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## What is Discipleship Part VIII

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### How Do I Recruit Leaders?

So, how do I recruit disciplers? The best way to catch new people into your Bible Study is for you and your members to invite their friends. **Advertising creates awareness, personal invitation creates participation!** Another good way to recruit and train Bible study leaders is a “mentor approach.” This means to have a primary lead person for each group alongside a secondary lead person. As the group grows, it can be divided into two, and the secondary lead person would become a primary lead person for the new group. Then, a new secondary lead person would be recruited for each group, and so forth.

Once you recruit the leader, partner them off for a few weeks in another Bible study so they can “get the feel” and give them the training booklet. This provides the model and experiences the leaders will need to have to reproduce the group. Then, meet with them to answer any questions; get their feedback and go over the basics so they have the vision and purpose down. Then, you can supervise, solving problems where and when they occur, reinforce, encourage, and put together more training as you go and grow. Have seminars once or twice a year with all leaders and potential leaders for further training, such as, *how to resolve conflict, and how to interact with the different personality types, how to outline Scripture...*The curriculum’s in this channel (Serendipity also has good resources for this as does Navigators, Inter Varsity and Campus Crusade.) You cannot just give them a book, no matter how good it is; personalized instruction and encouragement is essential. If you have a small church and limited resources, partner with other churches and do one together.

- It is absolutely essential that you be willing and able to weed out people who should not be leading groups. Have them do a personality inventory such as Myers Briggs, and a Spiritual Gifts inventory ([Spiritual Gifts Discovery Workshop](#) ). Get to know the people who are responsible to care for the flock. You want the flock properly cared for and not fleeced!
- A true leader, one who is in Christ, will have the characteristics of Servant Leadership, an essential trait... see our leadership channel.
- What should you watch out for? People with wrong or ulterior motives for being in leadership, being over-zealous to lead, spiritually immature and/or a lack of willingness to grow, distrust or dislike for authority, or a personality that seems unstable.
- Is experience required for the leader? No, as long as the attitude and willingness to learn and grow are there, he can learn as he goes. Make sure he gets extra support, mentoring, and prayer (John 1:12).
- Having a method of handling conflict resolution is paramount, and will solve most future problems and issues. Firstly, identify the conflict and the responses from each side and listen carefully to them with encouragement and understanding.

Secondly, explore a Biblical model of conflict resolution. Thirdly, integrate Biblical knowledge in a step-by-step fashion. And, fourthly, help teach the parties *conflict resolution* to prevent a repeat of such instances in the future. I sometimes bring other staff or other people in if required. I try to eliminate any misunderstandings and have the attitude for a win/win solution.

- Having a conflict-free environment will enhance recruitment greatly, because nobody wants to work in an atmosphere of strife! Alongside this, it is essential to have a Biblical Vision and Mission Statement, so everyone will be on the *same page* of what we do and why we do it ([How to Develop and Cast your Vision](#)).
- Have a public reporting of your progress and growth in the church newsletter!

### **A practical Plan for any function in the Church**

**Objective:** To have a practical, continuing plan for recruiting volunteers in your ministry.

Most churches have a “hunting season” or peak times where the Nominating and or Recruiting committees mass their campaign to lasso people to fill their needed spots. But, do not rely on this; people who are shy, or feel they are inadequate may hide during this time. Recruiting should be a year round process. Finding volunteers successfully is by relational means, person to person, rather than just public announcements and big campaigns. These indirect methods do not work well because people tend to be very busy and/or stay away. They will often glance over, or not listen to the announcements or advertisements. The ones who do read and listen to them are often already so busy they cannot give much more. So, what do we do?

### **Ideas to consider and apply to your ministry:**

1. **Prayer:** Establish a prayer group whose specific task or one of their main tasks in prayer is to pray for staffing needs and their care!
2. **Personal Advertising:** This is the least likely way to get people; however it still has a significant role, as it lets the church know of the need. When you do advertise your need, have volunteers give testimonies in writing and in public announcements. Keep them short and encouraging. For children and youth needs, have the children and youth make the proclamations! Keep them short and to the point and do not occupy too much pulpit time. Instead, go to each adult Sunday school class and do your promotion at your church’s fellowship events. Never resort to guilt trips!
3. **Literature Advertising:** As the above method, this is not very effective, but is still necessary to get the word out so people will start thinking about it. Advertise in your church’s publications, in an upbeat and encouraging way. If you have the resources, consider developing an attractive brochure that tells people who are in the church as well as outside of it about the ministry and volunteer opportunities. Explain what they do and what they are about. Also, make sure you have a well-written and clear job description to give to potential volunteers, that answers common questions. This will help bring new people into your ministry!

4. **Networking:** Let the all of leaders and staff members know of the needs of one another, so to be on the lookout. People who may not fit their need may fit another leader's need! Twice a year, have all of the leaders and pastors go through the church directory and write out the names of those who might be good at different ministries. You can do this individually or together. Then compare the lists and contact the people. Work at recruiting as a team and NOT as competition! Also, new recruits and new members may know of other prospects, so encourage them to give you ideas on whom to contact. Make sure you avoid having several recruiters trying to rope in the same people at the same time. Have one leader go to them and see in what ministry they might be interested.
5. **Personal Recruitment:** The best and most effective way to bring new people into your ministry is to personally go to them "face to face!" Be on the lookout for perspective people, but, at the same time, do not be a "land shark" or "hound" people. Be warm and friendly and make sure you are interested in them as a person, not just a potential prospect! When you find someone who is interested, call then the next day to talk to them about the program, and perhaps take them out to lunch, again making sure you are interested in them, not just as a recruit. You are working for Christ, not the army!
6. **Have a plan to bring in and screen people:** Too many churches, so desperate for people, skip this crucial step, and open themselves up to potential harm as well as sin of it's people, especially the children!
  - When a potential volunteer comes to you, interview them, check their references, or question people who know them. Have a system of standards and guidelines for your ministry. In this process, be ministering and encouraging to them. Have some specific questions to give them, so they become a part of the process to interview you, too. You are interviewing them as Christ would, not an employer would, yet, at the same time, you need to be wise!
  - Give them a *Spiritual Gifts assessment* as well as your guidelines and job description. If the person does not register the gifts necessary for the position and they still desire to get involved, let them try it out. Spiritual Gifts tests are not always accurate!
  - Have them visit the ministry to see it for themselves, then re-interview them to get their feedback, interests, expectations, fears, preferences, and how they see themselves as involved.
  - Do not force them to commit; allow them time for personal prayer, reflection, and a good decision. Encourage them to make sure their family supports their decision to volunteer. You do not want to cause division or unnecessary stress on their family!
  - Get feedback from your other volunteers on whether or not they can work with this person and support them. Affirmation and support from potential co-workers who are already in the ministry is essential. Never throw people in a team without the other team members being a part of the induction process!
  - If they will be working with children and youth, make sure you follow your state's and insurance company's child abuse guidelines, such as fingerprinting, and never have one adult alone with the children. The children need to be in plain view, so have windows in the doors, etc.

- If they are unsure, allow them to try it out for a while! If it is not for them, work with the other leaders and pastors to find another ministry they might fit into better.
  - Have a well thought out orientation for each ministry for a large church or all together for a small church; keep it fun, short, and to the point. Then fold people into a ministry team of caring, enthusiastic people, with mentors to guide them. Include formal training.
  - Have a celebration for them for joining the team, such as treating them to breakfast before church or lunch after church.
  - Have a training program and/or a mentoring person assigned to them.
  - Make sure you have a prayer team to keep this person in prayer!
  - If it does not work out, if they do not feel comfortable, encourage and support them, even if they need to check out another team or ministry!
7. **Ongoing Affirmation:** There is a direct connection between the time and effort you put into encouraging people and their loyalty and length of their stay with you. Those nice, warm hearted notes, calls, and visits of encouragement and support are essential to turn a short term volunteer into a long-term commitment! You can never say "thanks" too often or adequately enough!
8. **Commitment to Servant Leadership:** It is your job to facilitate and model trusting God and one another. You must be committed to a stress free environment in your team relationship! A good leader will always be actively listening, and courteous. Your appreciation, love, and recognition of their contribution will encourage respect for one another because, as a team, you are growing together!
9. **Be committed to clear communication!** You should have no hidden agendas. Be open and honest! Your sole agenda is to please God!
10. **Evaluation:** Have a non-threatening, encouraging, positive way to evaluate the effectiveness of the volunteers. People will serve you longer and better if they know where they stand, and have a sense they are doing a good job!
11. **Celebration:** Find various ways to publicly and privately reward your volunteers, especially those who have served long and faithfully!

**Now go and do as Jesus called you to do!**