

Community Groups Ministry

Identify an Apprentice

Purpose

As we excel in welcoming new people and helping them see the need for biblical, life-transforming community, the demand for Community Groups increases drastically. Who will lead these new groups? We will always need to develop new leaders to take on the incredible task of leading Community Groups! As each Community Group leader identifies and develops an apprentice leader, we will not only meet the future demand for Community Groups, but we'll continue to multiply disciples and leaders for Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:2).

Desired Result

Each Community Group leader identifies an apprentice leader and has a simple plan to multiply in the future. This is the single-most important action step we can take to ensure we're welcoming all new people into a Community Group. We can't launch Community Groups without Community Group leaders. If we wait for people to volunteer to lead, or we rely on a few people to recruit new leaders, we will always have a shortage of Community Groups. The best future Community Group leaders are those who are currently experiencing life-change in their own Groups.

How Do I Identify an Apprentice?

Look for a teachable group member who has the potential to be a good Community Group leader. You're looking for people who are teachable and willing, not perfect. We are here to help, you are not walking alone. As you start to identify an apprentice reach out to your coach or Crossroads Leadership to support you in this process.

Ultimately, these three C's will help you prayerfully consider who in your group may be a good apprentice leader:

Character

- Determine if your potential apprentice has established a personal relationship with Christ, is growing in that relationship, and is growing in biblical character.
- Your potential apprentice's character is a model for others to follow.

Culture

- Is your potential apprentice aligned with the mission, vision, doctrine, and leadership direction of our church? Has he or she completed Discover Group and become a Partner of Crossroads Church?
- Can your potential apprentice embrace the leader's primary role of facilitator, not teacher or counselor?

Competence

- Is your potential apprentice teachable and able to learn the skills necessary to create authentic biblical community where spiritual growth can occur?
- Does your potential apprentice have the relational skills to effectively lead a group in the future?
- Have you seen your potential apprentice display leadership skills such as facilitating group discussions, planning socials, providing care, or hosting the group?

How Do I Recruit an Apprentice Leader?

- Have a direct conversation with a potential apprentice. Tell them that you picture them as a new Community Group leader. Ask them to enter a simple process of starting a new group sometime in the future.
- Let them know that apprentice leaders need to be teachable and willing, not perfect.
- Invite them into a time of assuming agreed-upon leadership tasks and learning by doing.
- Be clear on the commitment to branch out and lead a new group sometime in the future.
- Ask them to prayerfully consider what God would have them do and then follow up with them.

How Do I Develop an Apprentice Leader?

People grow into leadership positions by doing leadership responsibilities. However, “learning by doing” isn’t enough. We need encouragement and honest feedback if we expect to grow as leaders. An apprentice learns from another by observing, following examples, trying leadership tasks, and then receiving encouraging feedback and input.

Simple Five-Step Apprenticeship Tool:

1. I do. You watch. We talk.
2. I do. You help. We talk.
3. You do. I help. We talk.
4. You do. I watch. We talk.
5. You do. Someone else watches.

Possible Leadership Tasks for Your Apprentice:

1. Facilitate the discussion. Lead the group through a sermon series, topical focus, or church initiative.
2. Host the Community Group time.
3. Lead the group in prayer, worship, praise, or sharing.
4. Lead a group service project.

How Do We Start New Community Groups?

There are numerous ways to multiply new Community Groups. These approaches fall into two major categories. Both categories require apprentice leaders and very careful communication within the group.

1. Launching Model

The existing group leader or an apprentice leader commits to be “sent out” by the group to start a new group sometime in the future. Members of the existing group may or may not follow the leader being sent to start the new group.

2. Multiplying Model

The group plans to form two or three new groups from the existing group. Members of the existing group are encouraged to prayerfully consider which new Group they will connect with.

Communication Is Key!

- Good communication starts with you and your apprentice. Be sure that there is clarity and an excellent understanding before you move forward.
- As soon as you have identified an apprentice and established a commitment, inform the group and begin to talk about multiplying in the future. Assure the group members that this won't happen immediately, but the group will work together on a simple plan of action. This could take months, or perhaps even a year as you seek God's timing for launching a new group.
- Talk often about multiplying. Work on a simple plan that the group supports.
- When the group draws closer to the launch date, give people choices on how they want to be involved. Avoid assigning them to a group when you branch. Don't mandate that they go or stay when sending out new group leaders.
- Celebrate Community Group multiplication!