers" or "maximizers"?
11. **Willing to serve others?**
Do they want this position to fulfill a need for positional power or as a place to serve others?
12. **Available to serve others?**
Do they have the time to spend with people? If God has called them to this ministry, are they willing to sacrifice to make leadership a priority?
13. **Is this the ministry capacity in which God wants them to serve at this time?**

Becoming an Small Group Leader

Here is the process for people to become leaders.

1. Interest Expressed

- Potential leader contacts staff or coach.
- Potential leader is approached by staff.

2. Contacted by Staff or Coach

- Explain the application process.

3. Potential Leader Reviews the Leadership Packet

- Seeks to understand qualities of a leader and commitment made to leadership.
- Fills out questionnaire and returns it to LDG staff for review.
- Has reference forms completed and returned to LDG staff for review.
- LDG AA makes a file for the potential leader's information.

4. Meet with Staff or Coach

- Review the leadership materials with the potential leader.
- Cover these keys in the interview:
 - Talk about their God story.*
 - Discuss prior small group experience or leadership.*
 - Explain how God has matured them and where is He is currently working.*
 - Clearly define the LDG vision and goals.*

5. Final Recommendation by Staff and Coaches

- Pray and seek God's direction.
- Discuss leader's strengths and weakness (if known).
- Suggest an invitation to leadership.
- Suggest a growth plan for those who are not extended an invitation to leadership.

6. Contact Potential Leader

- If invited to serve, register them for the next LDG training.
- If invited to serve, discuss timetable to start the group and group formation meeting.
- If invited to serve, let them know about VHS and other coming training events.
- If not invited to serve, meet face to face to explain why invitation is not extended and give a plan for growth so that leadership can occur or provide other ministry opportunities more suited for applicant's gifts.

7. Communication Between LDG Ministries Concerning New Leaders

- Place in an appropriate coaching team.
- Obtain names of potential group members from small group staff
- Add to Leadership Directory, Database, E-mail List.

Vision and Values

Vision of McLean Bible Church and Frontline

The vision of McLean Bible Church is to impact secular Washington with the message of Jesus Christ.

The mission of Frontline is to take young adults to the next level in their spiritual journey with Jesus Christ.

Our Core Values and Eternal Values

The vision of our church incorporates 10 Core Values and 10 Eternal Values.

Our Core Values

1. People matter to God and to us.
2. The Gospel message transforms people's lives.
3. The goal of our ministry is to transform people into fully devoted followers of Christ.
4. Ministry and evangelism must be carried out in a relevant way.
5. People must be treated gently and respectfully.
6. People need to be connected to a caring community.
7. Every Christian has a God-given ministry.
8. Everything we do for Christ must be done with excellence.
9. Our church must have an evangelistic impact on our community.
10. To accomplish our mission, we must be willing to step out in visionary faith and take risks for God.

Our Eternal Values

1. The Bible is inerrant and infallible.
2. The Bible is the guide for all faith and practice.
3. Where the Bible is clear, we will be emphatic. Where the Bible is silent, we must allow people freedom.
4. Jesus Christ is God in human flesh.
5. All people are eternally lost; salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ apart from human works.
6. Jesus Christ is the head and authority of the church.
7. All ministry that is effective must be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
8. God moves in response to our united and personal prayer.
9. The glory of God is the motive of our ministry.