

Top Tips for Small Group Ministry

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Start as you wish to continue. However you start this ministry is generally how it is going to carry on. Mid-course adjustments are harder than one would expect. Design your ministry so it is a long term, integrated dimension of your ministry. This is not a time saver ministry. All the energy you put in now will need to be maintained forever. It never goes on auto pilot.

Develop in-house leadership training capacity. Outside leaders can provide facilitator trainings to help you start, but you absolutely must develop an in-house system for continually identifying, mentoring, recruiting, and supporting new group leaders. This is the engine behind small group growth. No leadership development process? Your ministry will stagnate and the groups will often become a liability.

Make it official. Whatever model you are using, whatever plan you have for supporting and training leaders - make sure you document it and get it approved by your board. Create a "charter" document for your group ministry. If you're launching a new congregation-wide group ministry this is a huge deal and commitment. Write it up and have your board approve it.

Too late? If you didn't do all of this when you started, no worry. Revisit your vision, write up how you want your group ministry to function, including leadership development as a central dimension, and then get the board to approve it.