

Developing Leaders

'I've researched small groups around the world. Here's what I've discovered: Small groups are not the answer. In fact, there is a danger in thinking that small groups are the answer. Small groups come and go; they rise and fall over time. Unless small group members are converted into small group leaders, little long term fruit remains.' Joel Comiskey

What to look for in Potential Leaders:

Character

Firstly a Small Group leader needs to be able to demonstrate godly character. Godly character can be described under the **HIT** principle:

H umility	Do they know their need of God? Are they teachable? Are they willing to serve? Are they willing to promote others?
I ntegrity:	Are they willing to be accountable to others? Do they demonstrate a desire for holiness? Are they working to overcome sin in their lives? Are they working towards being the same on the outside as they are on the inside?
T hankfulness:	Do they show a gratitude to God for what he has done for them? Are they open to God for him to teach them? Will they be reliant on God in their role as a leader?

Competence

If someone is teachable they can be coached into the role of leader. The first stage of identifying a leader is to ask them to lead a part of a cell meeting. Their reliability and understanding can be evaluated through this. If the culture in the cell includes positive criticism and feedback, skills can begin to be developed.

Chemistry

It is very important for the group to be a place of safety where leaders can be open, knowing that there is complete confidentiality and support. If a potential cell leader is known to be negatively critical of the model, the vision or the church leaders themselves, they will destroy the unity in the leadership team. Unless they can be helped through to a place of acceptance and support it is better that they do not become cell leaders, even if they are gifted.

Life Cycle of a Small Group

Research shows that if you put people together in any group the relationships *consistently* go through a pattern. These stages have been applied to the cell model in the tables below.

	FORMING
Symptoms	Relationships forming, everyone tends to be nice and polite
Goal	Getting to know each other
Focus	Group
Problems	Insufficient time given to acquaintance making and helping everyone feel comfortable
Strategy	State purpose and goals of group. Longer ice breakers. Social events. Discuss need for trust

	STORMING
Symptoms	Arguments, unmet expectations, friction. The "ideal" fades as the reality of "this group isn't perfect" emerges
Goal	Real relationships based upon understanding and clear expectations
Focus	Self
Problems	Leader does not bring focus onto Jesus and the community He desires to bring
Strategy	Face conflict positively. What is and isn't working? Define expectations and create ownership

	NORMING
Symptoms	People supporting one another and working together
Goal	Honesty and edification
Focus	Jesus
Problems	Potential to stagnate once community formed if leader does not set goals and focus group outwards
Strategy	Facilitate use of gifts. Accountable relationships. Social outreach events. Identify potential leaders

	PERFORMING
Symptoms	Group is being effective beyond itself in touching the lives of others
Goal	Outreach and ministry
Focus	The lost
Problems	Reluctance to adapt and mature relationships
Strategy	Interest groups. Relational evangelism. Prayer walks. Develop and release potential leaders

	REFORMING
Symptoms	People understand and embrace the cost of planting new cells and forming new relationships
Goal	Smooth division and support
Focus	Growth
Problems	Be aware of ongoing needs of cell members as the focus is outward
Strategy	Plan and communicate well ahead. Celebrate growth. Create support structures for new leaders

"As you change the dynamic of the group, you cycle through all the stages again. Often not as deeply, and it won't take as long, but as a group grows, it always goes through Storming stage to get to a new phase of growth. It's helpful to know, though, that this is normal and healthy. And that it's not really an option."
 From a Cutting Edge Interview with corporate teams consultant Grace McLaren.