

Preparing your team for multiplication

The following resource is for leaders to prepare their team for division and multiplication to birth two groups from one and move to separate locations. The following can be used by leaders as a teaching tool or to formulate a discussion with group members in preparation for this necessary transition for Small Groups in growing churches:

A growing church must have a strategy or model to multiply Small Groups:

Groups that grow over 10 are too large for leaders to coordinate adequate pastoral care, it reduces personal sharing and restricts potential new leaders from stepping up into leadership roles.

Option 1 (old model): At regular intervals all Small Groups members are returned to a large pool whereby groups are redistributed to leaders in groups of 6-8. This principle in theory provides good group multiplication but has several **disadvantages**:

- Relationships which have been built between group members which promote open discussion and growth are lost and have to be rebuilt in the new group.
- Leaders have to rebuild relationships with their team.
- It allows the opportunity for people to fall off the radar as the leader does not yet have a personal relationship with new members.
- As the church continues to grow this option becomes logistically too difficult to coordinate.

Option 2 (large church model): As each group grows to 10-12 the group plans for a transitional division producing multiplication of one group into two. The group divides into two rooms at one venue with the existing leaders and the new leaders overseeing half the group each. This process would take place over at least four weeks but up to one term. The advantages of this model are as follows:

- At least five members in each new group have already been together in the previous group which helps to maintain an environment which continues to promote open discussion.
- The leader of the new group will in most cases have developed in the original group and has had the opportunity to begin to build relationships with the people they will oversee.
- The original leaders who will continue leading half the group remain at the venue to maintain a period of support to the new leaders and provide a smoother transition for all group members.
- The large church model creates opportunities for new leaders to be trained up, running the occasional session, and taking on leadership responsibilities in a

supportive environment while being mentored by existing leaders. **2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)** *Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.*

- Group members are carefully and prayerfully distributed between the original leaders and newly appointed leaders in consultation with the Small Groups Pastor. This planning would take place over a period of time prior to the beginning of the transition process. This gives group members time to adjust to the idea of division and multiplication.

“The gestation period for healthy groups to grow and divide ranges from four to twenty-four months. The more frequently a group meets, the sooner it is able to divide. If a group stays together for more than two years without becoming a parent, it stagnates. Research indicates that groups that meet for a year without birthing a daughter cell only have a 50 percent chance of doing so. But every time a cell bears a child, the clock resets. Thus a small subgroup can remain together indefinitely and remain healthy and fresh by giving birth every few months” (Carl George, Church Growth Consultant)