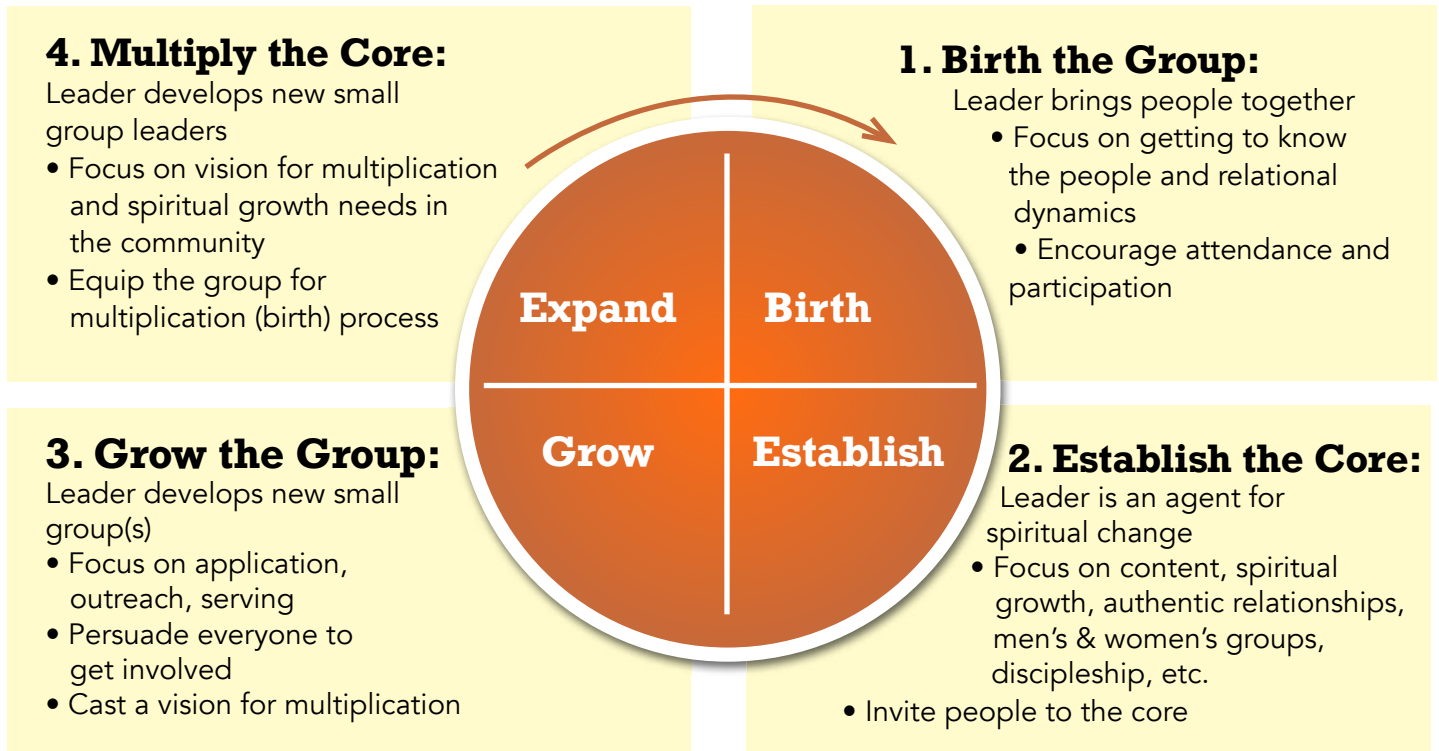


Understanding the Small Group Life Cycle



Starting the Group

Launching a new group is often the difficult part. These steps will help. It is okay (even preferable) to start with just 3-4 couples.

- Look around your current spheres of influence for potential members (i.e. – work, neighborhood, activities you're a part of). Make a list of potential people you'd like to invite.
- Pray for those people to join.
- Have your plan and details nailed down – more people will respond to a clear plan.
- Set up a casual but intentional time and make the personal invitation.

Growing the Group

Once the group has launched, encourage and challenge the members to invite others to join you. Think about how Andrew opened the door for Peter to meet the Messiah.

Use the empty chair model.

At each meeting, place an empty chair in the room and remind everyone that the chair(s) needs to be filled.



Multiplying the Group

Just like physical birthing, there is an element of pain and sadness. When one group becomes two, it often feels like saying good-bye to a close friend or as if something is being lost. However, it also produces joy and celebration as we follow Jesus' strategy for Kingdom advancement.

When a group grows too large (say greater than 14) and there is capable leadership available, whether a new group leader or a leader taking a break – it's time to start the birthing process.

(See appendix F, p. 68)