



GROUPS MATTER.

Seven Practices of Leaders Who Make Apprentices

How should churches go about helping leaders make leaders who effectively carry out expectations?

BY: *Rick Howerton*

FROM: *GroupsMatter.com/Launch*

There is much debate today concerning the role and title of a person who shepherds a small group. Some small group pastors have concluded that a “host” is what is necessary, someone to open their home, have some snacks, and see that each aspect of the small group meeting is experienced. And according to the culture that many churches are in and the goals they have for each group, this is a viable and effective point person for a small group.

Other churches aspire to have each group led by a “leader,” an individual who would be perceived as the pastor of the small congregation that is their small group. In most of these churches it is also the responsibility of the leader to mentor a new leader from within the group.

So, how should your church’s small group point person go about helping leaders develop apprentices to eventually lead new groups? A few suggestions:

- 1.** Make each small group leader aware of this expectation when recruiting them to be a leader. If this requirement is thrown at them after they have been recruited, the small group leader may never embrace the opportunity they’ve been given.
- 2.** Make each small group leader aware that the most important role they fill in making a future leader is to be a role model for that person.
- 3.** Each small group leader should make the apprentice they choose aware of the role they are learning to carry out. The apprentice needs to know that the bar is much higher than teaching a class or being a host, that they are going to learn to be a leader, and that this will require being willing to do what is necessary to learn leadership.
- 4.** Educate the small group leader concerning how to teach skills. Learning a new skill requires a method that works. Teach your small group leaders to,
1) Model the skill, 2) Let the apprentice try it while the leader watches,

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3) The leader affirms them for what they did well, then once again models what wasn't done correctly, 4) The apprentice carries out the skill again while the teacher watches, 5) The teacher affirms them for what they did well then once again models what wasn't done correctly, etc... Practices 3-5 are repeated until the apprentice gets it right then the teacher sets them free to do this skill on their own.

5 Create opportunities for group learning experiences, apprentice alongside the leader who is training them. Do this during huddle meetings, set aside

- specific training experiences for this, or take leaders and apprentices together to a small group conference.

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6 Encourage small group leaders to give more and more opportunity to the apprentice to lead during small group meetings. They should meet with the

- apprentice following the meeting or in the next few days to affirm them for what they did well and graciously point out what they could do better and how to do that better.

7 Give the small group leader and apprentice books written with the small group leader to read that will help them on their journey together. A few

- suggestions would be: *How to Lead Small Groups*, *Simple Small Groups*, *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups*, *How to Lead a Great Cell Group Meeting*, *Destination Community: Small Group Ministry Manual*. ■