

Identifying Potential New Group Leaders

A foundational principle of CCN is expressed in our church mission statement: "To develop and deploy..."

Jesus modeled leadership development with the twelve disciples, and Paul encouraged his disciple Timothy to do the same (2 Timothy 2:2).

Ephesians 4:11-12 makes it clear that leaders have a duty to train and empower God's people to serve the body (do ministry).

In *7 Deadly Sins of Small Group Ministry* Donahue and Robinson note, "The decision to put people into the pipeline is commendable, but you will have far greater success if they are the right people."

1. What do the following verses tell us about how to identify spiritual leaders?

- I Samuel 16:6-7
- Mark 10:43-45
- Luke 6:12-16
- II Timothy 2:2
- I Peter 5:1-5

2. What is the difference between natural talents and spiritual gifts in leadership? Share examples.

3. Who takes the group seriously – attends consistently, prepares, engages in discussion, etc.?

4. Who speaks up and challenges your leadership? (Note: These may be frustrated leaders.)

5. Think through these spiritual, emotional, and social qualifications. Don't expect perfection.



Spiritual

- Do they see God working in their lives?
- Are they self-feeders?
- Do they spend time alone with God regularly? Are they eager to learn?
- Who is faithful, available, and teachable?



Emotional

- Do they seem secure, honest, and transparent?
- Are they emotionally stable?
- How do they respond to confrontation?



Social

- Do they participate without dominating?
- Are they able to listen?
- Do they reflect a love for people? Do they care?
- Have you observed in them gifts and orientation toward others?
- Do they seem relationally healthy when interacting with others and describing their relationships with key people (such as spouse, children, parents, co-workers)?

Developing New Group Leaders

The success of any ministry or church depends on the quality of its leaders and the development of new ones. This certainly fits within Covenant's mission statement: *"We will develop and deploy fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ to disciple our family, community, and world."*

Put simply, it is our mission to "Develop & Deploy." Jesus modeled this with the Twelve. Paul did this and then exhorted Timothy to do the same (cf 2 Timothy 2:2). Ephesians 4:12 affirms this, as well.

It is the goal of our staff and leaders to equip and mobilize the body of Christ (the Church) to do the work and share the joy of ministry.

We cannot over-emphasize the value and need of prayer in identifying and raising up the next generation of spiritual leadership.

The Principle of Multiplication

New group leader development uses the principle of multiplication. For example, an effective evangelist who reaches 1,000 people a day for Christ could win the world to Christ in 13,515 years. But a very effective disciple who teaches and trains two people a year to reach others for Christ has to potential to spread the message to the world in 33 years!

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES OF NEW GROUP LEADERS:

Love and serve the people in the group

- o New group leaders are probably already serving and caring for people in the group
- o Recognize this, encourage it, and prompt them with additional opportunities

Learn from the leader and assist in some of the easier tasks

- o Help new group leaders to understand the basics (Five Roles) involved with leading

Lead the group in the discussion on an occasional basis

- o Ask a new group leader to lead all or part of an upcoming study
- o Offer to meet with them in the week before the meeting and prepare together

Look for his or her own future new group

- o Involve new group leaders in assessing the spiritual maturity of people in the group
- o Find out who they think is growing spiritually and may be ready to help more in the group

Objections New Group Leaders Often Share And How to Address Them

"I don't have the time..."

- Cast vision for their own life transformation (share your experience).
- Share the vision, the value, and the need for spiritual leadership and their part in God's big plan.
- Gently remind them that people prioritize what they find important, and this will naturally fit into their schedule.

"I don't have the gifts of leadership..." or "I don't know enough..."

- Remind them that leadership is mostly about character and skills. Knowledge can be learned over time.
- Remind them that they would not be a teacher but a facilitator.
- Tell them they will be trained and shepherded throughout

"I'm not a leader..."

- Explore this; maybe they don't have a healthy view of leadership, especially spiritual leadership.
- If you know of another leader who has a similar personality style, background, or interests, consider setting up a lunch or breakfast with that person and your potential new group leader to talk through experiences and tips for growing into leadership.

"Just clear out of the way and let me lead..."

- Sometimes new group leaders seem over-eager to lead. That's not all bad. Try to direct the enthusiasm in a way that benefits the person and the group.
- Telling someone to "slow down" or "learn more before you lead" can be hard. Meeting privately and asking questions might help them develop. Here are some ideas:
 - "What would be your plan for accomplishing...?"
 - "How would you have handled the question _____asked the other night?"
 - "What do you think will be needed to help _____grow spiritually this year?"
 - "Who has helped disciple and train you spiritually? How did they go about it?"