



THE STARTER KIT FOR MOBILIZING MINISTRY

BY SARAH JANE REINBORG

© Copyright 1994 by Leadership Network, Tyler, Texas.

This material may not be reproduced in its entirety in any form, except with the written permission of Leadership Network, P.O. Box 9100, Tyler, TX, 75711. However, Leadership Network grants permission to users to photocopy smaller sections, group discussion exercises, and standardized forms contained in the material, provided that no more than 100 copies are made, and that the copies will be used solely for nonprofit, lay ministry programs and purposes, related to the mission of the organization assuming responsibility for copying. In making copies of any part of this book, the organization agrees not to sell the copied material or reprint the copied material in a copyrighted work without the written permission of Leadership Network.

Graphic design, illustration and layout by Sheila Blakemore of Logo Company, Austin, Texas.

About the Authors:

Sarah Jane Rehnberg, Coordinating Author/Editor

Sarah Jane has devoted her career to volunteerism and the application of its principles and practices in a wide variety of settings. As an active Lutheran, she was commissioned by her Synod to analyze its 174 member congregations based upon a congregational survey. As the architect of the Texas State Plan for National and Community Service, Sarah Jane helped to bring over 2,000 AmeriCorps positions to her adopted home state. While living in her native Pennsylvania, she applied her expertise in volunteerism to the creation of award-winning middle and high school curricula for the Volunteer and Youth Training and Leadership Program, sponsored by Camp Fire International. A past president of the Association for Volunteer Administration, she identified the competencies that form the core of the profession's certification program. Along with her two sons, David and Michael Bonessi, she resides in Austin, Texas.

Brad Smith, Supporting Author

On staff with Leadership Network, Brad is responsible for developing a network of churches who are effectively mobilizing members. Brad is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and served seven years at its Center for Christian Leadership developing spiritual formation and leadership programs. As a former U.S. Senate aide, consultant to churches and businesses, and founding pastor and church planter, Brad has developed people equipping processes in a variety of settings. Through Brad, the big-picture perspective of Leadership Network is reflected in trends, structural models and various alternative approaches to lay mobilization presented in *Section 1*. Along with his wife, Debby, Brad lives in Tyler, Texas.

Sue Mallory, Supporting Author

The Director of Leadership Training Network, Sue served for eight years as Director of Lay Ministry for Brentwood Presbyterian Church. Sue currently directs Brentwood's Leadership Development & Planning Office. Founder of the Southern California Association for Lay Empowerment and Development (LEAD), Sue serves the organization as its president. The chair of the 1994 International Conference on Volunteer Administration, Sue is a sought after trainer and consultant in lay ministry program development. While she was instrumental in all sections of the *Starter Kit*, *Section 2* particularly reflects her genius and in-depth knowledge of the field. A wife, and mother of three grown children, Sue resides in Playa del Rey, California.



Welcome to THE STARTER KIT FOR MOBILIZING MINISTRY!

Starter Kit '95 is the product of Leadership Training Network (LTN), a newly established organization whose mission is to equip church leaders to mobilize laity for ministry.

Since its inception, the *Starter Kit* has been a team effort. Among the many contributors supporting the development of the manual are:

Bob Buford, the founder and chairman of Leadership Network. Bob's total commitment to the energy and potential of the ministry of the laity made this manual possible.

Steve Sheely, author of many Serendipity Press publications and an expert in small group ministry, contributed greatly with his creativity and organizational ability to the construction of Section 1 and brought many of the interactive exercises to life.

Katrina Gault, Fred Smith, and Gayle Carpenter of Leadership Network, with their attention to detail and combined facilitation, kept the *Starter Kit* on track and provided us with the resources necessary to complete the project.

Many dedicated lay leaders and practitioners in the field graciously shared their successes, their materials, and their hopes and dreams for lay mobilization. On behalf of Leadership Network and Leadership Training Network, we wish to acknowledge:

Brentwood Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, CA
Crystal Cathedral, Anaheim, CA
Los Altos United Methodist Church, Los Altos, CA
National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC
Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, PA
Saddleback Community Church, Mission Viejo, CA
West Side Presbyterian Church, Ridgewood, NJ

For providing support and guidance in the development process, we are most grateful to: Marlene Wilson, President of Volunteer Management Associates and author, Boulder, CO; Gayle Hardaway, Highland Park United Methodist Church, Dallas, TX; and Doris Pierson, National Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C. Each offered the wisdom acquired through considerable experience in the field and provided comments and recommendations critical to the formation of *Section 2* of this manual.

We hope that you will find *Starter Kit '95* useful as you continue to develop churches where every member is a minister.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Jane Rehnborg".

Sarah Jane Rehnborg, Ph.D.
Coordinating Author/Editor
The Starter Kit for Lay Mobilization

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Mallory".

Sue Mallory
Supporting Author
Director, LTN

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "BRAD".

Brad Smith
Supporting Author
Leadership Network

Dear Reader,

Our dream for the *Starter Kit* is that it grow and develop as the field of lay ministry management evolves. Your input will help that growth process! To ensure that future editions of the *Kit* reflect current practices and meet the needs of the churches developing lay ministry systems, we are asking for your input. Please send us your comments, suggestions, recommendations, case studies, useful forms and any advice that will enhance our materials. We look forward to hearing from you and to acknowledging your contributions in future editions.

Cordially,
The Authors

Name _____ Date of Submission: _____

Church/Organization: _____

Title/Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Best time to call: _____

Fax: _____ Internet Address: _____

I would like to share: recommendation advice
 information comments
 form/program tool concern/problem
 case study other: _____

In addition to the space below, feel free to attach additional pages of information as necessary. We're sorry, but it will not be possible to return materials submitted.

At the discretion of the *Starter Kit* authors, the information shared may be used in a future edition of the manual. Forms, case studies and program tools which are included will be credited to the church or organization originating the material.

Please mail to:
Leadership Network, Attention: *Starter Kit*, P.O. Box 9100, Tyler, Texas 75711-9100.

"A new church is being born. It may not be the church we expect or want. The church of the future may not include our favorite liturgy or hymn, our central theological principle, or even our denomination! God's promises always arrive with surprises in them. The form of the new world and new church is not in our hands.

What is in our hands is the chance to respond to God's call. To put our skills and our wills to the tasks of discerning the opportunity points, the places and times for change effort and to add our gifts to God's church in this time of change. How God uses our gifts we cannot predict."

Loren B. Mead⁵

"Leadership is about change. It is important to remember that we cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are. A prayer from the African-American church puts it well, 'Lord, we're not what we want to be, we're not what we need to be, we're not what we are going to be, but thank God Almighty, we're not what we used to be.'"

Lovett H. Weems⁷

"The creation will be forever incomplete without you, without your gift... Out of this fundamental gift will emerge perhaps many gifts. There will be many functions, though they will change from time to time. There will be motherhood, fatherhood, teaching, preaching, administration, healing. Then the time will come when we no longer exercise certain gifts, perhaps because of illness or old age, but we will still belong to the Body and more deeply than we do now, because we are grafted more deeply into it. The primary thing is the gift of the person, regardless of his function."

Gordon Cosby²

"In particular, there is a disjuncture between the stated purpose of the Christian church and the way it is organized locally. Form does not follow function. The church exists for mission, for the sake of the world. Yet it is organized to build itself up as an institution. It draws people to itself, but fails to send them back out. It blesses the work its members do within the institution, but pays no attention to the work they do 'outside' the church."

Devida Foy Crabtree¹

"The issue is not that we have pastors (pastor-equipppers are biblical), but the problem is that we have divided the body of Christ into over-worked leaders and passive pew-sitters and put an unscalable wall between them. The laity have been convinced that it's all right to just sit back and give up their ministries, their freedom, their fellowship with other Christians, their priesthood as believers. The pastor has been turned into the CEO of the church— something Scripture does not teach."

Gene Edwards and James Rutz⁴

"There are two churches: the Church, the institution and the Church, the People of God. In the Church, the institution, there are two orders, clergy and lay. In the Church, the People of God, there are varieties of gifts and functions. The two are NOT identical. The institution is the earthen vessel in which the treasure is kept. It is NOT the treasure."

Verne J. Dozier³

"We ask to know the will of God without guessing that his will is written into our very beings. We perceive that will when we discern our gifts. Our obedience and surrender to God are in large part our obedience and surrender to our gifts."

Elizabeth O'Connor⁶

¹David Foy Crabtree, *The Empowering Church* (Washington DC: The Publications Program of the Alban Institute, 1989), p. xii.

²Gordon Cosby, *Handbook for Mission Groups* (Washington, DC: The Church of the Saviour, no date), p. 24.

³Verna J. Dozier, "Towards a Theology of the Laity" *Alban Institute Action Information Newsletter*, (Washington, DC: September 1978), p. 1.

⁴Gene Edwards & James Rutz, "What You've Never Been Told About Your Church" *Interest*, (Vol. 2:2, February, 1985) from summary of article appearing in *Current Thoughts & Trends*, Vol. 2:2, February, 1985.

⁵Loren B. Mead, *The Once and Future Church* (Washington DC: An Alban Institute Publication, 1991), p. 87.

⁶Elizabeth O'Connor, *Eighth Day of Creation* (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1971), p. 15.

⁷Lovett H. Weems, Jr., *Church Leadership* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), p. 38.

"WHY BUILD A LAY MOBILIZATION PROGRAM?"

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ...We will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Ephesians 4:11-16, NIV

Building a Lay Mobilization program is hard work. Why do it? Why devote the effort and the resources to develop lay ministry at your church?

This section of the *Starter Kit for Lay Mobilization* will answer those questions by addressing the following topics:

- What Is Lay Mobilization?
- Lay Mobilization as a Common Thread among Healthy Churches
- Characteristics Shared by Churches with Effective Lay Mobilization Programs
- What Is the *Starter Kit* and How Do I Use It?
- What Are Some Next Steps to Be Thinking about after the *Starter Kit*?

WHAT IS LAY MOBILIZATION?

What is Lay Mobilization?

Church leaders want to see members ministering according to their gifts. Members want to know how they can use their gifts in ministry in the church, the community and in their daily lives in the marketplace and family. How can you, a church leader, make this a reality for your church?



Without the computer, the screen and the keyboard that make up your information system, you would not be able to run the software packages that are so useful in church operations and management. Likewise, the *Starter Kit* represents the "hardware" of your lay mobilization system. The *Starter Kit* is open-ended guide book. It is not tied to any particular "software" program, curriculum, gifts assessment program, Bible study or small group plan. You may add these components to your system once you have your "hardware" operational. A strong, effective lay mobilization system needs both a solid basic foundation and customized programs that best fit the needs of your church.

Lay mobilization occurs through thoughtful, purposeful planning. *Section 1* of the *Starter Kit* takes the work of laying the foundation for a lay mobilization system and breaks it into manageable, sequential pieces. It helps you ask the right questions, and leads you and your leadership team to key decision points to create a system that will guide people to understand their gifts and use their gifts in their area of calling. The goal of the *Starter Kit* is to help build the church into the body of Christ "that grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work." (Ephesians 4:16)

The job of mobilizing the members to ministry requires the church to develop LEADERS and SYSTEMS. This is a tall order and an order not fulfilled with just one "new program" or any sort of quick-fix. Lay mobilization is a mind-set, a vision, AND it is a system. Lay mobilization is more than volunteer management; it is more than in-depth Bible study; it is more than gifts assessment; it is more than prayer; it is more

BUILDER'S NOTE:

Which is it, a Program or a System? While the Starter Kit asserts that lay mobilization, is in fact, a SYSTEM, most people more readily grasp the idea of "program." Furthermore, it is usually more plausible to introduce a program into the life of the church than to speak of developing new systems or restructuring the church. Gradual approaches are generally easier to start and manage. Therefore, the Starter Kit is based on the belief that while lay mobilization is in fact a system that will eventually permeate the entire operation of a congregation, the concept is more easily understood in programmatic terms.

Lay mobilization is church members understanding their gifts and living out their calling in every area of their lives. The Starter Kit helps churches build effective **SYSTEMS** and train **LEADERS** who cause lay mobilization to occur.

than small group experiences; it is more than worship and music. While it is more than all of these things, it requires each of them and more.

Lay mobilization is about becoming intentional in helping people grow towards maturity in the body of Christ. It is about building an umbrella of systems and supports that encourage people as they grow in a faith enriched and made real through ministry, and Christian fellowship. It is about being there for each other in time of question and need, it is about being there in celebration and joy. It is about being there for each other as Jesus Christ builds our unity.

Lay Mobilization is about:

- mobilizing Christians in service
- ministry—working through God's power and gifts to build his kingdom
- management systems and structures to support and enable people to come to understand their role as ministers and to identify opportunities to serve
- casting vision, selecting leaders, forming committees and creating administrative structures
- resources—finding your way into and through the maze of books, programs, tools and opportunities available to churches serious about creating lay ministry programs
- hard work, prayer, fellowship and fun
- “walking the talk” and helping every member to be a minister
- empowering *both* clergy and laity to use their gifts
- Christians becoming active in today's world
- preparing people for whole life ministry—in their churches, communities, families and workplace

What is the *ultimate* goal of a lay ministry program?

True False

- To meet the need for workers in the various programs of the church.
- To care for the underprivileged and displaced of the community.
- To engender more ownership in the church.
- To increase retention and giving.
- To provide personal fulfillment through ministry.
- To help individuals mature spiritually by using their God-given gifts to serve each other and the community, so that the whole church can attain the maturity that God intended.

LAY MOBILIZATION IS A COMMON THREAD UNITING SUCCESSFUL CHURCHES.

A healthy church takes many forms. At first glance, the churches that are the most visible and most often imitated seem to be widely different. Yet, in the midst of these differences, a common thread emerges.

The Small Group Movement:

The recent emphasis on small group ministry creates a structure by which each member is shepherded in a small group of ten or less. The various tasks of small group leadership are broken down according to the skills and time availability of the participants. Lay leaders can take active roles without intensive training or a seminary commitment. **The result is that many people are recruited and trained to minister to others.**

The "Seekers-Church" Movement:

Among the best known of the seeker congregations, Willow Creek in South Barrington, IL, creates a place where Christians can bring their non-believing friends to an environment that makes it easy for them to understand and be attracted to the gospel. The key is not the style of music, nor the drama, nor the sermon, although each is important and done exceptionally well. **The key to its success is the seeker church's ability to provide**

TOOLBOX



REACHING THE GOAL: MINISTRY IN DAILY LIFE

The ultimate objective for the Christian is that all of life—home, work, service and leisure—grows out of a faith commitment and reflects an understanding of one's personal relationship with God, a relationship where each member is gifted and called to be a part of the body.

Although such a broad perspective seems natural, most members need support as their faith grows and matures to this understanding. A thoughtfully developed lay ministry program, undergirded with solid Biblical study and Christian education, provides the graduated, sequential approach necessary to reach this level of commitment. Until members **actually experience** themselves as gifted and see the relationship between their gifts and their service as called Christians, the larger understanding is strictly theoretical. Lay ministry provides the foundation necessary for growth in faith.

"Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does..." James 1:22-25

a place where the whole church community uses their gifts to attract non-believers, overcome objections and model the Christian lifestyle. The seeker church enables lay persons to use their unique evangelistic ability to draw people to Christ without extensive training.

The Bible-Teaching Movement:

The best examples teach their members to study and apply the Bible on their own, in their families and small groups rather than remain dependent upon audience-centered events and "professional" teachers.

The Worship Movement:

Using either traditional or contemporary styles, churches excelling in worship have learned how to involve the whole congregation rather than putting on a "show" up front. In each case a participatory environment is created drawing people into the life and work of the congregation through manageable, yet challenging tasks, each utilizing the gifts and skills of the members.

Characteristics Shared by Churches with Effective Lay Mobilization Programs.

Whether it is a contemporary or traditional church, congregations with healthy lay mobilization programs seem to share similar characteristics, which can be found where effectiveness, health and the released energy of the Holy Spirit come together. This meeting point intersects where lay persons are given a place to use their gifts in a natural way, contributing to the overall work of the body of Christ. Christians grow in faith as they serve together, share their journey, gain Biblical insights and become deeply involved in ministry.

In connecting the vectors of effectiveness and health in innovative churches, three trends repeatedly emerge.

Innovation, health and effectiveness come together at the point of lay involvement.

First, the person always shows strong, top-level support for lay mobilization. The senior pastor, the staff and the leadership board understand, support and, most importantly, champion the program of lay involvement. The vision is repeatedly cast from the pulpit and supported through ongoing Christian education. Church bulletins and newsletters endorse the effort. People are affirmed and recognized for their involvement. Bulletin boards chronicle new events. Church leadership actively celebrates participation. The level of support also includes providing adequate resources to effect a lay mobilization effort and churchwide visibility for the program.

Second, there is always an identifiable leader or team of leaders pointing the way and implementing the involvement process. Sometimes an exceptional Director of Children's Ministry has organized lay involvement in the children's area and has expanded this skill to other areas in the church. In other cases it may be the Director of the Small Group Ministry Program who has expanded his/her role, implementing a churchwide lay involvement program. Some churches have hired a person to mobilize the laity and have named the position Director of Lay Ministry, Volunteer Ministries Director,



Director of Leadership, Equipping Pastor, or Spiritual Gifts Minister. God finds many ways to bring a church into this movement, but it almost always results in a key person or team being designated and vested with the authority, responsibility and resources needed to manage a churchwide lay ministry program.

The three critical components of successful programs of lay involvement:

1. Supportive pastoral and board leadership in casting the vision and providing resources adequate for success.

2. An identifiable leader, or team of leaders, with the authority and responsibility to run a program.

3. A comprehensive system which includes preparation and development of members, thorough administrative systems, staff support and involvement, and celebration of success.

Third, successful programs require comprehensive systems that allow members to grow into a readiness to serve and to develop and mature as Christians through their service. Participation is more than simply a new class or a program to incorporate members into a new ministry area. New members' classes, Biblical study to equip members, gifts seminars and matching systems are integral parts of the process, but none is sufficient in itself. A complete system involves new and existing members, sets the context for service, supports a discovery process, matches members to service based on their gifts, places members in ministry opportunities, coaches their involvement, and celebrates service as an avenue for spiritual growth. Successful lay participation is integral to the structure and operation of the church; it is not just one more program among many within the congregation.

WHAT IS THE STARTER KIT FOR LAY MOBILIZATION?

It Is a Manual:

The Starter Kit For Mobilizing Ministry is a manual designed to help churches think through ways to move proactively in the direction of starting a lay ministry system or enhancing an existing effort. It is written in three sections, each addressing a specific concern. The first section, to the senior pastor and church leadership, provides information about laying the foundation and guidance in assessing your current organizational structure as you make plans for the future. The second section, for the director of the program, provides hands-on help in building a program that meets the unique needs of the congregation. The final section offers resources and references to augment the effort and provide technical assistance.

The blueprint and construction theme of the *Starter Kit* is taken from Ephesians 4:11-13: "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers, **to prepare God's people for works of service**, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

It is the role of church leaders to help members find their place of service and to help them succeed in ministry. As this happens, the whole church matures. The *Starter Kit* is intended to be a tool to help church leaders carry out this task.

It Is a Flexible Guide:

Whether you are starting from scratch or improving an existing program, there needs to be a clear picture of how the pieces fit together. One congregation may select to expand its Christian education program or add a hands-on service component to its discipleship program. Another may decide to conduct gifts-assessment seminars to help members identify their gifts and talents. For some congregations, lay involvement may be closely connected with small group ministry. Each of these is a good place to start, but each will fall short of its potential if not seen as part of a larger whole.

The *Starter Kit* aim is to provide the conceptual framework and the "drafting tools" that will allow your church to create a comprehensive system to support its unique approach to member involvement. The emphasis is practical and open-ended rather than step-by-step because each church will need to personalize its own system. Lists and multiple sub-sections allow you to read the information needed to meet specific program concerns.

WHO IS THE STARTER KIT FOR?

- **Independent and denominational churches alike.**
Some churches work through established committees while others are less formal. The *Starter Kit* focuses on shared theological principles and provides a framework for discussion and strategizing so each church can develop its own, customized approach.
- **Churches of all sizes.**
Large churches may have more detail in their programs, but the basic components of the lay involvement system as explained in the *Starter Kit* must be present in a church of 50, as well as one of 5000.
- **Churches with a clear vision of every member as a minister.**
This *Starter Kit* is for those churches that are ready to IMPLEMENT a lay involvement system. Preaching and teaching the importance of lay involvement is vital since an effective lay ministry system must build upon the vision of the senior pastor, the key leadership and the congregation to equip the "priesthood of all believers." The *Starter Kit* focuses on the steps to put a program in place as the church leaders teach the underlying theology of lay involvement.

HOW IS THE STARTER KIT ORGANIZED?

The *Starter Kit* has been developed in three, stand-alone sections. Each is separately numbered and can be read independently of its companions.

Section 1

To the Leadership Team: The Pastor & Leadership Board

Section 2

To the Director of Lay Ministry: Mobilizing for Ministry

Section 3

Resources and References

Through its terminology and graphics, the design of the kit reflects the construction theme of Ephesians 4:12 "so that the body of Christ may be built up."

Builder's Notes:

clarify concepts and offer variations on a theme.

Contractors' Conference:

offer discussion questions for the leadership team.

Building Blocks:

organize program development steps.

Toolbox:

related concepts, ideas, useful suggestions

TOOLBOX



A WORD ABOUT WORDS

It is unfortunate that even the best available terms do not always communicate well the basic Christian beliefs about giftedness, calling and ministry. Webster's Dictionary defines "layman" as "a person...who is not an expert..." yet all believers are given unique gifts for ministry. The term "volunteer" communicates that ministry is optional, yet we know that all believers are called to be ministers. The term "mobilize" is a military term of conscripting soldiers, while God doesn't force but invites people to obedience.

Here is the Glossary for this *Starter Kit*:

Leadership Board: Churches call their leadership boards *sessions, trustees, councils, vestries* and *deacons*. In each case, they are speaking of the administrative board that oversees the life of the congregation. For the sake of simplicity, the *Starter Kit* generally refers to this group as the "leadership board."

Members: Some churches speak of *the laity, disciples, brothers and sisters in Christ*, or *volunteers*. When the *Starter Kit* speaks of "member" or "lay person," it is referring to those who are not the ordained clergy. They may or may not be on the formal membership rolls, but they are members of the church community as they attend worship, earn their livelihood in the community and struggle with their call to be Christians in a secular world.

Director of Lay Ministry: Some congregations title the position *Director of Leadership Development, Coordinator of Gifts Ministry, Equipping Pastor*, or *Director of Discipleship*. Others, to better reflect their theological understanding of lay involvement, have titled the area *Shared Ministries Program, Ministry of Equipping*, or *Gifts Ministry*. It is the leadership board's job to find the terminology that suits their church. The *Starter Kit* refers to the position of Director of Lay Ministry and to the system as a lay ministry system.

He/She: Although "his/her" is used extensively throughout the *Starter Kit*, there are times when one gender or the other might appear. Please insert the gender of your choice and recognize that we understand each congregation has its own perspective on the appropriate roles of men and women within the ministry.



SECTION 1:

To the Leadership Team: Pastor and Leadership Board

Section 1 is designed to help a church think through how to move proactively in the direction of starting a system for lay ministry or how to enhance an existing effort. It includes:

- strategy check-lists
- scriptural background
- sample job descriptions
- guidance for choosing the lay mobilization model for your church
- discussion guides
- guidance in vision casting
- recommendations for selecting a Director of Lay Ministry
- summary of current trends

Who should read *Section 1*? The senior pastor, the key leadership, members of the governing board, or committees charged with implementing a lay involvement program.

How do we use *Section 1*? As a tool to guide discussion and lay the foundation for a member-involvement system in your congregation. For example:

- your church might want to hold a two-day retreat. Prior to the retreat, photocopy appropriate sections and distribute them to your leadership team for advance reading. Use the Contractors' Conference guides to focus discussion; or
- designate the first half-hour of your governing board meeting to discuss specific concerns raised in the kit.

Be sure to appoint a member of your group to record your answers and keep records of your discussions. Feel free to skim sections that are not applicable to your congregation and to focus on subjects of greatest interest.

SECTION 1:

PART 1:
Trends Supporting Lay Mobilization
—A Market Analysis

PART 2:
The Bible—The Foundation for Lay
Mobilization

PART 3:
A Blueprint for Lay Mobilization

PART 4:
Where Are You Now?
—Surveying the Site

PART 5:
Where Do We Want to Go?
—Forming Your Vision

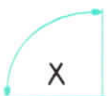
PART 6:
How Do We Get There?
—Choosing a Model for Your Church

PART 7:
Maybe We Should Remodel
—Updating Your Current System

PART 8:
Protest Signs and Picket Lines
—Obstacles to Development

PART 9:
Selecting a Director

PART 10:
Sharing Your Vision



SECTION 2:

To the Director of Lay Ministry

Section 2 is written for the Director of Lay Ministry, or the committee or task force charged with the responsibility of initiating a system. It is organized around the seven building blocks for system-wide development and offers the user information about:

- creating a Lay Ministry Committee to support the work of the director
- creating ministry descriptions to focus member service
- developing comprehensive administrative systems to ensure that members don't "fall through the cracks" or exit through the back door of inactivity
- ways to invite members into service
- guidelines for creating an interviewing system
- suggestions for working with staff and much more.

Concluding *Section 2* is a special addendum on managing transitions. Helping staff and members adjust to a truly participative church requires skill in the management of change.

Who should read *Section 2*? The newly-appointed Director of Lay Ministry or the team or committee responsible for establishing a program. Experienced directors may choose to read *Section 2* looking for ways to enhance an existing program. The senior pastor interested in the details of system development will learn what is involved in establishing a program.

How can you use *Section 2*? *Section 2* offers checklists, guides and pointers for creating a comprehensive lay ministry system. If you are just beginning a program, the section is developed in a step-by-step format that will guide your work sequentially. People with existing programs are encouraged to select topics where additional development may enhance your operation.

SECTION 2:



Vision and Context



The Lay Ministry Leadership Team



Administrative Systems



The Interview Process



Connections in Ministry



Support, Affirmation, Feedback and Evaluation (SAFE)



Celebrate and Grow



An Addendum: Change in the Church

SECTION 3:

Resources and References

Section 3 indexes additional resources in the area of volunteer management, gifts assessment systems and computer software to assist with the management and implementation of a lay involvement program. Although the written word can help many of us begin the journey of lay mobilization, the direct support available through consultants and training programs often proves invaluable. The resource section offers the reader suggestions for locating additional information and support.

What can you tell me about the groups and organizations listed in the *Resource & References* section? Since each church has different needs, it is impossible to endorse one service as the "best" for your church. You are encouraged to contact each group that you think may be of value to your church and to learn of their services or products directly.

How can I be listed in the *Resource & References* section? Please complete the entry form appearing at the conclusion of the *Resource & References* section. Organizations and service providers that devote a major portion of their business to the religious sector will be considered for listing in future editions.

Can I photocopy any part of the *Starter Kit* for others in my church? Yes, absolutely. We ask that you refer to the copyright notice on the back of the title page for restrictions and recognition requirements. Please include a copyright notice on the bottom of each page you duplicate. Let us know both what was most helpful in the early planning stages and how we might improve upon the *Starter Kit* for future editions.

SECTION 3:

TRAINING SERVICES

Leadership Training Network

Newell & Associates

Trumbauer Consulting

Volunteer Management Associates

GIFTS ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Assessment Inventory for Ministry

Birkman International, Inc.

Breakthru

DiscMin

In His Grace, Inc.

INCITE

Ministry By Design

Mobilizing Spiritual Gifts

Network Ministries International

The Profile Leadership Institute

Serendipity

SOFTWARE SYSTEMS

Logos Management Software

MicroAssist, Inc.

RUR's Volunteer EQUation EXpress

Red Ridge Software Company

Triggs Dunlevey Software, Inc.

Volunteer Management Resources

AFTER THE STARTER KIT, THEN WHAT?

The ultimate aim of this *Starter Kit* is to help churches which are implementing lay involvement systems learn from each other. In conjunction with the *Starter Kit*, a new networking organization called Leadership Training Network (LTN)² has been formed to create ongoing dialogue. Dedicated to educating, equipping and empowering leaders to effectively manage lay ministry systems in the local church, Leadership Training Network's vision is to help "prepare God's people for works of service" (Ephesians 4:12, NIV).

Leadership Training Network's services include:

Training Institutes: Five-day, interactive learning experiences offered around the country, the Training Institutes provide useful, hands-on instructional support to enable Directors of Lay Ministry to return to their churches prepared to initiate or enhance their program of lay ministry. Advance-level experiences are being developed to complement the basic institute.

One-Day Forums: Working with its sponsor, Leadership Network, LTN hosts one-day programs to help church teams assess what is involved in developing or expanding a lay ministry program. Participants are introduced to the seven building blocks for lay ministry program development and initiate a planning process for their congregation.

The Starter Kit for Lay Mobilization: Under the umbrella of Leadership Network and LTN, the *Starter Kit* will be revised and updated periodically to, reflect developments in the field and new standards of practice.

Consultants and Support Services: Consultants are available to work directly with churches, assisting congregations in the implementation stages of program development, or with trouble-shooting concerns. Arrangements are negotiated individually.

Plans include a national conference on lay mobilization, periodic newsletter updates and networking with service providers to augment and enhance lay mobilization efforts.



To be added to LTN's mailing list or for more information call 800-765-5323.

²The Starter Kit and Leadership Training Network are sponsored by Leadership Network, a nonprofit, private operating foundation that encourages learning and innovation in churches across denominations. Leadership Network can be reached at P.O. Box 9100, Tyler TX 75711.

XIV

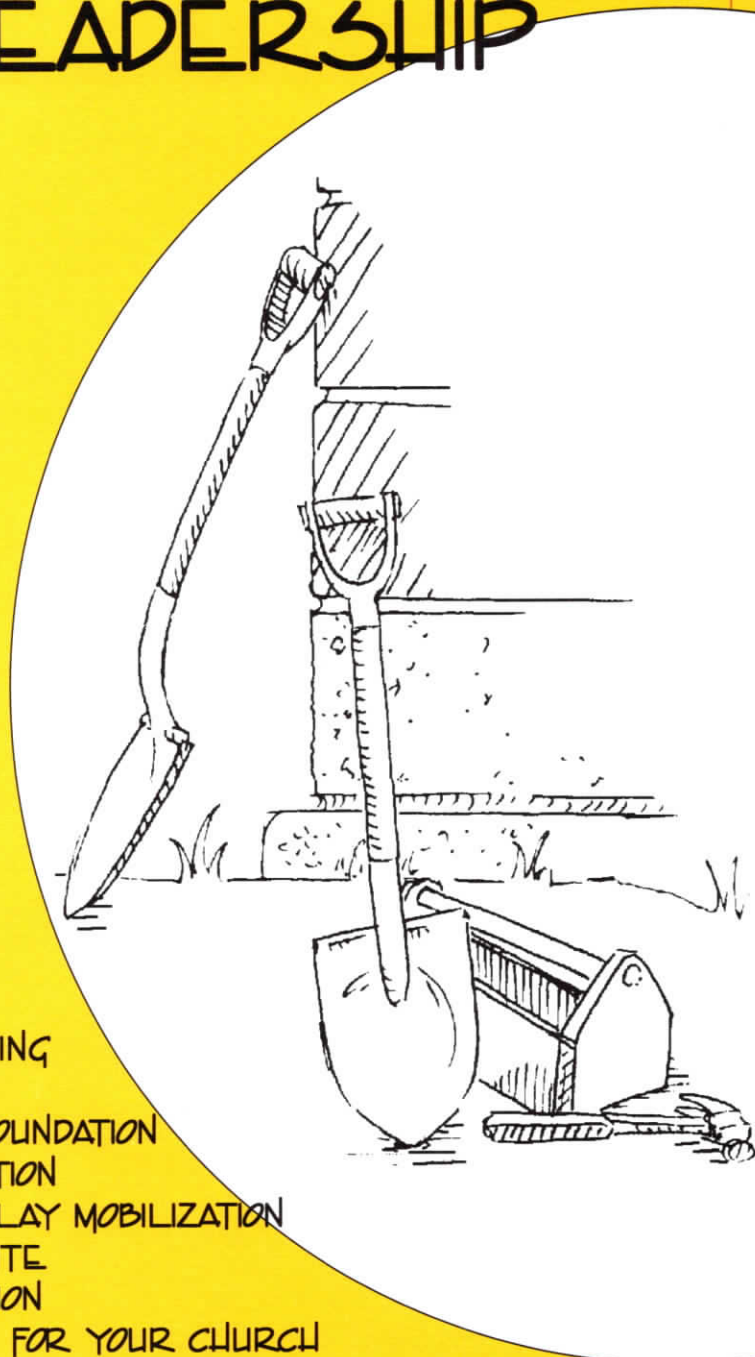
TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM 

SECTION 1:

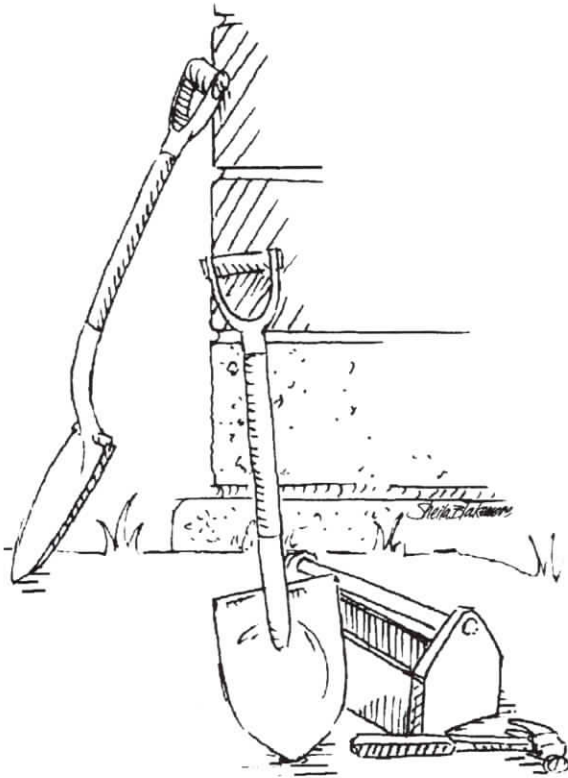
TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

CONTENTS :

- TRENDS SUPPORTING LAY MOBILIZATION
- THE BIBLE-THE FOUNDATION FOR LAY MOBILIZATION
- A BLUEPRINT FOR LAY MOBILIZATION
- SURVEYING THE SITE
- FORMING YOUR VISION
- CHOOSING A MODEL FOR YOUR CHURCH
- MAYBE WE SHOULD REMODEL
- PROTEST SIGNS AND PICKET LINES
- SELECTING A DIRECTOR
- SHARING YOUR VISION



THE WORK OF THE LEADER



This section is addressed to the leadership board—the senior pastor, the vestry, elders or deacons, and the upper-level staff. Ephesians 4:12 states your ultimate role at its most basic level is “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” It is easy in the midst of managing facilities and staff, dealing with conflicts, tight budgets, zoning laws and counseling loads to forget the most important role that God has given you—to prepare God’s people for works of service.

This opportunity and responsibility is both exciting and challenging. *Section 1 of The Starter Kit for Mobilizing Ministry* is designed to help you focus on your role as an equipper of others. It provides you with a plan to lead your church to a new level by:

- re-examining the mission and goals of your church
- seeing the entry points of the church from the perspective of new members
- evaluating the effectiveness of your current lay involvement efforts
- customizing lay involvement approaches of fit the unique needs of your church
- selecting the key leaders who will continue to build the program

“Leadership can never be understood apart from mission and vision. Leadership never exists for itself or for the glorification or even personal development of the leader. Leadership exists to make possible a preferred future (vision) for the people involved, which reflects the heart of the mission and value to which they are committed.”

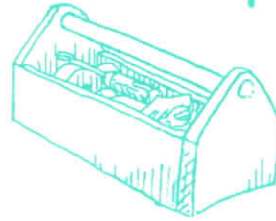
Lovett H. Weems Jr., *Church Leadership*, p. 25

This is not an easy or quick task. Decisions take time and require input from an increasing number of people who need to have ownership in the decision making process. The many crises of daily church management constantly encroach upon your time as you work to develop new, proactive approaches to address re-occurring problems. Through the information presented and the questions raised here, you and your leadership team can walk through a process that will help you effect a gifts-based ministry that mobilizes the laity in service to your church and the larger community.

It is an exciting opportunity. Through prayer, hard work and persistence, your church can continue to grow as a congregation where members know their gifts and are supported in ministry “so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God.” Ephesians 4:12b-13a NIV.



THE 10 PARTS FOR PLANNING FOR LAY MOBILIZATION



PART 1: 1-5

TRENDS SUPPORTING LAY MOBILIZATION —A MARKET ANALYSIS

Secularization of Society	1-6
New Styles of Ordained Leadership	1-7
Lay Person of the 90s	1-8
New Patterns of Giving	1-9
Urgency to Simplify	1-9
Quest for Community	1-10
New Patterns of Learning and Growth	1-11

PART 2: 1-13

THE BIBLE—THE FOUNDATION FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Ministry, An Act Of Love	1-14
Each Christian, A Purpose	1-14
Christians, Called And Gifted	1-15
Gifts, Given In Community	1-15
Gifts Serve, Glorify God	1-16
Church Leaders, Equipping Others	1-16
Spiritual Growth, Through Service	1-17

PART 3: 1-19

A BLUEPRINT FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Clarifying the Concepts	1-20
The Lay Mobilization System Chart	1-21
Using the Chart in Church Planning	1-22



PART 4: 1-23

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
—SURVEYING THE SITE

Church Mission And Purpose	1-24
Church Program Emphasis	1-26
Existing Church Model	1-30
Current Lay Mobilization Strategy	1-30
Current Strategy Effectiveness	1-31

PART 5: 1-39

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?
—FORMING OUR VISION

Lay Mobilization Possibilities	1-40
Dreams Into Vision	1-45
Clarify Goals, Evaluate Success	1-46

PART 6: 1-49

HOW DO WE GET THERE?
CHOOSING A MODEL FOR YOUR CHURCH

Centralized Model	1-50
Departmental Model	1-56
Sunday School/ Adult Bible Fellowship Model	1-58
Small Group Model	1-60
Proactive Cousins	1-66

PART 7: 1-73

MAYBE WE SHOULD REMODEL
—UPDATING YOUR CURRENT SYSTEM

Program Mistakes in Lay Ministry	1-74
Enhancing Existing Programs	1-77



PART 8: 1-79

PROTEST SIGNS AND PICKET LINES
- OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT

Workload Management	1-80
Job Security	1-81
Church Bureaucracy	1-83
Laity, Prepared for Ministry	1-84
Control the Ministry	1-85
Timing Issues	1-86

PART 9: 1-89

SELECTING A DIRECTOR

Prepare the Way	1-90
Selecting the Right Person for the Job	1-95

PART 10: 1-107

SHARING YOUR VISION

What Does it Mean to Share a Vision?	1-108
How Do You Share a Vision?	1-110
Before You Get Started	1-114
Common Mistakes	1-115

PART I:

TRENDS SUPPORTING LAY MOBILIZATION —A MARKET ANALYSIS

Is lay involvement just another fad, or is it a major and lasting transformation affecting many aspects of the church? *Trends Supporting Lay Mobilization* examines a number of social trends affecting congregational life and considers the implication of each for the future of the church.

"But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter."

2 Thessalonians 2:13-15 NRSV

"We are at the front edges of the greatest transformation of the church that has occurred for 1,600 years. It is by far the greatest change that the church has ever experienced in America; it may eventually make the transformation of the Reformation look like a ripple in a pond."

Loren B. Mead,
The Once and Future Church, p.68

In Part 1, you will...

- Examine 7 Trends Facing the Church:
 1. Increasing Secularization of Society
 2. New Styles of Ordained Leadership
 3. The Lay Person of the 90s
 4. New Patterns of Giving
 5. An Urgency to Simplify
 6. A Quest for Community
 7. New Patterns of Learning and Growth
- Work through discussion questions designed to help your church identify and respond to these trends.



TREND #1—

The Secularization of Society

Trend— As general literacy has increased, Biblical literacy has steadily declined, even among those raised within the church. Loren Mead writes:

“The cultural environment of our younger generation is much more distant from even the stories and illustrations of the faith than previous generations. [An]...acquaintance noted, ‘When Martin Luther King said, ‘Let my people go,’ almost everyone who heard him knew what he meant.’ ‘I wonder,’ he said, ‘if King could get away with it today.’”¹

Christianity is no longer the dominant belief in the United States. The church, once the center of family and community life, competes for attention in a secular world filled with work, athletics, school, recreation, and other events. The percentage of the “unchurched” and “less-churched” continues to grow.

Implication— More of the work of the church will take place outside its buildings and outside its formal programs. Lay people will take a greater role as lifestyle evangelists, shepherds, administrators and leaders as the work of the church moves into the community. This requires fewer “come to the church and do it” programs and more “we’ll train you to go be with them” programs.

Loren Mead continues:

“...the future church will have to be even more intentional in formation of its laity. Living in the world’s ambiguous environment and attempting to act faithfully there, every church member is on the front line, frequently alone. ... Lay people in an uncertain environment will be called on for independent decision and action. Memorized answers will not be enough. Every local congregation will be called on to develop processes and programs to support laity on a lifelong basis.”²

¹Loren B. Mead, *The Once and Future Church: Reinventing the Congregation for a New Mission Frontier*, 1991, An Alban Institute Publication, Washington D.C., p. 51.

²Loren B. Mead, *The Once and Future Church*, p. 49-50.



TREND #2—

New Styles of Ordained Leadership

"The clergy and the laity are the strategic teams, but they have to learn a new way to work together."

Loren B. Mead,
The Once and Future Church, p.59

Trend— Some have portrayed lay involvement as members wresting power from clergy. Yet, the current movement is more often championed by ordained church leaders who recognize that the task of leading the modern church requires a much broader leadership base. Declining membership, changing neighborhoods, and reduced contributions have all caused increased awareness among clergy of the need for greater ownership and participation by lay persons in the purposes and tasks of the church. Lay-led small groups remove the impossible demand for a senior pastor or a staff member to shepherd 500, 150, or even 50 people. Gifted members assume pastoral care responsibilities for 10 other lay people, each participating in the ministry process.

Implication— After laypeople are inspired toward growth by preaching and study, lay involvement systems provide a way for them to take the "next step" in their development. Members can progress to interactive learning and hands-on ministry that completes the cycle of growth.

WOMEN "CLOCKING-OUT"

"...women of child-bearing age have been leaving their jobs and returning home in significant numbers. The biggest change is among young women ages 20 to 24, whose participation in the labor force peaked several years ago and is now declining. There is, however, a decline, plateau, or lower rate of increase in every age category." reports Leith Anderson in the September 17, 1994 issue of *Christianity Today*. The effects could be far-reaching...

- households will have more time than money.
- single paycheck families will "downsize" their purchasing.
- with fewer persons competing for jobs, unemployment may decline.
- churches may experience a decrease in giving, especially among families that tithe, but an increase in available time from members.
- women will bring their experience and expectations with them to the volunteer work force.
- demand for child-related services for at-home Moms will grow.

In concluding his article, Anderson says, "if the trend continues, and the implications prove true, churches will be wise to take notice."



TREND #3—

The Lay Person of the 90s

Trend— Church members are busier and face more crises in their lives through multiple careers, job transfers, forced retirements, and second careers; divorces, single-parenting, and blended families; chronic illness, death, and losses; aging parents and returning children. Members are less willing to make open-ended commitments to serve without addressing their personal needs.

Yet crises and busy schedules actually present an opportunity for a well-run lay ministry system. If well cared for in crisis, people will respond by caring for others in their crises. Motivated to make a difference, members will commit deeply if they perceive their time will be used well.

Implication— Members want to be listened to and cared for; they want to have a ministry that both makes a difference and fits their needs and gifts. The key to providing this is solid preparation and a well-developed mentoring system. Interviewers and ministry mentors, trained to identify the needs and the expectations of today's members, can initiate a dialogue for ongoing faith development and support. An effective interview enables the member to share personal crises, as well as examine skills and talents for possible ministry. Members need ongoing support and nurturing as they cautiously test the waters of Christian service and grow spiritually through ministering to others.

TOOLBOX



What do members expect when they serve? An opportunity...

- to find personal fulfillment
- to meet targeted growth objectives
- to meet specific, personal needs
- to build relationships
- to make a difference in the lives of those served or the cause championed
- to use their unique skills, talents and abilities in a meaningful way
- to fill gaps in life plans and expectations
- to schedule service around the competing demands of work, family and personal obligations
- to be invited to continue

When members serve in our church, do we consider their needs when we design ministry opportunities? How do we balance the needs of the member with the needs of the church?



TREND #4—

New Patterns of Giving

Trends— In the midst of materialistic lifestyles, increased numbers of direct-mail appeals and telephone solicitation, and highly visible scandals among Christian leaders, there is a marked tendency to give less to causes in which a person has no direct connection. The Independent Sector, found that persons actively engaged in voluntary service consistently give an average of three to four times the amount given by persons not engaged in voluntary service.⁵

Implications— Increased involvement earns both the members' ownership and excitement about giving to a cause in which they can also serve. An additional benefit of meaningful lay involvement is numerical growth. Retention of members is increased if new members are immediately plugged into the activities of church. Involved members generally come to know and trust the decision makers, increasing the likelihood that they will stay and invest both their energy and their resources.

TREND #5—

An Urgency to Simplify

Trend— Corporate America, as well as the voluntary and public sectors, have witnessed the trend toward "down-sizing" and "re-engineering." Some churches face declining membership due to changing neighborhoods and must "down-size." In other growing churches the trend toward "excellence" in the 1980s caused congregations to expect increasing quality in programming. These same churches are now looking for ways to refocus on more core issues for the church. Down-sizing in these churches often means reducing numbers of programs, placing a greater emphasis on small groups, and maintaining quality services without producing the expectation that a youth ministry event needs to be in the same league as a rock concert to be considered successful, or that each Sunday must be bigger and better than the last.

"The point is not to get people to work, but to help them connect to the story of Jesus Christ.

...Our job is to develop a system of meaning and recognition that leads to a personal legacy."

Michael Foss, Pastor,
Prince of Peace Lutheran
Church, Burnsville, MN

Implication— A more strategic use of the lay ministry system is to place it at the core of the church's effort to simplify and focus. A well-run system spreads out the tasks and enhances commitment through manageable pieces of work within the members' areas of interest. Through the interview and mentoring process, each person better understands his/her gifts and is encouraged to serve in an area of talent and interest, as well as be served. When partnered with a churchwide commitment to simplify, members are freed to focus on fewer activities, and can develop deeper relationships in the midst of their service.

⁵Independent Sector, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 1992; Washington DC. In its 1992 survey, volunteers contributed \$1,155 compared with the average contribution of \$477 for persons not volunteering.



TREND #6—

A Quest for Community

Trend— With transient neighborhoods and families living hundreds of miles apart, people are looking for places where they can quickly establish community with others who share common values. Many see the church as the primary source of community for themselves and their children.

Implications— A lay ministry system designed for people to serve in groups, provides a strong basis for friendships and community, a basis that surpasses the teamwork needed to accomplish a task. Many churches are combining an emphasis on small groups with a focus on lay involvement. Gift assessment in a group setting increases self-knowledge for individuals and also provides mirrors of self-identity often lacking for individuals who have not grown up in stable or extended families. Likewise, family programs designed to incorporate assessment instruments facilitate positive communication, strengthening families to work together in service projects.



UNDERSTANDING DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Boosters (born before 1945): In their mid-50s and older, Boosters are nearing retirement or retired with extra time and lifelong skills. They usually like to serve as part of a group and would prefer fewer but significant options for service. They tend to be very loyal to the church with a strong sense of responsibility and may commit to longer terms of service.

Boomers (born 1946-1964): Fully one-third of the population, Boomers are facing mid-life decisions including how to make a significant impact upon their community in the second half of their life. Many are considering ways to transition from a focus on material success to spiritual significance. They usually want many options for service with freedom to choose; tend to be individualistic; like short-term projects; and feel severe time pressure.

Busters (born 1965-1976): The neXt generation is in a stage of life that often has more discretionary time to commit to a significant cause but they guard it closely. With a high awareness of local social concerns and environmental issues, they respond best when given freedom to develop new ministry approaches without heavy-handed guidance by older members.

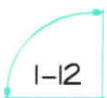


CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

Discuss the evidence of the 7 Trends in your church and community:

1. Increasing Secularization of Society
2. New Styles of Ordained Leadership
3. The Lay Person of the 90s
4. New Patterns of Giving
5. An Urgency to Simplify
6. A Quest for Community
7. New Patterns of Learning and Growth

1. Which trend most affects your church? What evidence do you see of the affect of these trends in your congregation's programs?
2. Can you identify other trends affecting your congregation not addressed in the list above?
3. Which of these trends excite you because of the opportunities they can bring to your church?
4. Review the seven trends. How will these trends affect your church's efforts to develop an effective lay ministry program?



TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



PART 2:

THE BIBLE

—THE FOUNDATION FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Across all Christian denominations, there is a history of theological support for lay involvement. The emphasis and methods may vary and there may be huge disparities at times between the theology and practice of lay involvement, yet there is an amazing agreement on the central points. A large part of this is due to the many scriptural references on the subject.

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

Matthew 25:37-40¹

Part 2 provides a list of scripture passages and a statement about their significance for lay mobilization. These passages can help you develop a vision for your lay mobilization system. You can build on these passages, develop Bible studies, sermons, and create vision pieces to educate and inspire your congregation about the importance of lay ministry.

In *The Bible: The Foundation for Lay Mobilization*, scripture illustrates the seven points...

- Ministry is an act of love and devotion to Christ.
- God has a unique purpose or calling for each of our lives.
- We all have gifts to fulfill our calling.
- Gifts are given to be used in community.
- Gifts should be used to serve God and others, not be left idle.
- The role of leaders in the church is to equip others for ministry.
- Spiritual growth occurs through service.

¹All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House all rights reserved.



POINT #1—

A ministry of serving others is an act of love and devotion to Christ. Any lay mobilization program should emphasize this aspect of serving others. Ministry, above all else, is an act of worship.

John 21:15-17 "After the meal Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?'"
'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.'
Jesus answered, 'Feed my lambs.'
Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you truly love me?'
He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'
Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'
The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'
Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.'
Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'"

See also **Matthew 25:31-46** (verses 37-40 shown on page 9).

POINT #2—

God has an unique purpose or calling for each of our lives. All Christians—clergy, non-clergy, staff, members, leaders, followers, men, women, children, physically fit, and disabled—are "priests."

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

1 Peter 2:5, 9, 10 "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ...But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

Jeremiah 1:4, 5 "The word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."



POINT #3—

We ALL have gifts to fulfill our calling. As we use the gifts God has given us, we accomplish his will. Just as God's purpose for each of us is unique, so are the gifts he gives us.

1 Peter 4:10, 11 "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."

Psalms 139:13-16 "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

See also **1 Corinthians 12-14**.

See also **Exodus 35-40**. This passage tells the story of the tremendous variety of gifts and skills the Israelites offered for the building of the tabernacle.

POINT #4—

Gifts are given to be used in community. The purpose of the gifts is not to build up the individual, but to serve the community. Each of us grows in spiritual maturity as we use our gifts.

Romans 12:4 "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."

1 Corinthians 12:4-12, 18 "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts



of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues...All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ...But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."

POINT #5—

Gifts should be used to serve God and others and not be left idle.

Matthew 25:14-30 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey..."

POINT #6—

The role of leaders in a church community is to equip others to use their gifts so that everyone can grow.

Ephesians 4:11-16 "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."



POINT #7—

Spiritual growth involves many things, including Bible study, prayer, spiritual disciplines, the sacraments, fellowship, and worship. Yet, **real spiritual growth is activated as we serve others.**

James 1:22-27, 2:14-17 "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does. ...Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. ...What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

What is a lay ministry about?

First and foremost, it is about helping individuals mature spiritually through the use of their God-given gifts to serve each other and the community, so that the whole church can attain the maturity that God intended. Yes, we need members in service to the church, and yes, we want to focus on the development of new leaders for the church, but the real focus of lay mobilization is faith development.

BUILDER'S NOTE:

A highly organized lay ministry system does not necessarily assure that the biblical connection between a person serving according to his/her gifts, and growing in faith maturity is always seen. Even a heavy dose of scripture at the front end of the program does not ensure a participant understands the connection. It takes a proactive and ongoing effort to make sure spiritual growth continues as a primary theme, woven throughout the process and continually emphasized, even after a person is placed in ministry.



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

Consider these questions as your church begins to focus its vision for lay ministry.

1. Which of the Biblical principles supporting lay mobilization speaks most poignantly to you as you fulfill your own ministry?
2. What is the most compelling Biblical passage for encouraging your leadership board to increase attention to lay ministry?
3. Which of these principles should be emphasized most as you encourage your congregation towards greater lay involvement?
4. What are some of the necessary Biblical components of a lay mobilization system based on these principles?
5. As you implement your lay involvement program, how can you ensure that, along with finding members to meet program needs, you also emphasize the importance of personal spiritual growth through service?



PART 3:

A BLUEPRINT FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Before you develop a lay mobilization system and customize it to the special needs of your congregation, you may find it helpful to examine a blueprint representing the components involved in a complete system. The “Overview of a Lay Ministry System” chart allows you to examine each part of the process and its organizational relationships. This knowledge, combined with your awareness of the unique needs and specific mission of your church, will enable you to design an approach for your congregation.

“Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head. Under his control all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So when each part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love.”

Ephesians 4:15, 16 TEV

In Part 3, you will...

- Examine a chart representing a blueprint of a Lay Ministry System. Each component of the system is defined.
- Explore ways to use the chart in planning a system for your church.

The blueprint is only a guideline. *It is meant to help you visualize a lay mobilization system, and then construct a pattern that works for your congregation. In actual practice, no system works as smoothly or as neatly as a chart suggests. Members may enter the process at various points along the continuum, stay in certain places longer than others, or skip components altogether. The key to application for your church is to create a system that allows each member to navigate the complete process with clear, identifiable “next steps.”*



CLARIFYING THE CONCEPTS

Seven broad components are found in some form in every effective lay ministry system. Each shaded box represents a component, or part of the system that members experience as they progress through the system. The unshaded boxes indicate the "support and development functions" necessary to create and sustain a well-functioning system.

The Seven Components of the System—

Assimilation: Helping new members understand the church and helping existing members to extend their involvement beyond Sunday morning attendance or to find more meaningful ministry opportunities.

Context: Helping members understand scripture and come to trust that God has gifted and called them to ministry; and helping members to grow spiritually as they use their gifts in service.

Discovery: An interview and/or assessment process to help members learn more about the unique gifts, talents, temperament, and life experiences God has given them, and allow them to share their needs for ministry and support from the congregation.

Matching: Identifying ministry opportunities where members' unique abilities are needed within the church or community. Matching also involves connecting members with others interested in exploring new ministry outreach.

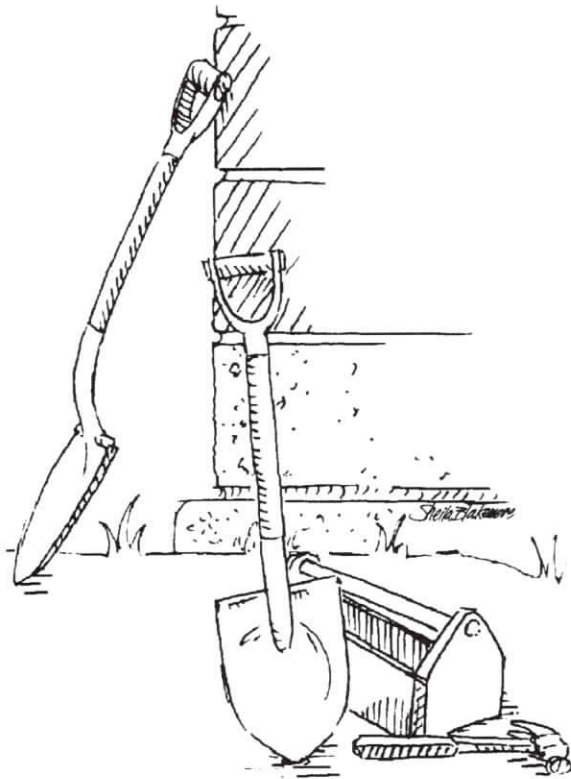
Placement: The actual connection of the member with the ministry opportunity, placement involves meeting with the ministry leader and other co-workers, reviewing the ministry description, receiving preparation and training for service, and initiating a regular pattern of service. Placement includes the opportunity to explore other options for service if the initial placement proves to be inappropriate for any reason.

Coaching: The ongoing provision of training, nurturing, support, supervision, additional gift discovery, and new placement, as well as opportunities to learn from and through the ministry experience.

Recognition: The celebration of service and the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of ministry for a Christian. Recognition includes exit interviews for those leaving a particular ministry, opportunities for development for new areas of service, as well as preparation for leadership.



THE WORK OF THE LEADER



This section is addressed to the leadership board—the senior pastor, the vestry, elders or deacons, and the upper-level staff. Ephesians 4:12 states your ultimate role at its most basic level is “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” It is easy in the midst of managing facilities and staff, dealing with conflicts, tight budgets, zoning laws and counseling loads to forget the most important role that God has given you—to prepare God’s people for works of service.

This opportunity and responsibility is both exciting and challenging. *Section 1 of The Starter Kit for Mobilizing Ministry* is designed to help you focus on your role as an equipper of others. It provides you with a plan to lead your church to a new level by:

- re-examining the mission and goals of your church
- seeing the entry points of the church from the perspective of new members
- evaluating the effectiveness of your current lay involvement efforts
- customizing lay involvement approaches of fit the unique needs of your church
- selecting the key leaders who will continue to build the program

“Leadership can never be understood apart from mission and vision. Leadership never exists for itself or for the glorification or even personal development of the leader. Leadership exists to make possible a preferred future (vision) for the people involved, which reflects the heart of the mission and value to which they are committed.”

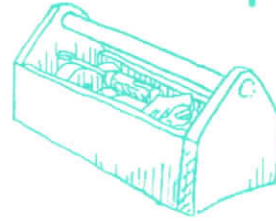
Lovett H. Weems Jr., *Church Leadership*, p. 25

This is not an easy or quick task. Decisions take time and require input from an increasing number of people who need to have ownership in the decision making process. The many crises of daily church management constantly encroach upon your time as you work to develop new, proactive approaches to address re-occurring problems. Through the information presented and the questions raised here, you and your leadership team can walk through a process that will help you effect a gifts-based ministry that mobilizes the laity in service to your church and the larger community.

It is an exciting opportunity. Through prayer, hard work and persistence, your church can continue to grow as a congregation where members know their gifts and are supported in ministry “so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God.” Ephesians 4:12b-13a NIV.



THE 10 PARTS FOR PLANNING FOR LAY MOBILIZATION



PART 1: 1-5

TRENDS SUPPORTING LAY MOBILIZATION —A MARKET ANALYSIS

Secularization of Society	1-6
New Styles of Ordained Leadership	1-7
Lay Person of the 90s	1-8
New Patterns of Giving	1-9
Urgency to Simplify	1-9
Quest for Community	1-10
New Patterns of Learning and Growth	1-11

PART 2: 1-13

THE BIBLE—THE FOUNDATION FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Ministry, An Act Of Love	1-14
Each Christian, A Purpose	1-14
Christians, Called And Gifted	1-15
Gifts, Given In Community	1-15
Gifts Serve, Glorify God	1-16
Church Leaders, Equipping Others	1-16
Spiritual Growth, Through Service	1-17

PART 3: 1-19

A BLUEPRINT FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Clarifying the Concepts	1-20
The Lay Mobilization System Chart	1-21
Using the Chart in Church Planning	1-22



PART 4: 1-23

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
—SURVEYING THE SITE

Church Mission And Purpose	1-24
Church Program Emphasis	1-26
Existing Church Model	1-30
Current Lay Mobilization Strategy	1-30
Current Strategy Effectiveness	1-31

PART 5: 1-39

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?
—FORMING OUR VISION

Lay Mobilization Possibilities	1-40
Dreams Into Vision	1-45
Clarify Goals, Evaluate Success	1-46

PART 6: 1-49

HOW DO WE GET THERE?
CHOOSING A MODEL FOR YOUR CHURCH

Centralized Model	1-50
Departmental Model	1-56
Sunday School/ Adult Bible Fellowship Model	1-58
Small Group Model	1-60
Proactive Cousins	1-66

PART 7: 1-73

MAYBE WE SHOULD REMODEL
—UPDATING YOUR CURRENT SYSTEM

Program Mistakes in Lay Ministry	1-74
Enhancing Existing Programs	1-77



PART 8: 1-79

PROTEST SIGNS AND PICKET LINES
- OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT

Workload Management 1-80
Job Security 1-81
Church Bureaucracy 1-83
Laity, Prepared for Ministry 1-84
Control the Ministry 1-85
Timing Issues 1-86

PART 9: 1-89

SELECTING A DIRECTOR

Prepare the Way 1-90
Selecting the Right Person for the Job 1-95

PART 10: 1-107

SHARING YOUR VISION

What Does it Mean to Share a Vision? 1-108
How Do You Share a Vision? 1-110
Before You Get Started 1-114
Common Mistakes 1-115

PART I:

TRENDS SUPPORTING LAY MOBILIZATION —A MARKET ANALYSIS

Is lay involvement just another fad, or is it a major and lasting transformation affecting many aspects of the church? *Trends Supporting Lay Mobilization* examines a number of social trends affecting congregational life and considers the implication of each for the future of the church.

"But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter."

2 Thessalonians 2:13-15 NRSV

"We are at the front edges of the greatest transformation of the church that has occurred for 1,600 years. It is by far the greatest change that the church has ever experienced in America; it may eventually make the transformation of the Reformation look like a ripple in a pond."

Loren B. Mead,
The Once and Future Church, p.68

In Part 1, you will...

- Examine 7 Trends Facing the Church:
 1. Increasing Secularization of Society
 2. New Styles of Ordained Leadership
 3. The Lay Person of the 90s
 4. New Patterns of Giving
 5. An Urgency to Simplify
 6. A Quest for Community
 7. New Patterns of Learning and Growth
- Work through discussion questions designed to help your church identify and respond to these trends.



TREND #1—

The Secularization of Society

Trend— As general literacy has increased, Biblical literacy has steadily declined, even among those raised within the church. Loren Mead writes:

“The cultural environment of our younger generation is much more distant from even the stories and illustrations of the faith than previous generations. [An]...acquaintance noted, ‘When Martin Luther King said, ‘Let my people go,’ almost everyone who heard him knew what he meant.’ ‘I wonder,’ he said, ‘if King could get away with it today.’”¹

Christianity is no longer the dominant belief in the United States. The church, once the center of family and community life, competes for attention in a secular world filled with work, athletics, school, recreation, and other events. The percentage of the “unchurched” and “less-churched” continues to grow.

Implication— More of the work of the church will take place outside its buildings and outside its formal programs. Lay people will take a greater role as lifestyle evangelists, shepherds, administrators and leaders as the work of the church moves into the community. This requires fewer “come to the church and do it” programs and more “we’ll train you to go be with them” programs.

Loren Mead continues:

“...the future church will have to be even more intentional in formation of its laity. Living in the world's ambiguous environment and attempting to act faithfully there, every church member is on the front line, frequently alone. ... Lay people in an uncertain environment will be called on for independent decision and action. Memorized answers will not be enough. Every local congregation will be called on to develop processes and programs to support laity on a lifelong basis.”²

¹Loren B. Mead, *The Once and Future Church: Reinventing the Congregation for a New Mission Frontier*, 1991, An Alban Institute Publication, Washington D.C., p. 51.

²Loren B. Mead, *The Once and Future Church*, p. 49-50.



TREND #2—

New Styles of Ordained Leadership

"The clergy and the laity are the strategic teams, but they have to learn a new way to work together."

Loren B. Mead,
The Once and Future Church, p.59

Trend— Some have portrayed lay involvement as members wresting power from clergy. Yet, the current movement is more often championed by ordained church leaders who recognize that the task of leading the modern church requires a much broader leadership base. Declining membership, changing neighborhoods, and reduced contributions have all caused increased awareness among clergy of the need for greater ownership and participation by lay persons in the purposes and tasks of the church. Lay-led small groups remove the impossible demand for a senior pastor or a staff member to shepherd 500, 150, or even 50 people. Gifted members assume pastoral care responsibilities for 10 other lay people, each participating in the ministry process.

Implication— After laypeople are inspired toward growth by preaching and study, lay involvement systems provide a way for them to take the "next step" in their development. Members can progress to interactive learning and hands-on ministry that completes the cycle of growth.

WOMEN "CLOCKING-OUT"

"...women of child-bearing age have been leaving their jobs and returning home in significant numbers. The biggest change is among young women ages 20 to 24, whose participation in the labor force peaked several years ago and is now declining. There is, however, a decline, plateau, or lower rate of increase in every age category." reports Leith Anderson in the September 17, 1994 issue of *Christianity Today*. The effects could be far-reaching...

- households will have more time than money.
- single paycheck families will "downsize" their purchasing.
- with fewer persons competing for jobs, unemployment may decline.
- churches may experience a decrease in giving, especially among families that tithe, but an increase in available time from members.
- women will bring their experience and expectations with them to the volunteer work force.
- demand for child-related services for at-home Moms will grow.

In concluding his article, Anderson says, "if the trend continues, and the implications prove true, churches will be wise to take notice."



TREND #3—

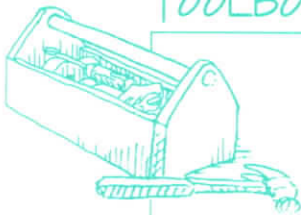
The Lay Person of the 90s

Trend— Church members are busier and face more crises in their lives through multiple careers, job transfers, forced retirements, and second careers; divorces, single-parenting, and blended families; chronic illness, death, and losses; aging parents and returning children. Members are less willing to make open-ended commitments to serve without addressing their personal needs.

Yet crises and busy schedules actually present an opportunity for a well-run lay ministry system. If well cared for in crisis, people will respond by caring for others in their crises. Motivated to make a difference, members will commit deeply if they perceive their time will be used well.

Implication— Members want to be listened to and cared for; they want to have a ministry that both makes a difference and fits their needs and gifts. The key to providing this is solid preparation and a well-developed mentoring system. Interviewers and ministry mentors, trained to identify the needs and the expectations of today's members, can initiate a dialogue for ongoing faith development and support. An effective interview enables the member to share personal crises, as well as examine skills and talents for possible ministry. Members need ongoing support and nurturing as they cautiously test the waters of Christian service and grow spiritually through ministering to others.

TOOLBOX



What do members expect when they serve? An opportunity...

- to find personal fulfillment
- to meet targeted growth objectives
- to meet specific, personal needs
- to build relationships
- to make a difference in the lives of those served or the cause championed
- to use their unique skills, talents and abilities in a meaningful way
- to fill gaps in life plans and expectations
- to schedule service around the competing demands of work, family and personal obligations
- to be invited to continue

When members serve in our church, do we consider their needs when we design ministry opportunities? How do we balance the needs of the member with the needs of the church?



TREND #4—

New Patterns of Giving

Trends— In the midst of materialistic lifestyles, increased numbers of direct-mail appeals and telephone solicitation, and highly visible scandals among Christian leaders, there is a marked tendency to give less to causes in which a person has no direct connection. The Independent Sector, found that persons actively engaged in voluntary service consistently give an average of three to four times the amount given by persons not engaged in voluntary service.⁵

Implications— Increased involvement earns both the members' ownership and excitement about giving to a cause in which they can also serve. An additional benefit of meaningful lay involvement is numerical growth. Retention of members is increased if new members are immediately plugged into the activities of church. Involved members generally come to know and trust the decision makers, increasing the likelihood that they will stay and invest both their energy and their resources.

TREND #5—

An Urgency to Simplify

Trend— Corporate America, as well as the voluntary and public sectors, have witnessed the trend toward "down-sizing" and "re-engineering." Some churches face declining membership due to changing neighborhoods and must "down-size." In other growing churches the trend toward "excellence" in the 1980s caused congregations to expect increasing quality in programming. These same churches are now looking for ways to refocus on more core issues for the church. Down-sizing in these churches often means reducing numbers of programs, placing a greater emphasis on small groups, and maintaining quality services without producing the expectation that a youth ministry event needs to be in the same league as a rock concert to be considered successful, or that each Sunday must be bigger and better than the last.

"The point is not to get people to work, but to help them connect to the story of Jesus Christ.

...Our job is to develop a system of meaning and recognition that leads to a personal legacy."

Michael Foss, Pastor,
Prince of Peace Lutheran
Church, Burnsville, MN

Implication— A more strategic use of the lay ministry system is to place it at the core of the church's effort to simplify and focus. A well-run system spreads out the tasks and enhances commitment through manageable pieces of work within the members' areas of interest. Through the interview and mentoring process, each person better understands his/her gifts and is encouraged to serve in an area of talent and interest, as well as be served. When partnered with a churchwide commitment to simplify, members are freed to focus on fewer activities, and can develop deeper relationships in the midst of their service.

⁵Independent Sector, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 1992; Washington DC. In its 1992 survey, volunteers contributed \$1,155 compared with the average contribution of \$477 for persons not volunteering.



TREND #6—

A Quest for Community

Trend— With transient neighborhoods and families living hundreds of miles apart, people are looking for places where they can quickly establish community with others who share common values. Many see the church as the primary source of community for themselves and their children.

Implications— A lay ministry system designed for people to serve in groups, provides a strong basis for friendships and community, a basis that surpasses the teamwork needed to accomplish a task. Many churches are combining an emphasis on small groups with a focus on lay involvement. Gift assessment in a group setting increases self-knowledge for individuals and also provides mirrors of self-identity often lacking for individuals who have not grown up in stable or extended families. Likewise, family programs designed to incorporate assessment instruments facilitate positive communication, strengthening families to work together in service projects.



UNDERSTANDING DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Boosters (born before 1945): In their mid-50s and older, Boosters are nearing retirement or retired with extra time and lifelong skills. They usually like to serve as part of a group and would prefer fewer but significant options for service. They tend to be very loyal to the church with a strong sense of responsibility and may commit to longer terms of service.

Boomers (born 1946-1964): Fully one-third of the population, Boomers are facing mid-life decisions including how to make a significant impact upon their community in the second half of their life. Many are considering ways to transition from a focus on material success to spiritual significance. They usually want many options for service with freedom to choose; tend to be individualistic; like short-term projects; and feel severe time pressure.

Busters (born 1965-1976): The neXt generation is in a stage of life that often has more discretionary time to commit to a significant cause but they guard it closely. With a high awareness of local social concerns and environmental issues, they respond best when given freedom to develop new ministry approaches without heavy-handed guidance by older members.

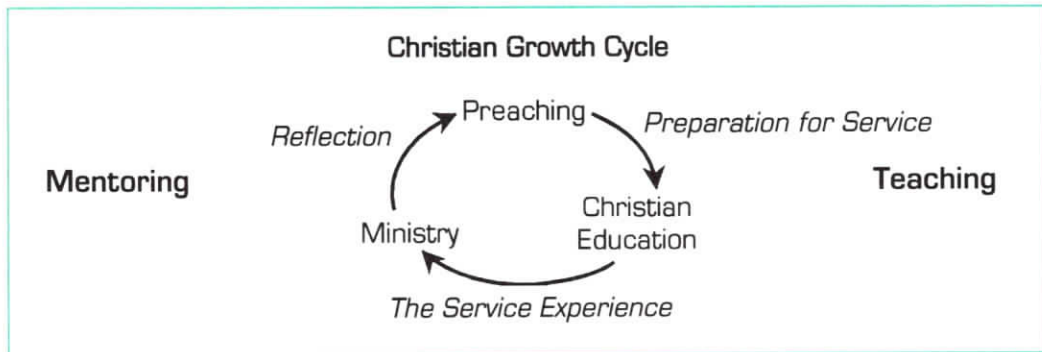


TREND #7-

New Patterns of Learning and Growth

Trend— With availability of new educational materials, many churches are responding to the overload of head-knowledge by developing learning approaches that utilize more experiential styles of education. Members want training to apply their faith in life situations and are looking to the church to help them examine their life experiences, set personal and spiritual growth goals, and establish career objectives.

Implication— Lay ministry provides a laboratory for Christian living. How can the experiences encountered in working in a soup kitchen for the homeless be grounded in scripture? When Jesus admonishes Peter to “feed my sheep,” in response to his assertion of his love for Christ, what does that directive mean to us in our daily lives? Ministry is where faith can become active in love, where head-knowledge can be felt, seen, touched and known.



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

Discuss the evidence of the 7 Trends in your church and community:

1. Increasing Secularization of Society
2. New Styles of Ordained Leadership
3. The Lay Person of the 90s
4. New Patterns of Giving
5. An Urgency to Simplify
6. A Quest for Community
7. New Patterns of Learning and Growth

1. Which trend most affects your church? What evidence do you see of the affect of these trends in your congregation's programs?

2. Can you identify other trends affecting your congregation not addressed in the list above?

3. Which of these trends excite you because of the opportunities they can bring to your church?

4. Review the seven trends. How will these trends affect your church's efforts to develop an effective lay ministry program?



PART 2:

THE BIBLE

-THE FOUNDATION FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Across all Christian denominations, there is a history of theological support for lay involvement. The emphasis and methods may vary and there may be huge disparities at times between the theology and practice of lay involvement, yet there is an amazing agreement on the central points. A large part of this is due to the many scriptural references on the subject.

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

Matthew 25:37-40¹

Part 2 provides a list of scripture passages and a statement about their significance for lay mobilization. These passages can help you develop a vision for your lay mobilization system. You can build on these passages, develop Bible studies, sermons, and create vision pieces to educate and inspire your congregation about the importance of lay ministry.

In *The Bible: The Foundation for Lay Mobilization*, scripture illustrates the seven points...

- Ministry is an act of love and devotion to Christ.
- God has a unique purpose or calling for each of our lives.
- We all have gifts to fulfill our calling.
- Gifts are given to be used in community.
- Gifts should be used to serve God and others, not be left idle.
- The role of leaders in the church is to equip others for ministry.
- Spiritual growth occurs through service.

¹All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House all rights reserved.



POINT #1—

A ministry of serving others is an act of love and devotion to Christ. Any lay mobilization program should emphasize this aspect of serving others. Ministry, above all else, is an act of worship.

John 21:15-17 "After the meal Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?'
'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.'
Jesus answered, 'Feed my lambs.'
Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you truly love me?'
He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'
Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'
The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'
Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.'
Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'"

See also **Matthew 25:31-46** (verses 37-40 shown on page 9).

POINT #2—

God has an unique purpose or calling for each of our lives. All Christians—clergy, non-clergy, staff, members, leaders, followers, men, women, children, physically fit, and disabled—are "priests."

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

1 Peter 2:5, 9, 10 "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ...But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

Jeremiah 1:4, 5 "The word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."



POINT #3—

We ALL have gifts to fulfill our calling. As we use the gifts God has given us, we accomplish his will. Just as God's purpose for each of us is unique, so are the gifts he gives us.

1 Peter 4:10, 11 "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."

Psalms 139:13-16 "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

See also **1 Corinthians 12-14**.

See also **Exodus 35-40**. This passage tells the story of the tremendous variety of gifts and skills the Israelites offered for the building of the tabernacle.

POINT #4—

Gifts are given to be used in community. The purpose of the gifts is not to build up the individual, but to serve the community. Each of us grows in spiritual maturity as we use our gifts.

Romans 12:4 "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."

1 Corinthians 12:4-12, 18 "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts



of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues...All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ...But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."

POINT #5—

Gifts should be used to serve God and others and not be left idle.

Matthew 25:14-30 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey..."

POINT #6—

The role of leaders in a church community is to equip others to use their gifts so that everyone can grow.

Ephesians 4:11-16 "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."



POINT #7-

Spiritual growth involves many things, including Bible study, prayer, spiritual disciplines, the sacraments, fellowship, and worship. Yet, **real spiritual growth is activated as we serve others.**

James 1:22-27, 2:14-17 "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does. ...Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. ...What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

What is a lay ministry about?

First and foremost, it is about helping individuals mature spiritually through the use of their God-given gifts to serve each other and the community, so that the whole church can attain the maturity that God intended.

Yes, we need members in service to the church, and yes, we want to focus on the development of new leaders for the church, but the real focus of lay mobilization is faith development.

BUILDER'S NOTE:

A highly organized lay ministry system does not necessarily assure that the biblical connection between a person serving according to his/her gifts, and growing in faith maturity is always seen. Even a heavy dose of scripture at the front end of the program does not ensure a participant understands the connection. It takes a proactive and ongoing effort to make sure spiritual growth continues as a primary theme, woven throughout the process and continually emphasized, even after a person is placed in ministry.



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

Consider these questions as your church begins to focus its vision for lay ministry.

1. Which of the Biblical principles supporting lay mobilization speaks most poignantly to you as you fulfill your own ministry?
2. What is the most compelling Biblical passage for encouraging your leadership board to increase attention to lay ministry?
3. Which of these principles should be emphasized most as you encourage your congregation towards greater lay involvement?
4. What are some of the necessary Biblical components of a lay mobilization system based on these principles?
5. As you implement your lay involvement program, how can you ensure that, along with finding members to meet program needs, you also emphasize the importance of personal spiritual growth through service?



PART 3:

A BLUEPRINT FOR LAY MOBILIZATION

Before you develop a lay mobilization system and customize it to the special needs of your congregation, you may find it helpful to examine a blueprint representing the components involved in a complete system. The "Overview of a Lay Ministry System" chart allows you to examine each part of the process and its organizational relationships. This knowledge, combined with your awareness of the unique needs and specific mission of your church, will enable you to design an approach for your congregation.

"Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head. Under his control all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So when each part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love."

Ephesians 4:15, 16 TEV

In Part 3, you will...

- Examine a chart representing a blueprint of a Lay Ministry System. Each component of the system is defined.
- Explore ways to use the chart in planning a system for your church.

The blueprint is only a guideline. *It is meant to help you visualize a lay mobilization system, and then construct a pattern that works for your congregation. In actual practice, no system works as smoothly or as neatly as a chart suggests. Members may enter the process at various points along the continuum, stay in certain places longer than others, or skip components altogether. The key to application for your church is to create a system that allows each member to navigate the complete process with clear, identifiable "next steps."*



CLARIFYING THE CONCEPTS

Seven broad components are found in some form in every effective lay ministry system. Each shaded box represents a component, or part of the system that members experience as they progress through the system. The unshaded boxes indicate the "support and development functions" necessary to create and sustain a well-functioning system.

The Seven Components of the System—

Assimilation: Helping new members understand the church and helping existing members to extend their involvement beyond Sunday morning attendance or to find more meaningful ministry opportunities.

Context: Helping members understand scripture and come to trust that God has gifted and called them to ministry; and helping members to grow spiritually as they use their gifts in service.

Discovery: An interview and/or assessment process to help members learn more about the unique gifts, talents, temperament, and life experiences God has given them, and allow them to share their needs for ministry and support from the congregation.

Matching: Identifying ministry opportunities where members' unique abilities are needed within the church or community. Matching also involves connecting members with others interested in exploring new ministry outreach.

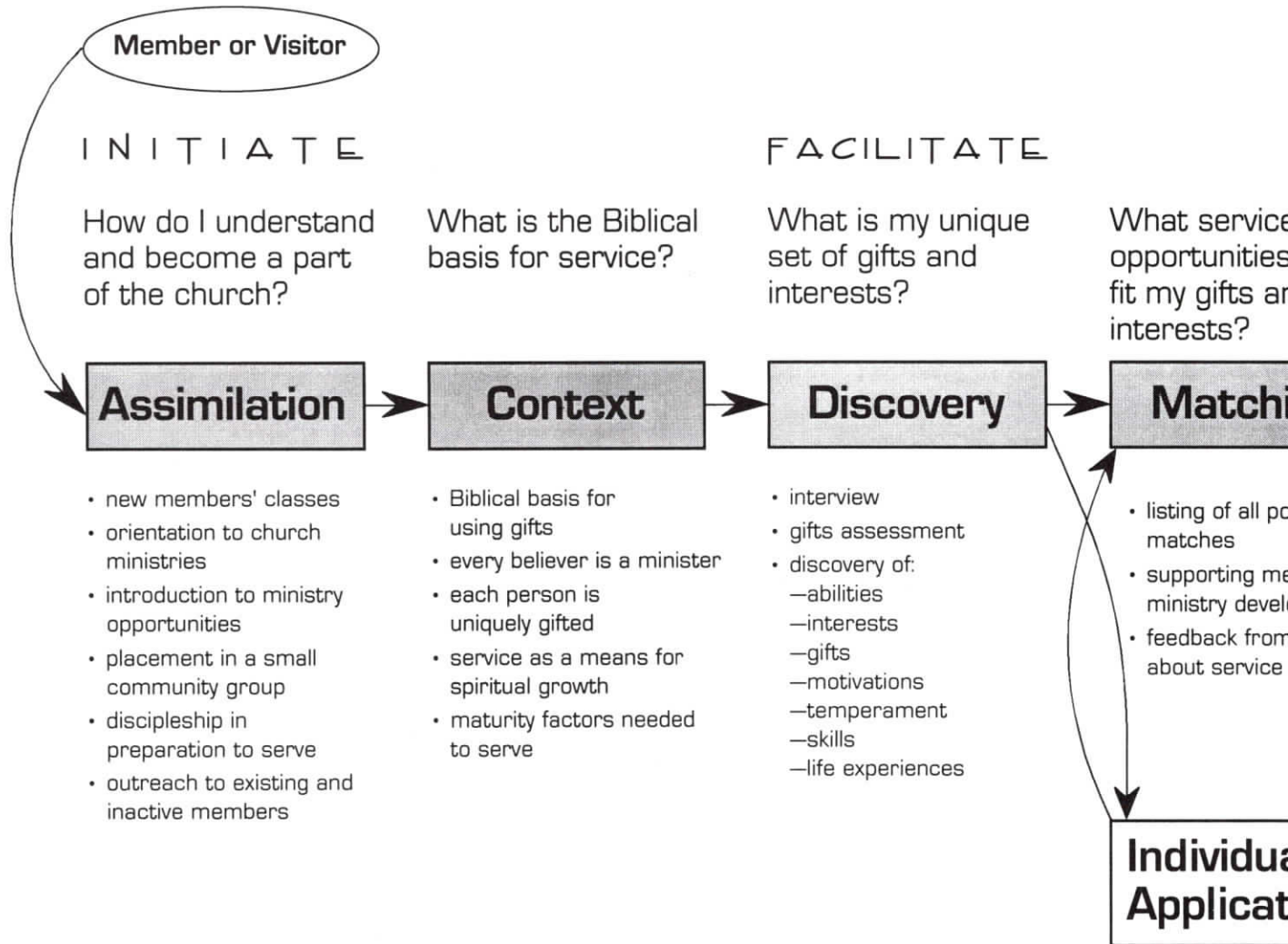
Placement: The actual connection of the member with the ministry opportunity, placement involves meeting with the ministry leader and other co-workers, reviewing the ministry description, receiving preparation and training for service, and initiating a regular pattern of service. Placement includes the opportunity to explore other options for service if the initial placement proves to be inappropriate for any reason.

Coaching: The ongoing provision of training, nurturing, support, supervision, additional gift discovery, and new placement, as well as opportunities to learn from and through the ministry experience.

Recognition: The celebration of service and the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of ministry for a Christian. Recognition includes exit interviews for those leaving a particular ministry, opportunities for development for new areas of service, as well as preparation for leadership.



AN OVERVIEW OF A LAY MOBILIZATION SYSTEM



Shaping the Vision & Initial Setup

- casting vision for church leadership and general membership
- mission/purpose statements
- set-up of Lay Ministry Committee
- select new staff—Director of Lay Ministry
- involvement of lay leaders and staff to embrace new vision
- planning and strategy development
- finances—developing a budget and obtaining the necessary resources

Administrative Support & Printed Materials

- a system for keeping records
- computerized information and matching systems
- ministry descriptions of service opportunities
- evaluation forms and feedback systems
- budgeting a system to track costs
- calendar/scheduling systems
- space/facilities management
- policy and procedures handbook
- prayer support systems

USING THE BLUEPRINT IN CHURCH PLANNING

Planning for lay mobilization can be very exciting. Although you will need to customize the design to fit your church, these suggestions will help get you started and may generate other ideas.

Listed below are several suggestions about ways to use the blueprint to encourage discussion and plan a lay mobilization system for your church.

Develop the Picture

- Reproduce the Lay Mobilization System chart. Seeing a “final product,” or even a sketch of a potential system, is one of the best ways to get people excited about the time, money and energy required to start a large initiative.
- Develop a common understanding of what a lay ministry system is about. Some members picture gift assessment seminars, others see Bible study, and still others picture a better way to get the bulletins folded and envelopes stuffed. The chart demonstrates the scope and potential of the system.
- Create a common language. People can discuss and plan far more effectively when shared terms have shared definitions.
- Customize the chart to the needs and specifications of your church. You may currently assimilate new members very effectively. Name the programs in your church that achieve certain functions. Be sure to celebrate your successes as you identify needs.
- A visual representation can help you develop a rough cost-benefit analysis. What programs and systems do you currently have? Where will new programs be added?
- Focus on a particular need, such as developing more leaders within the church. Examine how the system would help you identify these persons and provide opportunities for their development.
- Through discussion, begin to define outcomes or results you can expect through a full system.
- As a discussion starter, the chart can be used to involve various groups or departments in the planning process. How would this system support their work? What are we already doing well? In what areas are we weakest? How can this system be adapted to best help us?
- Visit a neighboring congregation with a well-developed system. Take the chart with you. Examine how they fulfill each function. Listen to their members describe their ministry experiences.



Mission: Personal, relational, Christ-centered growth through ministry.

Cataloging Ministry Opportunities

- researching and listing with descriptions the ministry opportunities available in the church and community

E N H A N C E

How do I select the best opportunity?
Where do I go?

How do I get ongoing training and encouragement?

How do I sustain my ministry and grow spiritually?

best
d



- training for ministry
- "trial" service placements
- linking members with ministry leaders or department heads
- orientations to specific service positions
- commissioning for service

- supervision of members and ministry leaders
- nurturing and ongoing support
- affirmation
- evaluation
- reassignments
- monitoring burnout
- supporting spiritual growth

- celebration of ministry
- small group discussions
- opportunities for reflection
- exit interviews
- new placements
- leadership development

ossible

member with
pment
member
nterest

**alized
ions**

- How does what I've discovered about myself address my immediate concerns about...
- parenting • marriage • career placement • college choice • finances • addictions
- What needs do I have for ministry from this church...
- Biblical study • relationship groups • counseling • grief support • divorce recovery
 - family assistance • other needs

Leadership Development

- interview and select core team
- develop staff and core team
 - Lay Ministry Committee
 - interviewers
 - ministry mentors
 - interpersonal and supervision skills
 - coaching and support skills
 - training skills
 - leadership development
 - feedback and evaluation
 - recognition
 - develop churchwide leaders

Support and Development Functions—

Shaping the Vision & Initial Set-up: A great deal of groundwork is necessary to prepare the congregation, church staff and leadership for an effective lay ministry system. An emphasis on increased lay involvement requires commitment from the senior pastor and key leadership, ongoing vision-casting, extensive planning, and selection of leadership for the lay ministry effort.

Administrative Support: The core of a system that serves people well is comprehensive planning, thorough record-keeping systems, organization, and staff and member involvement.

Cataloging Ministry Opportunities: Potential areas where people may serve must be identified, listed, and described. Effective networks into the community allow secular service opportunities to be researched and documented. Ministry descriptions need to be continually updated and revised to reflect available opportunities.

Individualized Applications: The interview experience in the Discovery phase provides the interviewer or the ministry mentor with the opportunity to get to know a member. For some members, service may not be an immediate option—the person may be involved with a job transfer, a new marriage, supporting an ailing parent, struggling with addiction, faced with financial problems, or other life crises that require immediate attention. The interviewer needs to connect the member with support systems within the church, to help navigate these difficult times. Later the member may re-enter the process and find an opportunity to be of service to others. The Discovery phase provides a special opportunity for the church and the member to become involved with each other in meaningful and growth-producing ways.

Leadership Development: A well-developed leadership team is critical to the success of the lay ministry system. Not only does the lay ministry system need a core of persons trained and gifted in leadership for all phases of program operations, but the church at large needs members prepared to assume leadership responsibilities for ministries and programs. The lay ministry system is especially useful in identifying potential leaders and developing these persons to assume larger roles within the church.



Open for An Overview of a Lay Mobilization System Chart.



PART 5:

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

—FORMING OUR VISION

Seeking a vision is a creative, exciting process. This is a time to resist everyday ways of solving problems and getting things done. Think big! Forget about how things have worked in the past! Imagine a lay mobilization program where God is involved in miraculous, unexpected and life-changing ways! Pray for faith and discernment of God's vision for your church.

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

John 14:12-14 NIV

In *Part 5* you will explore...

- Possibilities for Lay Mobilization
- Techniques to Translate Dreams into Visions
- Methods to Evaluate Progress with Lay Mobilization



WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR LAY MOBILIZATION?

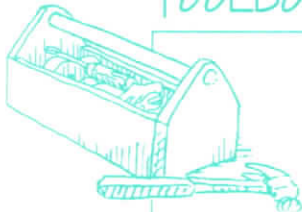
1. Brainstorm the Possibilities

Brainstorming is a group process where combined creativity results in many more ideas than one person could develop on his/her own. Frequently, the ideas born of a brainstorming session expand beyond existing boundaries because the process generates unique and innovative solutions and ideas.

As your group brainstorms, remember the following guidelines:

- There is no such thing as a “stupid” idea. Brainstorming requires the freedom to suggest anything and it requires an openness of the group's members to honor all ideas.
- There is no set pattern to brainstorming. Some people might begin with the finished product, while others might focus on the process.
- Brainstorming works best without structure. Some of the best brainstorming occurs in a large open room with nothing more than big pads of paper and colored markers. Also, brainstorming cannot be scheduled and confined. For best results, allow plenty of time.
- Each brainstormer needs freedom to expand upon or improve any idea on the table. Ownership of ideas or over-sensitivity to feelings will inhibit brainstorming.

TOOLBOX

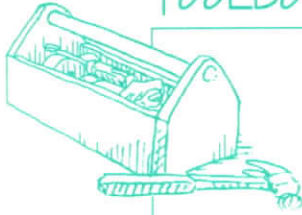


Often a primary motivation for a stronger lay involvement program is to fill the job slots in the various church departments. Yet if there was 100% involvement, the church would still need only 25% of the total membership to run all its programs.

100% involvement is unlikely, but a 50/50 mind-set is a worthy goal. This involves trying to place 50% of all lay ministers outside the church, in community agencies, mission projects and other ministry opportunities. Viewing lay mobilization from a community perspective creates a healthy, outward focus. Churches who have pursued a 50/50 approach to ministry have reported increases in new members as the church gains the reputation for being interested in the needs of the community. Evangelism happens naturally as church members build relationships with the non-churched people they work with on service projects, at their office, or in neighborhood organizations.



TOOLBOX



Ministry occurs outside of ministry descriptions and organized programs. Brainstorm what whole-life ministry could mean to you and other members of your church.

Think of the...

- janitor who sees attention to detail as an act of worship to God.
- homemaker who creates a safe environment in which children can stretch their creative wings and find their own gifts.
- corporate executive who creates a company culture of integrity and justice.
- grandparent who models the grace of God by taking in an unwed mother.
- school teacher who encourages children to see their special potential.
- doctor who treats each patient with the compassion of Christ.
- student who swims against the tide of peer pressure and models the Christian's call to purity.

How can each of us model our calling as Christians and use our gifts in all the dimensions of our lives?

2. Develop Your Vision

Here are some questions that will help you develop your vision:

1. Assuming money, facilities and attendance were unlimited, what in your wildest dreams would your lay mobilization program look like in five years? In ten years? (Use the space below to take notes, make sketches or diagram what you imagine.)

2. Continue your line of thought from the preceding question. What will the different departments and ministries of your church look like after your lay mobilization program has taken root and had an effect on existing programs?



3. Here is a list of the 7 components of an effective lay mobilization program. As you envision your lay mobilization program, you can imagine the details of each part of the system. For each one, answer the question:

“What are my wildest dreams for this part of the process?”

Assimilation

Context

“The process of establishing vision and values is a painful one. ... You cannot be everything to everybody any-more. ...We get lulled into mediocrity, ...we lose sight of what could be...through God's power that is available to us.”

Bill Hybels, Senior Pastor,
Willow Creek Church,
Barrington, IL

Discovery

Matching

Placement

Coaching

Recognition

4. Put yourself in the shoes of Joe Visitor. Using the lay mobilization model you have chosen, describe Joe's journey from his first moment walking into your church through the conclusion of his first ministry experience.

5. What does Joe have to say about his experience?



6. Think about Amy Uninvolved-church-member. What would happen to her if your church developed and enacted your dream lay mobilization program? What are your dreams for how your model will connect with people like Amy?

7. Pretend it is a few years in the future. You are at a local coffee shop and you unintentionally overhear two people talking in the booth next to yours. These people are not members of your church and probably do not attend any church. You hear them talking about your church! By now your lay mobilization program is in high gear. What do these outsiders have to say about the ministry going on at your church?

8. Imagine that your lay mobilization program is highly successful. Some of your lay people are sharing testimonials about their experience in ministry. What will they say?

9. This portion of the *Starter Kit* has a variety of different ministry options listed at the foot of each page. Which of these ministry opportunities would you like to see included in your lay mobilization program?

— MINISTRY POSSIBILITIES —

These are some of many ministry possibilities and they are listed to inspire you as you seek your vision for lay mobilization.

Career Guides for the Homeless
Scripture Readers for Shut-ins
Small Group Outreach Hosts
Plant Growers for Patients
New Visitor Contactors
Disaster Relief Food Packers
Sunday Morning Receptionist

Ushers
Prayer Team Coordinator
Host Families for Unwed Mothers
Grief Support Team
Small Group Leader
Adult Bible Master-teacher
Acolyte Coordinator

Holiday Sanctuary Decoration Team
Banner-maker
Dance Team Director
Stewardship Committee
Gifts Assessment Mentor
Parking Lot Security
Blood Drive Coordinator



"A dream is an 'I wish' statement. A vision is an 'I will' statement."

Howard G. Hendricks,
Chairman, Center for
Christian Leadership,
Dallas Theological Seminary

10. The various ministries of your church impact many people. Select a person affected by one of the ministries in your actual or envisioned lay mobilization program. How will that person's life be affected by this ministry?

11. What about those people who come forward for ministry but don't feel like they fit into an existing ministry opportunity? What is your dream for those people in finding a customized ministry? What is your dream about how your lay mobilization program will change people's approach to their workplace, their family and other parts of their life outside of the church?

12. After hearing everyone's "future" vision of your lay mobilization program, go back around and discuss what you heard that was most exciting to you.

— MINISTRY POSSIBILITIES —

Trustee	Mop and Hammer Team	Youth Outreach Leader
Handbell Choir	Church Office Administrative Assistant	Bus Driver
Elders	Small Group Coach	Youth Chaperone
Door-to-door Evangelism	New Member Guide	Vacation Bible School Teacher
Food for the Bereaved	New Member Sponsor	Crisis Phone Line Counselors
Church Grounds Landscapers	New Christian Mentor	Habitat for Humanity Coordinator
Church Library and Bookstore Clerks	Recovery Ministry Spokesperson	Ministry Catalogue Editor
Scripture Memory Coordinator	Youth Retreat Helper	Greeters
Baby Holders and Rockers	Audio-visual Assistant	Seminar Organizer



TRANSLATING DREAMS INTO VISION:

Getting on the Same Page: Fine-tuning Our Vision

1. Ask each member of the leadership team or discussion group to write a short description of the following statements. Compile the responses and share them with the group. Discuss the implications of the various perspectives.

The purpose of a lay mobilization program is to...

We will accomplish this by (broad statements of what will be done in the program)...

We will know it is successful when...

2. From your answers above and from what emerged during your brainstorming time, list and prioritize the ten most desired outcomes of your lay ministry program. Synthesize each into a word or short phrase. (e.g. "community impact", "whole-life ministry" etc.)

3. Using the top three or four on your list, spend no more than 15 minutes to develop a preliminary purpose or vision statement for your lay ministry program.

— MINISTRY POSSIBILITIES —

Addict Support Program
New Ministries Assessment Director
Hospital Visitation
Prison Ministry
Helper for Single-parent Families
Mechanics for Confused Car Owners
Church Information Center Attendant
Nursing Home Ministry Coordinator
Choir

Outreach Ministry to Minority Groups
Church Photographer
Church Newsletter Layout Specialist
Inter-generational Ministry Director
Caregiver for Children of Divorce
Tape Ministry Coordinator
Youth Rock Band
Jr. High "Big Brother" or "Big Sister"
Video Camera Operator

Sports and Recreation Fitness Director
Marketplace Evangelism Team
Special Events Team
Spiritual Renewal Retreat Director
Exit Interviewer
Crisis Pregnancy Center Counselor
Meals on Wheels Driver
Medical and Dental Advisor
Foreign Mission Team Advocate



TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

EVALUATING YOUR PROGRESS: HOW WILL YOU KNOW WHEN YOU GET THERE?

Once your leadership team has formed a vision, you can establish criteria for evaluating whether or not you are successfully accomplishing that vision. One member of the leadership team may see a lay mobilization system as being successful only when a leadership development system is operating and preparing new members for committee chair positions and board responsibilities. For another, the success of the program may mean sufficient ushers for a three-month rotation or teacher's aids prepared for the overflow in youth Sunday school. Still another may want a new Bible-study curriculum or a comprehensive gifts assessment system in place.

Here are some principles to help you identify your expectations for your lay mobilization vision:

1. Identify your expectations early on. Multiple, conflicting objectives lead to frustration and program failure. Solid foundations are built upon a clearly stated, shared understanding.
2. Involve as many program directors, salaried staff and lay leaders of the church as possible in setting goals and expectations. For a lay mobilization system to be truly effective, it requires system-wide input.
3. Too many goals will prevent a focused effort and result in scattered resources. Too few goals may lead to micro-management or a weak, aimless beginning.
4. Continue to share and discuss your goals with one another. The best way to determine if your leadership board has reached consensus is to agree upon ways to measure your goals and report on the status of those goals



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

1. In the space below, write down specific goals which will help you determine if your vision is being realized. Responding to the following question might help: "We will know this program is successful when..."

2. Consider the following questions as you decide on the objectives you will use to determine the success of your lay mobilization program:

How many new and existing members do you hope to interview and involve in ministry in each of the next five years?

How many people are you currently serving in your church and community?
How many people in and outside of your church would you like to see being served?

What percentage of equipped members do you hope to see involved in ministry in each of the next five years?

How many members do you want to see trained and prepared for new leadership positions in each of the next five years?



What percentage of new members do you hope to have involved in the life of your church within six months of their first visit?

3. How will you ask the director of the lay ministry system to report progress to the governing board or other authorities?
4. How will you reflect the importance of lay ministry in the publications and programs of the church?

Check out *Section 2, Step 3*, entitled *Administrative Systems* for more helpful suggestions on developing workable goals and objectives.



PART 6:

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

—CHOOSING A LAY MOBILIZATION MODEL FOR YOUR CHURCH

Each church has its own way of accomplishing its mission. In the previous two chapters, you examined your church's mission statement and organizational model, considered how your church currently involves the laity, and began imagining a "dream model" for lay mobilization.

Now it's time to give your dream some form by choosing the lay mobilization model that will work most effectively in your church.

*"I know your deeds,
your love and faith,
your service and
perseverance, and
that you are now
doing more than you
did at first."*

Revelation 2:19 NIV

This chapter suggests ways to weave a lay mobilization system into your existing structure rather than adding "just another program" into the life of the church. These models take advantage of the existing strengths of your church and allow you to tailor the system to fit your specific needs.

Part 6 examines four models, each of which takes advantage of the existing structure of the church:

- *The Centralized Model*—all departments report directly to a central staff member or leadership board.
- *The Departmental Model*—primary authority is placed with each department head such as the Director of Children's Ministry, Director of Worship, Director of Adult Education, etc.
- *The Sunday School or Adult Bible Fellowship Model*—organized around large adult Sunday school classes.
- *The Small Group Model*—organized so that the assimilation, teaching and support of members occurs in small groups.

This chapter also includes information on different ways to start your program.



THE CENTRALIZED MODEL

With the centralized model, the church begins a new lay ministry department. This department is connected in a purposeful way with almost every other ministry the church offers. A director is selected to manage the department and to work closely with the senior pastor, staff and church leadership.

The lay ministry department assumes primary responsibility for creating a system to support lay involvement. The Director works with the staff and ministry leaders to:

- develop a central record-keeping system to coordinate information and facilitate the connection of members with ministries that can utilize their gifts and interests.
- train interviewers and ministry mentors that meet with each member to learn his/her needs and connect the person to services, and to identify his/her talents and connect the person with ministry opportunities.
- teach leaders how to write descriptions for ministry opportunities in their areas.
- help coordinate churchwide programming to complement the goal of lay mobilization by developing Christian education that supports an understanding of our call as Christians to serve as God has gifted us.
- create training for existing department heads and ministry leaders that helps them recruit or invite members into ministry, place members according to their gifts and talents, coach members as they begin their ministry, and affirm and recognize members for service offered.
- monitor the overall system, watching for members who are misplaced or ministries that are experiencing problems with member involvement.
- evaluate the level of member involvement and spiritual growth through ministry.
- support the pastor and key leadership, as together they continue to cast the vision, "every member a minister."
- network with groups and organizations in the community to find ways members can serve in their neighborhoods and move the church outside its walls.

The diagram of the centralized model on page 53 explains the process from the point of view of someone entering the front door of your church and passing through each of the components of an effective lay mobilization program. Notice how assimilation, context, discovery, matching, placement, coaching and recognition occur in this model:

Assimilation. The process begins when a new person enters your church or when an existing member tries to find a ministry opportunity. They participate in a seminar, new members' class or orientation organized in cooperation with the department of lay ministry.

Context. Through a centralized set of seminars or classes, each person learns the Biblical basis for service and Christ's call for each of us to minister.

Discovery. The lay ministry department helps each person discover his/her unique set of gifts, skills, experiences and interests. This involves in-depth interviews and may be supported with gifts-assessment systems. This part of the process might reveal that a person has needs more urgent than ministry, such as emotional and recovery needs, faith issues that need attention, or relationship-building needs.



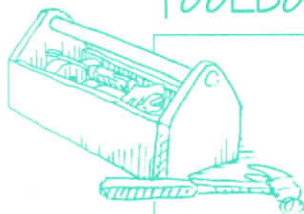
Matching. In the centralized model, the lay ministry department catalogs descriptions of every available ministry opportunity in the church and uses the interview to help match the person with the best ministry opportunity. From this centralized interview, the member is then directed to:

- a particular department of the church to serve.
- a community agency for ministry in the neighborhood.
- others who share dreams for new ministries.
- a mentor to help integrate ministry as part of the person's role in the office or home.
- a counseling or support group to help the person deal with issues that surfaced in the interview.

Placement. The lay ministry team supervises members' placement in ministry. As ministry areas request assistance, the director identifies members with the requisite skills, abilities and time and forwards their names to the ministry area. Each individual ministry area is responsible for talking with prospective members and inviting them to serve. If the ministry assignment does not "fit" for any reason, the ministry area encourages the member to return to the lay ministry department for a more appropriate position.

Coaching. Coaching members during their ministry experience is the job of the ministry area supervisor or leader. The lay ministry department provides support, feedback and central training for each department where members have been placed.

TOOLBOX



BEFORE YOU CHOOSE YOUR LAY MOBILIZATION MODEL: "WHERE HAS GOD PRECEDED YOU?"

Most often, if a church board is planning a new emphasis on lay involvement, God has already started the movement somewhere in the church. As Henry Blackaby states, "Watch to see where God is working and join him."¹

- Where has God preceded your efforts to begin a lay mobilization program?
How have you seen God prepare the way already?
- Where have new avenues already opened?
 - Through Sunday school classes?
 - Through small groups that have taken the initiative to help their members serve?
 - Through a group of entrepreneurial laypeople who have created target ministries in the community apart from the "official" church program?
 - Through a children's ministry that has already organized its volunteers well?
 - Or, are there other avenues where God has already led this movement?

Identifying where God is working will help you build your lay mobilization program on existing strengths.

¹Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God* (Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 1990), p. 15.



Recognition. Commissioning, awards, special banquets and celebrations are all part of recognizing members involved in ministry. Through its coordination role, the lay ministry department facilitates recognition events, ensuring that each person, regardless of their ministry, receives affirmation.

The Advantages of the Centralized Model:

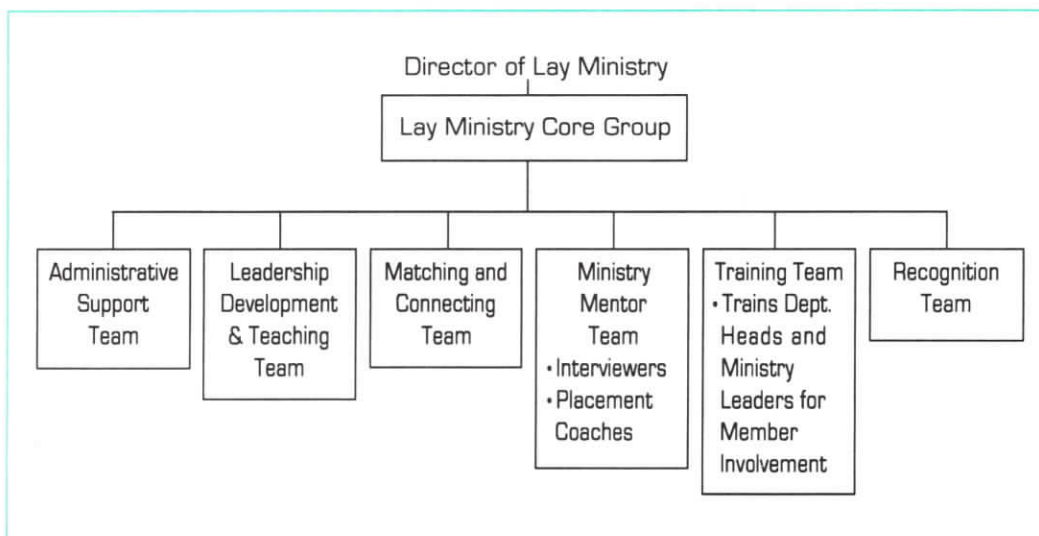
- A clear point of entry ensures that all members have the opportunity both to serve and be served. Each person progresses through the same churchwide path to placement.
- The emphasis is first on the person as a child of God and then on placing the person in ministry.
- Coordinated ministry descriptions enable the person to find the opportunity within the church that best suits his/her gifts and talents.
- A dedicated director ensures that the program will receive priority attention.

Disadvantages of the Centralized Model:

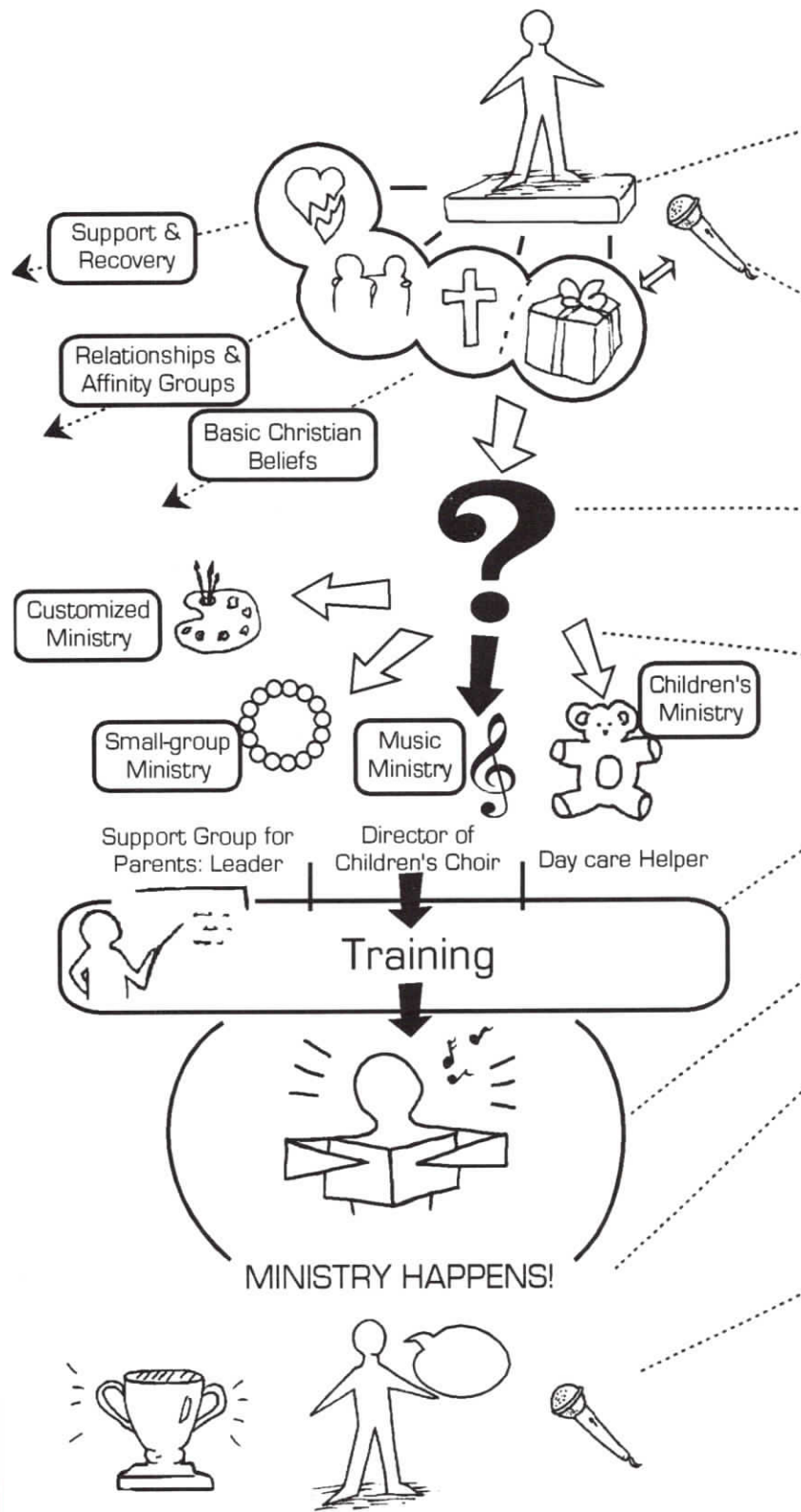
- Substantial development time is required to initiate a full-scale program. Expectations need to be adjusted accordingly.
- The potential for bureaucratic structures and bottlenecks is greater. The transition of members from the department of lay ministry to other departments requires thoughtful coordination.
- In the early stages, the process may be confusing as members and other staff shift from independent recruitment programs to a centralized “human resource” department.

How Is It Staffed? An Organizational Structure

Regardless of the lay mobilization model you choose, you will need to develop an organizational chart for your lay ministry department. The nature of your organizational structure will depend on the different organizational characteristics of the lay mobilization model you have chosen. Here is an example of the organizational chart from a well-developed, centralized lay mobilization program:



CENTRALIZED MODEL



Role of the Lay Mobilization Department:

Assimilation:

- New Member Orientation
- Ministry Seminars
- Context

Discovery:

- Interviews
- Felt Needs Assessment
- Gifts Assessment & Skills Inventory

Matching:

- Catalog Ministry Descriptions

Placement:

- Connects person with ministry
- Assures a good "fit"
- Customized Ministry Training

Coaching:

- Helps person find proper support
- Mentor people during ministry

Recognition:

- Commissioning, awards, special banquets

Exit Interviews:

- To determine—
 - continue?
 - promote?
 - change?
 - sabbatical?



DEAR STARTER KIT.

Without realizing it, I developed a lay mobilization program for our church. I thought your readers might find this story interesting.

I approached a large church in the southwest part of the country with a proposal for a small group program. I was hired and the small group program went great. Lives were being changed, leadership was developing, and the idea of "customized" ministry began to blossom at the church.

I soon found myself as the "Pastor of Adult Ministry," so I rolled up my sleeves and went to work. With my available budget, I hired people to manage the small group ministry, adult Sunday school, volunteer program and our singles program. I devoted my time to creating a unified adult ministry at a church that had never had a unified adult ministry. This is what happened:

I revised **New Member Orientation** to include a comprehensive inventory including life experiences, felt-needs assessment, gifts assessment and passion. This information was used to help each new member "Plug In" to our church. Future plans included individual interviews with each person and then allowing existing members to experience the same process.

Instead of segmenting small groups as a separate department, I began to **identify each small group as to the function it fulfilled**. Small groups were distinguished by support and recovery issues, Bible study, or ministry. I did the same thing for the different programs of other departments, including adult Sunday school and our singles program.

I found laypeople who wrote four-week classes on **Christian Basics**. These five classes (including "Who is Jesus?," "Beginning the Christian Faith," "How to Study the Bible," "Who is the Holy Spirit?," and "How to Spend Time Alone with God") were taught on a rotating basis. The goal was to offer basic Christian teaching for people who came through our doors without a Christian background.

Also, I began to **collect information on every ministry** our church offered. Each department wrote down descriptions of all their ministry opportunities and training events. We were building a ministry catalog. Ministry mentors were in the works to help nurture people as they found their ministry, received coaching and determined their future ministries.

Finally, we began **planning rallies and appreciation banquets** for our volunteers in all of our ministry departments.

The result was lay mobilization! At the time, I had never heard of "lay mobilization," but suddenly there it was! By developing a "process-oriented" adult ministry program, which helped someone move from non-involvement to ministry, lay mobilization began. My job "accidentally" changed from Pastor of Adult Ministry to Director of Lay Mobilization. Each component of adult ministry became part of the process in the development of lay ministers!

I learned two very important lessons about lay mobilization. First, developing each member into a minister is a logical, natural process. Second, you can build a lay mobilization program without dismantling or significantly changing existing ministries. Utilize your strengths by going where God has preceded you!

Signed,
An anonymous small group pastor



THE DEPARTMENTAL MODEL

This model involves equipping the leader of each ministry department with skills in lay mobilization. Operating as lay mobilization leaders for their responsibility areas, the department heads assume responsibility for interviewing members, placing them in service according to their gifts and abilities, monitoring and supporting their ongoing involvement, and recognizing them for their ministry.

This approach is particularly effective with:

- smaller churches.
- churches organized around strong departmental ministries.
- churches unable to afford a lay ministry coordinator on either a full or part-time basis.

Practical Recommendations to Facilitate This Approach:

1. Convene department leaders to lay the groundwork for the lay mobilization system. Thoughtful planning leads to the development of uniform ministry descriptions, coordinated training efforts, selection of gifts-based Christian education materials, and a system for recognition.
2. Create a Coordination Committee to share departmental ministry needs and coordinate outreach efforts. The coordinating group facilitates churchwide recruitment efforts and provides a forum to share information about members with unique gifts and interests.
3. Send the Chairperson of the Coordination Committee to additional training in lay ministry with the goal of bringing back additional knowledge to train each departmental director.
4. Develop joint seminars and training that can be used by each department that will help members discover their gifts and connect their ministry to their overall spiritual growth.

Advantages of the Departmental Model:

- The people doing the recruiting fully understand the needs of the departments. The point of entry is often where the volunteer already has a general interest to serve.
- When a coordinating committee is used, the most critical needs of the church are the first to receive assistance.
- People can be mobilized for ministry quickly.

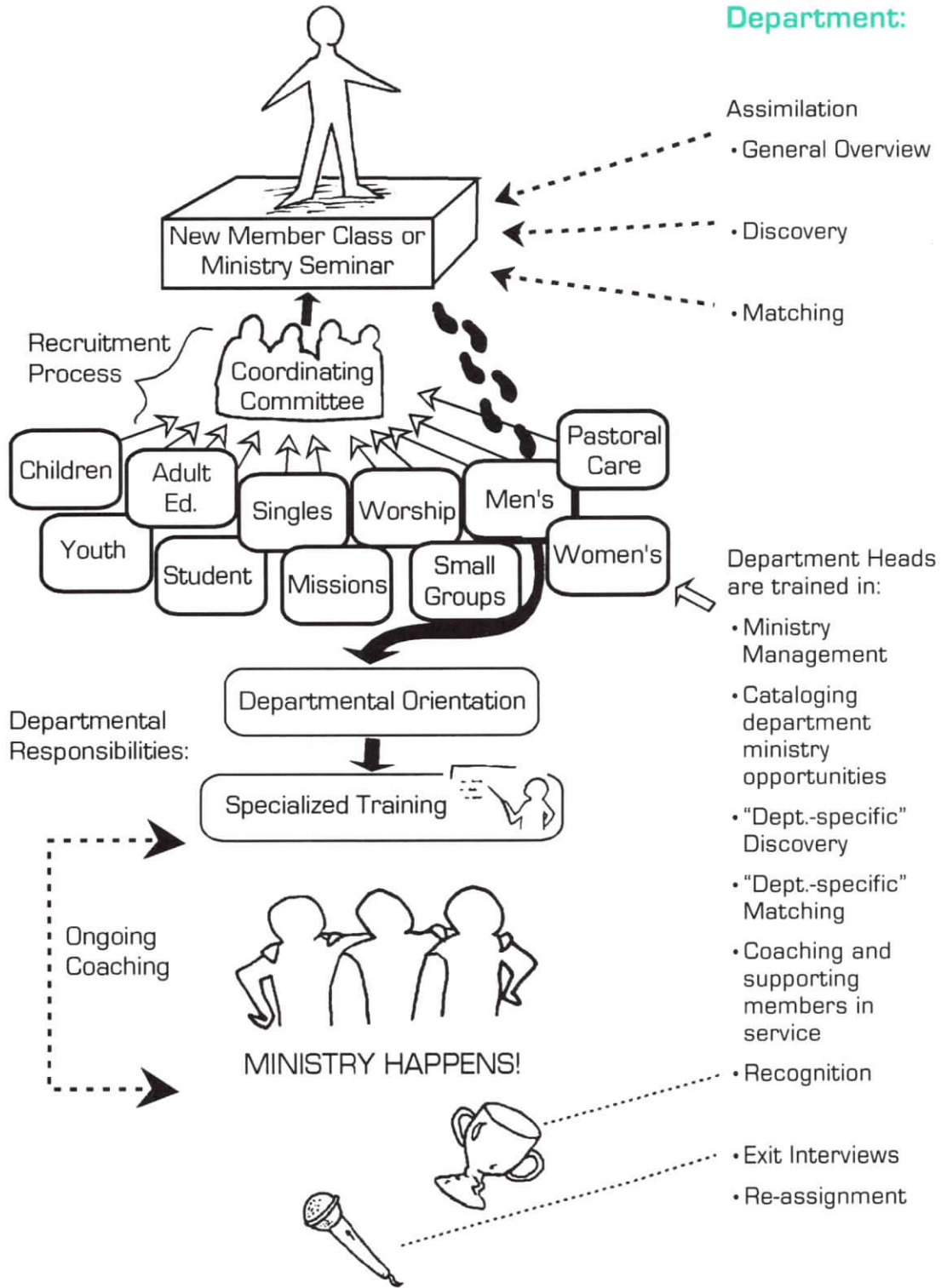
Disadvantages of the Departmental Model:

- The focus of lay mobilization tends to be on meeting departmental staffing needs, not on developing members as disciples.
- With limited incentive to expose members to other ministry opportunities, departments may poorly utilize members' gifts and skills.
- The needs of the surrounding community may be neglected since church programs have the "inside track" on recruiting.
- Lack of a centralized interviewing system means multiple entry points for service. This may confuse new members and cause them to be poorly integrated into the total ministry of the church.



THE DEPARTMENTAL MODEL

Role of the Lay Mobilization Department:



THE SUNDAY SCHOOL/ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIP MODEL

Many churches have strong Sunday school classes, or Adult Bible Fellowships (ABFs) which form the backbone of their structure. The director of lay ministry, or a designated leader, works with each Sunday school teacher or ABF leader to help him/her understand his/her role in lay mobilization. The group or class becomes the doorway to service and the vehicle for involvement within the church. The group or class leader assumes lay mobilization responsibilities, supporting members as they identify personal needs for support, and gifts and talents to utilize in service.

As illustrated in the diagram, the Sunday school class or ABF creates time for assimilation, context, teaching, discovery, and even ministry itself.

- *Assimilation* and *Context* occur as members enter groups through the existing structure and learn, through the class, about the role of lay ministry in the church.
- *Discovery* is a group process. Members are participants in "round-table" or "break-out" groups that help them discover their ministry.
- *Matching* and *Placement* occur as a group process. The class identifies the ministry it will perform as a group. The group may also choose to encourage each member to enter into ministry individually and use the group as his/her basis for support, encouragement and ongoing reflection about the meaning of ministry in a Christian's life.
- *Coaching* and *Recognition* happen among peers. The leader may focus class discussion on the experiences members are having in their particular ministry.

Advantages of the Sunday School Model:

- This approach takes advantage of the existing leadership structure within the church. It builds upon existing Bible studies and trust relationships to encourage service through peer influence as well as scriptural understanding.
- For some members, the discovery of gifts is more effective in the group setting.
- Friends are available to participate in group projects or to develop "buddy teams" to encourage members hesitant to serve.

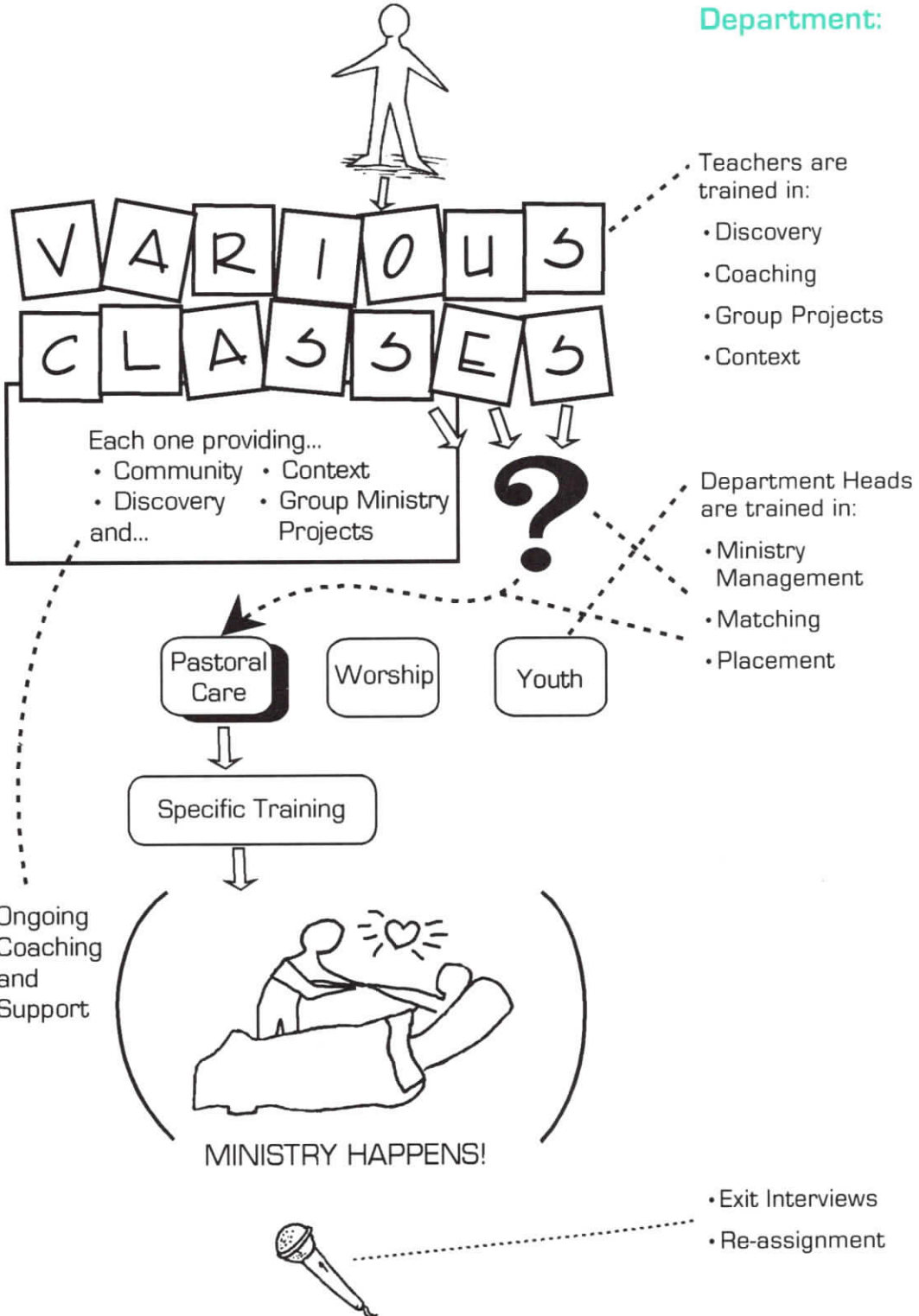
Disadvantages of the Sunday School Model:

- Teachers/leaders may not feel qualified to assume this additional role, or may not have the gifts that support this new form of involvement. You may want to encourage group leaders to delegate this position to a committed assistant.
- It is often hard to get past the needs of friends in the group in order to focus on the concerns of the church or the community.
- There needs to be a centralized lay ministry department or coordinating committee to catalog churchwide and community ministry areas.
- Without centralized coordination, it is difficult to monitor success and determine the outcome of the effort.



SUNDAY SCHOOL / ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIP MODEL

Role of the Lay Mobilization Department:



SMALL GROUP, CELL-DRIVEN, OR META-CHURCH MODEL

The quest for community is a high priority for many churches today. This quest has led many churches to reorganize their whole structure around small groups.

In this model, the lay ministry department utilizes the existing small group structure to help groups guide all of their members to places of ministry.

Key Features of a Small Group Model for Lay Mobilization:

Small groups provide an environment for nurturing members, meeting their needs for community, and supporting them in their emerging Biblical and spiritual understanding of themselves.

Small Groups and Lay Ministry can complement one another in a variety of ways:

- *Assimilation.* People assimilate and make friends quickly in small groups.
- *Context.* Small groups provide excellent places for interactive learning and personalized application of Biblical truth.
- *Discovery.* Small groups are considered by many to be the best place to conduct gifts assessment programs. The feedback of an intimate group of caring friends is a wonderful complement to "pencil and paper" assessments.



Serendipity's Lyman Coleman, for four decades a pioneer of the small group movement, uses the analogy of the three-legged stool to emphasize the importance of a balanced small group.

"Each small group needs to rest equally on three legs: group-building, Bible study and ministry. Any small group that keeps these three components in balance will be a healthy small group AND a small group that is more likely to multiply in a timely way. A small group that only emphasizes one or two of the three "legs" develops unhealthy habits, such as becoming too introspective, prone to ministry burn-out, or suffering from spiritual indigestion."

Serendipity offers over 70 different small group products for new groups, support and recovery groups, affinity groups, and Bible study groups. *Graduation!*, Serendipity's latest product, is a six-week small group book that helps a group say "good-bye," consider the needs of the church, and identify where each group member can move onward in serving others. Also, Serendipity has recently published *The Small Group Starter Kit*, which includes a Director's Workbook, a Leader's Manual, and a variety of other helpful tools. Serendipity can be contacted at 800-525-9563.



Lay mobilization systems can support small groups as both systems work to achieve their shared goals of building disciples in an atmosphere of support and acceptance.

- *Matching* members to ministry opportunities requires thoughtful attention to the unique needs of a member. Many small group leaders welcome assistance with this responsibility area. Specially trained mentors from the department of lay ministry may visit groups to guide the matching process.
- *Placement and coaching* is clearly enhanced by the support a member receives in the small group. Yet, as in the other models, the primary responsibility rests with the leaders of areas where members are placed. Coordination between leaders of small groups and ministry areas is facilitated by the department of lay ministry.
- *Celebration of service* sustains effort and builds up the body of Christ. Leaders of both the lay mobilization effort and the small group effort can cooperatively ensure that members grow through ministry and receive recognition for a job well done.

BUILDER'S NOTE:


Small groups can serve a vital function that many other church environments cannot: helping people with support and recovery issues. The intimate, informal setting of a group of 8 people meeting in a home, can be a powerful place to deal with interpersonal, emotional, and historical issues. A small group lay mobilization model needs to recognize that some people who need what a small group has to offer, might not be ready to embark on the adventure of ministry. The discovery process needs to include information gathering which might determine if someone is simply too overwhelmed with life's issues and struggles to begin the mobilization process.

Why Combine Lay Mobilization and Small Groups?

Small groups and lay mobilization can be a powerful combination. Actually, a healthy small group program IS a lay involvement program because the church is recruiting, training and placing lay people who have shepherding, pastoring, leadership and other gifts in small groups where they can exercise those gifts. Lay mobilization is enhanced in small group clusters which encourage members to serve, which facilitate community and which support personal growth.

An advantage of conducting discovery in a small group context is that it provides enhanced bonding as members learn about each other's life stories, gifts and interests. As group members get involved in helping each other find a place of service, they can, from the start, focus on helping each other, rather than on what they can "get" from the group. Mutual commitment is built around a concrete and immediate task.





Dr. Paul Ford provides a seven-step strategic process for implementing a spiritual gift-mobilizing emphasis in a small group-centered church, or "cell-church."

1. Owning of the Vision
 - Who carries the torch for Cell-Group Gifts Mobilizing?
 - How to check ownership among staff, governing board, and ministry leaders.
2. Defining Mentoring Leadership
 - Who will be the mentors: small group leader or separate role?
 - How will group leader and mentor work together if separate role?
3. Defining Small Group Leader and Mentor Training
 - Identify key issues for training.
 - Gift specializing, interview skills, diagnosing assessment tools.
4. Defining Components, Ministry Identity and Assessments
 - Spiritual gift, ministry burden/passion, plus...?
 - Time availability, maturity, talents, experience, personality/temperament.
5. Planning a Curriculum
 - Use available resource or develop own Bible study process?
 - S.H.A.P.E., Networking, or Getting Gifts in Gear...samples
6. Placing People in Ministry in and Beyond the Small Group
 - Where will group members use their gift: role definitions.
 - Serving within the group, larger body ministry, new small group?
7. Continuing to Mentor
 - Ongoing discipling in ministry
 - Who will check in, double-check the placement, encourage, mentor?

Training programs and consulting on this process, including examples of churches which have adapted and used it, are available through Dr. Paul R. Ford Ministries, 505-296-8568.

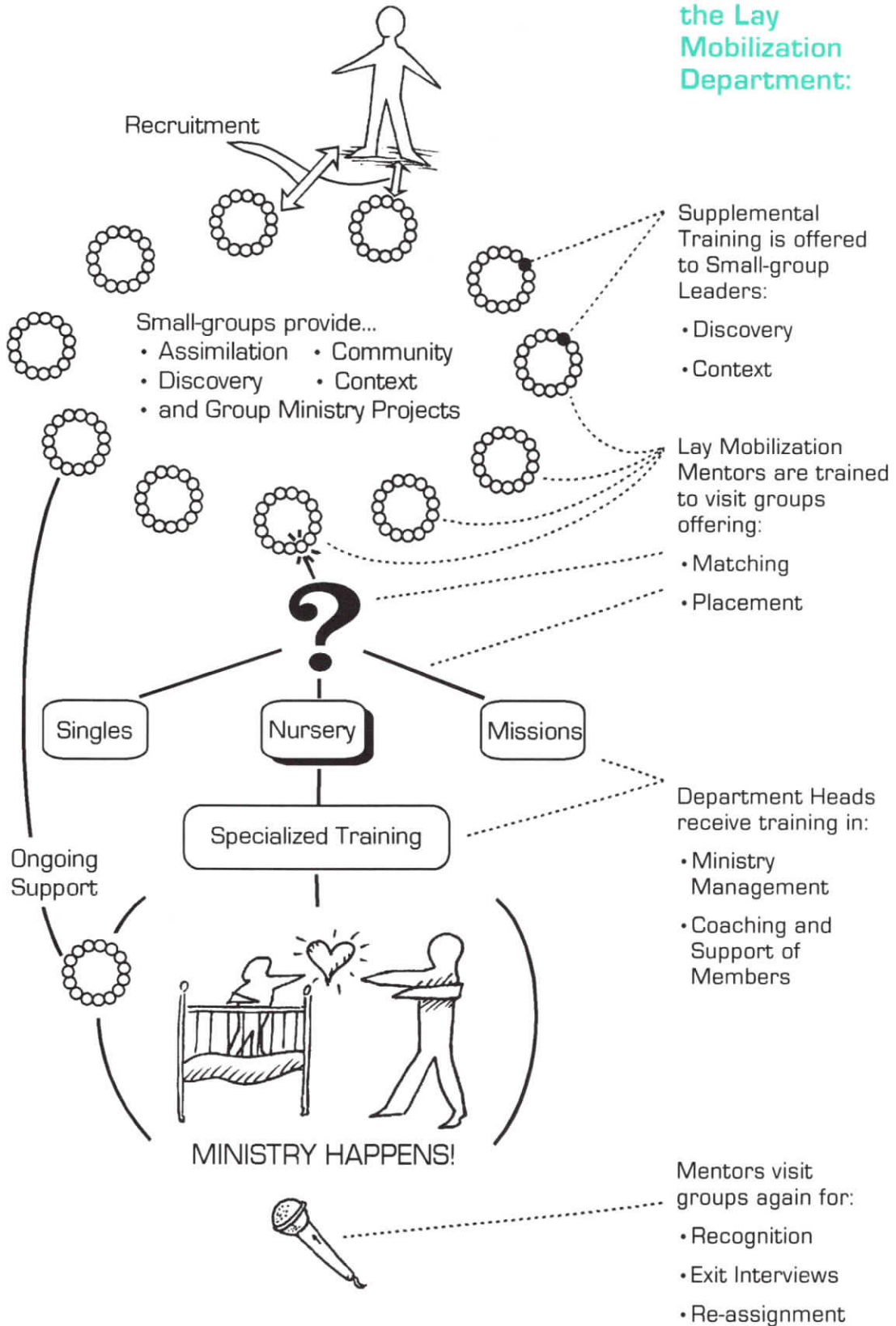
Another advantage of combining lay mobilization and small group efforts is that it helps keep small groups from becoming too inwardly focused. Inwardly focused groups often become stifled or develop unhealthy relational patterns. Many churches have discovered that once a group bonds, it is very difficult to integrate new members. One alternative is to find ways the group can do service projects together; an even better alternative is to help its members discover their gifts and serve in other areas, maintaining the small group as a place of support, ongoing learning, prayer and encouragement. As individual members are focused on service in areas of giftedness outside the group, they bring back to the group the concerns of the church and community.

Lay mobilization brings broad-based coordination and an awareness of all the ministry needs of the congregation. An effective director has networks into the community and knows of areas of need where members may serve beyond the walls of the church. Through centralized management, both programs can connect with the larger church, encouraging participation in programming that supports the larger body. The lay mobilization effort offers a central point of assimilation of new members, helping ensure that people are connected with small groups or other ministries of the church.



SMALL GROUP MODEL

Role of the Lay Mobilization Department:



Practical Suggestions for Mutual Support of Small Groups and Lay Mobilization:

1. The most effective shared beginnings occur when both systems develop under the coordination of the same leader, such as the senior pastor, or the same advisory board. Otherwise, competition for the best leaders, visibility and dollars will weaken both efforts.
2. Expand the training of the small group leaders. Include a comprehensive understanding of lay mobilization in the small group facilitators' training. Understanding the lay mobilization system, and the importance of ministry in the life of the Christian, enables the small group leader to effectively encourage and support lay service.
3. Provide small groups with a gifts assessment curriculum. In addition to conducting the initial interview, the lay ministry program offers all new members and interested existing members the increased self-knowledge that comes from a good curriculum and that can facilitate effective ministry placement.
4. Train and develop a centralized talent bank of ministry mentors. These persons—trained in gifts assessment, matching and placement—can be deployed as short-term “consultants” to individual small groups for two- to six-month periods to support the group in its discovery and ministry exploration work.
5. Create an information system that is easily accessible. Encourage each small group to appoint a liaison to the lay mobilization program. This person can survey the needs and interests of the group and assist members with the identification of ministry opportunities.
6. Work together to develop exciting churchwide recognition programs. Groups experience community as they fulfill ministry that is celebrated by the congregation. Individuals grow in their awareness of their giftedness as their ministry is affirmed.
7. Encourage small groups to act as the “base camp” for members committed to ministry in the church and the community. Make the small group the vehicle for reflection and growth.
8. Build “task groups” which are composed of members who are serving together in the same area of ministry.
9. Focus on ministry in daily life. Encourage small group exploration about how all life can be seen as an integrated whole for the Christian.



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

1. Where do our small group and lay ministry programs overlap? Where do they have different goals and structures?
2. What steps can we take to make sure our small group and lay ministry program are intricately coordinated?
3. What seems the best approach for us? To train the small group leaders or develop a "pool" of ministry mentors? What can we do to help offset the disadvantages of the approach we've chosen?
4. What seems to be the best way to structure our groups? To serve through service projects, serve together, or act as a "base camp" of support? What can we do to help offset the disadvantages of the approach we've chosen?



PROACTIVE COUSINS: 3 WAYS TO REACH THE SAME GOAL

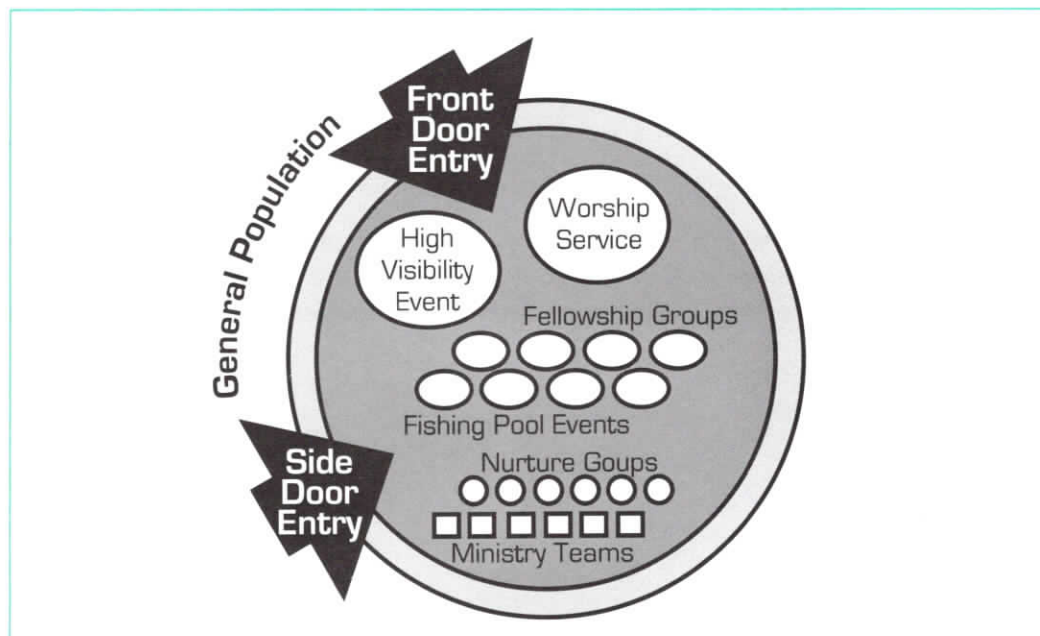
There is a relatively small percentage of people who have the gifts to develop their own path to a goal. Many people need help to establish a path to reach their goals. This means they need a clear statement of "What is the next step for me?" and a way to keep track of their progress along the way.

Many churches do not understand this and have found that while people might listen to the sermons, they have difficulty applying the truths of the sermon to their lives. Values such as lay involvement, discipleship and community building may be clearly preached, but without a pathway for implementation these values may not be translated into actions. In this case, the church feels stagnated and people get used to listening to sermons without knowing their next step in response.

In the last ten years, three movements, "the proactive cousins," have been started to address this problem in different areas of the church. All three start with the basic assumption that people need a clear path to follow to reach their goals. Also, all three movements are striving for a healthy balance of discipleship, community and lay mobilization. Each begins with a different area of the church.

Community:

Carl George developed a paradigm called "The Meta-Church" which provides clear steps for new member assimilation and progress toward small group communities. Rather than preaching about community and hoping it develops, the Meta-Church provides a proactive system to move each member to a small group that is facilitated by a trained leader.

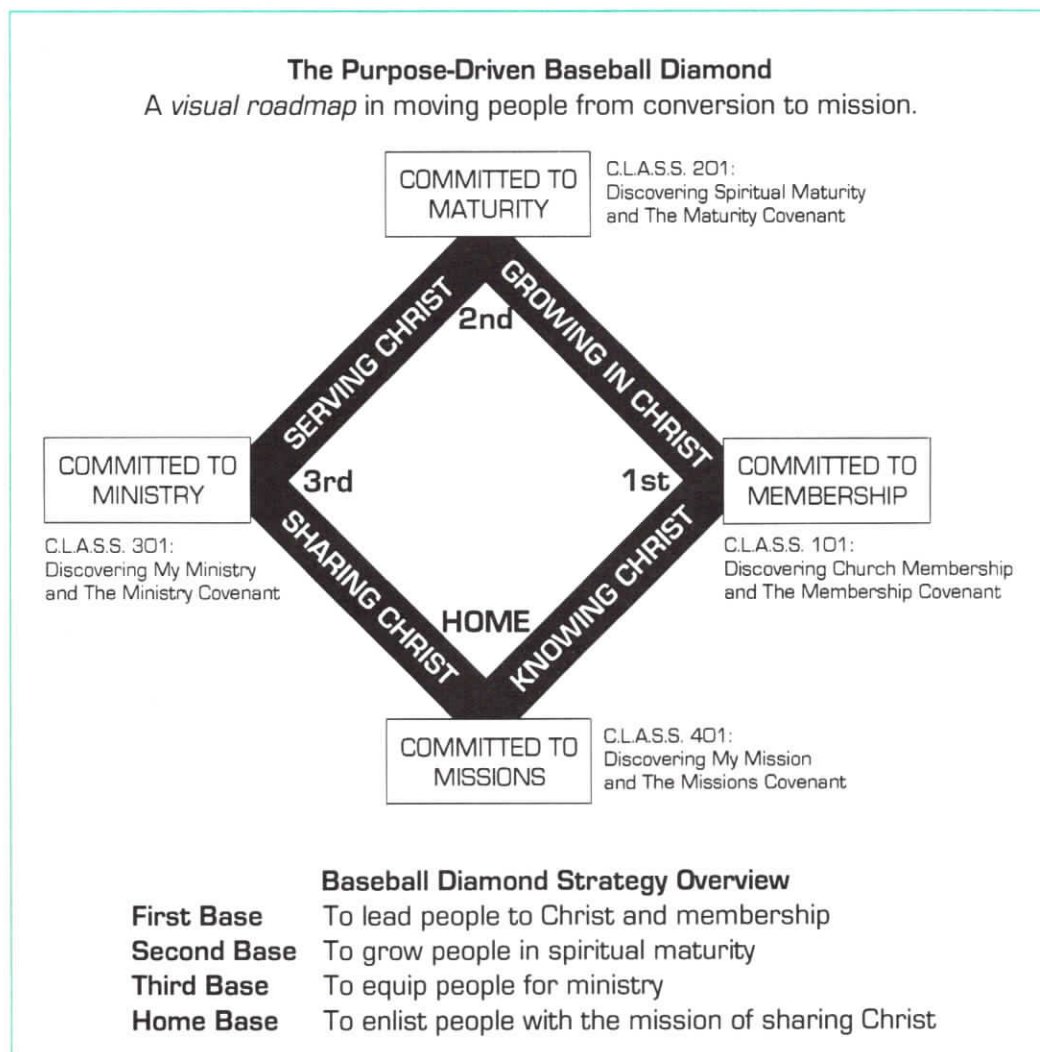


[Chart used with permission. *Prepare Your Church for the Future*, Carl F. George, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1991. For more information about the Meta-Church paradigm, contact the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth 818-449-0425.]



Discipleship:

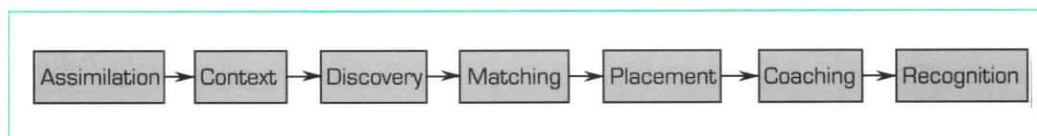
Rick Warren at Saddleback Valley Community Church developed a paradigm called "The Purpose-Driven Church" which provides four clear steps people can progress through as they grow in their commitment. Each step includes a special training class. Members are encouraged to be continually thinking about when they can take the next step in their spiritual growth.



(The class curriculum and tapes are available through The Encouraging Word, P.O. Box 6080-388, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, 714-587-9534.)

Lay Involvement:

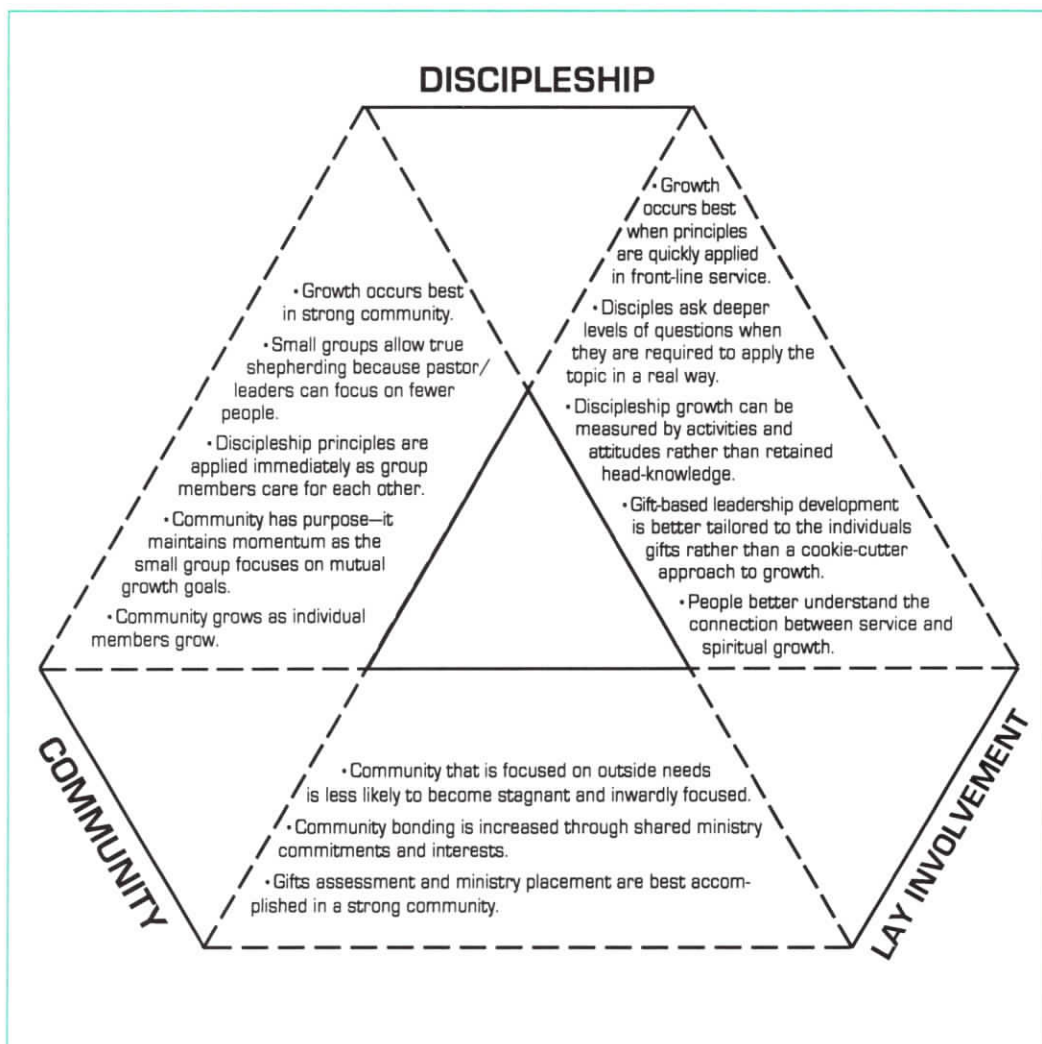
Through the work of Marlene Wilson, Bruce Bugbee, Paul Ford and this *Starter Kit*, various proactive systems have been developed to move lay members toward understanding their gifts and finding a place of service.



It is a mistake to label any of these programs as just a small group program, or just a volunteer management program, or just a Christian education program. Done properly, each movement includes discipleship, community and lay involvement and together they help every church member realize his or her goals.

Similarly, regardless of whether you choose for your church a centralized model, a departmental model, a Sunday school model, or a small group model, effective lay mobilization programs will all achieve a healthy balance between discipleship, community and ministry.

The following diagram illustrates the powerful synergy that can be created when a lay mobilization program balances discipleship, community and lay ministry.



Suggestions for Starting Your Lay Mobilization Program

Many churches may not be ready to implement a full lay mobilization effort due to budget constraints or lack of support by the staff, congregation, or top-level leadership. Consider these alternatives to pave the way for a full-scale effort down the road.

Start slow and pilot test your process.

Start with a single department. The initial administrative systems, the process of cataloging ministry opportunities, and the preparation of the ministry leader to place and support members in service, can be developed on small scale. Together you can brainstorm meaningful ways to recognize members already serving and seek their input about other people to contact to work in this ministry area. You can explore gifts assessment tools you may want to incorporate and determine their effectiveness in helping people discern their gifts and talents. As you work out the "kinks" in the system, you can move to other departments.

Fix the "squeaky wheel" first!

Many churches face the greatest crisis for member support in the Children's Ministry Department. Select this or another high-priority area and investigate the situation. Meet with members already serving in this area and learn what they enjoy and what makes their commitment. With the department leader, develop ministry descriptions that meet the needs of the department and the concerns of the members. Develop an exciting interview process that piques the interest of members. Recognize existing members and develop ways to commission new members into ministry. Promote the ministry in this area and the exciting opportunities to serve in the ministry area. Keep careful records of each accomplishment and highlight shared successes!

Nothing succeeds like success. With a good track record, and needs well met, other departments will be eager to participate in the system.

Decide where to begin. With mentors, administrative systems, or both?

Administrative systems: Some churches place their initial effort on record-keeping systems to ensure that the administrative supports are solidly in place before people are invited to participate in the program. This makes sure that the initial participants do not suffer from partially installed systems and end up either being poorly treated or falling through the cracks. These programs operate behind the scene for months as the hard work of designing computer programs, entering membership data and collecting ministry descriptions occurs before the first participants start through the system.



Ministry mentors: For other churches, the idea of complicated record keeping doesn't fit their culture. Many churches are in geographic regions, or have an informal tradition, that makes it unlikely that they will ever collect attendance records or monitor member involvement through computers. While this likely means a loss of much of the benefit of the program, it is better to start where the church culture allows, rather than not have a lay ministry program at all.

Develop a core of trained ministry mentors thoroughly familiar with their responsibilities and knowledgeable about the church. The program will operate behind the scenes for several months as ministry mentors are found and trained. When ready, mentors can serve as follow-up consultants to a new members class or gifts seminar, or can be "let loose" throughout the church to informally help members find places of ministry that fit their gifts. As the value of lay mobilization is demonstrated through action, it will be possible to "back track" and create an administrative structure that will facilitate a more carefully monitored process. Few leadership boards are unimpressed when high levels of member involvement can be documented statistically.

Regardless of your choice, prepare well in advance. It is damaging to a program to launch an effort if you are ill-prepared to meet the demand for service.



Sell the idea first to those most able to sell it to others.

It is vital that the most influential people in the church thoroughly understand and experience the process early. Their personal benefit will help them authentically convince others of the importance of a system for lay mobilization. You might wait on the results of a pilot project to yield benefits, or select a group of influential people to try out a new gifts assessments system before it is unveiled to the church at large. These people can pave a path that may otherwise take years of work to permeate the church. It is very important that the leadership board personally go through a pilot discovery and placement system very early in the process.

What tools and resources should be in place before we start?

There are several excellent assimilation, gifts assessment and matching and placement curriculum programs on the market. Many are listed in *Section 3* of the *Starter Kit* under *Resources and References*. Some churches start their lay mobilization program with a curriculum and customize it to fit their needs. Others develop a carefully designed interview process and work hard to train the interviewer but never incorporate a gifts assessment system. Each approach has its merits.



Advantages of starting without a curriculum or gifts assessment:

- A church can concentrate on establishing the system and training the leaders, without getting distracted by the search for the “perfect tool.” As the leaders do the work, they will define what tools they need to improve their efforts.
- A program initially designed without a standard curriculum will be more customized to the unique needs and language of the individual church.
- An effort started and designed by people in the church often leads to greater personal ownership and ongoing support of the resulting program.
- You can add a curriculum later once the basic foundation is developed. This ensures that the curriculum is adjusted to meet the needs of the congregation, not the other way around.

Disadvantages of starting without a curriculum or gifts assessment:

- When a decision is made to use a curriculum, the time spent in design and adoption may appear to be re-inventing the wheel.
- Some important details may be overlooked that would have been covered in a curriculum or gift-assessment instrument.

Advantages of starting with a curriculum or gifts assessment:

- Someone has already thought through the main issues and provided you with a step-by-step program for implementation.
- Professionally printed resources give members something they can take home and refer to later.
- The church has a common language and a common approach and more clearly understands the terms being used by various leaders in the process.
- Some curricula come with workbooks, videos and audio tapes that have been designed by professional trainers with skills you may not have access to in your churches.

Disadvantages of starting with a curriculum or gifts assessment:

- Searching for the “perfect tool” often distracts from the main issues. The quality and comprehensiveness of tools greatly varies and it is difficult at first to identify their weaknesses.
- A published system always seems “complicated” until someone invests the time to understand the whole approach enough to see where the program fits and doesn't fit his/her church. When a church jumps into a standard curriculum without this large initial investment of time, it often results in a misfit.
- No system is perfect. Many have an emphasis that may be different from the focus of your church. Starting with a system may not allow you to see its weaknesses and adjust for them at the beginning.
- Many gifts assessment systems were designed for business applications. They may work well in leadership development but may be too complicated for assimilation of new members. They must be checked to make sure they have multiple levels for both the new members and advanced leadership development stages of your program. For some churches, it is important that they use “church” language and have biblical support. (See *Using Assessment Tools* in *Section 2* of the *Starter Kit*.)



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

Discussion questions:

1. Which lay mobilization model do you think would work most effectively at your church?
 - The centralized model
 - The departmental model
 - The Sunday school/ABF model
 - The small group model
 - A hybrid between two or more models.
2. Chart the flow that a new member might take through the model in your church.
3. What will you call your lay mobilization program?
4. How will you start your lay mobilization program?



PART 7:

MAYBE WE SHOULD REMODEL —UPDATING YOUR CURRENT SYSTEM

In 1983, Marlene Wilson wrote "...today's church too often is a happening that never quite happened or, as Thielecke expressed it, dynamite that failed to go off. The pews are filled with potential unrealized and energy untapped. As a result, both the gathered and scattered ministry of the laity is in trouble in a great many churches."¹ Her book,

How to Mobilize Church Volunteers, helped pioneer a lay mobilization movement in churches throughout the United States and Canada. Many exciting programs now involve people in ministry across denominations and within the evangelical movement.

Successfully functioning programs, as well as those still finding their way, often look for new approaches to update their systems. *Maybe We Should Remodel* addresses some of the concerns raised by experienced leaders of lay ministry programs.

In *Maybe We Should Remodel—Updating Your Current System* you will find...

- The three most common missing links within existing lay ministry programs.
 1. Support of the top leadership
 2. A qualified, designated lay ministry leader
 3. A complete operational system
- Ideas for enhancing existing programs.
 - Add to the interview process.
 - Connect with Christian education.
 - Connect with small-group ministry.
 - Enhance the skills of other leaders.
 - Set goals for program improvement.
 - Expand the role of the program.

"You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual home to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ...But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

1 Peter 2:5, 9-10 NIV

¹Marlene Wilson, *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983), p. 21.



THE THREE MOST COMMON MISSING LINKS WITHIN EXISTING LAY MOBILIZATION PROGRAMS

Fully 99% of churches expressing dissatisfaction with their current programs can trace their disappointment back to one of the three key ingredients for program success.

Effective programs must have...

1. The visible, ongoing support of the top leadership.
2. A qualified, designated leader with adequate resources to do the job.
3. A complete operational system, not just pieces of the process.

A lay ministry system will continue to produce disappointing results until a congregation is prepared to make a full-fledged, three-pronged commitment to the program.

1. Does the program have visible, ongoing support from top leadership?

Mobilizing the laity for ministry represents a significant shift from the more traditional clergy-centered model of ministry delivery. Although most churches preach the theology of the priesthood of all believers, a much smaller number have identified the process necessary to equip members for ministry. Many staff members simply aren't aware of the steps they must take to make the transition from doing the ministry to equipping others to minister.

Compounding the difficulty, seminaries have generally not taught courses in effective lay management. Few continuing education programs address the issue. While judicatories may want to support the movement, many are unclear how to proceed or lack the resources to initiate a major effort.

What does it mean to provide visible, ongoing support for lay ministry? This checklist identifies some of the factors indicative of a well-supported program.

- Is the program highly visible in the church?
- Do the members participating in ministry feel supported in, and energized by, their efforts?
- Is lay ministry frequently spoken about during sermons and worship services?
- Does the person in charge of lay mobilization report to the senior pastor or the top-level management staff?
- Does the Director of Lay Ministry receive a salary similar to other staff positions, such as the Director of Christian Education or Director of Children's Ministry?
- Does the Director of Lay Ministry have adequate secretarial support, good office space, and access to necessary office resources?



- Is the Director of Lay Ministry included in central planning meetings and retreats?
- If the Director of Lay Ministry position is part-time or unfunded, is increasing the funding for this position a high priority?

2. Does the program have a qualified, designated lay ministry leader?

Many churches underestimate the amount of time, energy and expertise required to implement and direct a comprehensive lay involvement system. The following list of questions will help you determine if your church adequately supports the lay ministry department.

- Is the person in charge of lay ministry vested with the authority as well as the responsibility to do the job?
- Is the director skilled in accomplishing most of the facets of the job, and capable of identifying others to augment skills he or she may be lacking?
- Are you prepared to hire someone to direct the Department of Lay Mobilization when the job has become too large for a committee to handle?
- Is lay mobilization considered an integral part of the discipleship process and not "just one more church activity?"
- Is the Director of Lay Ministry given adequate funds for continuing education?
- Is adequate secretarial and administrative support available to the department for record-keeping responsibilities?
- Is the director integrally involved in the planning and development process utilized in your church?

3. Does your lay mobilization system include a complete operational process?

Because congregations tend to emphasize certain objectives more than others, they frequently develop programs which reflect their unique concerns. While it is appropriate that a congregation support its objectives, a lay ministry system is only effective when all the elements are in place. Two imbalances are most commonly observed:

The Teaching Imbalance

The "teaching imbalance" is seen most often among the evangelical churches. Many of these churches provide excellent assimilation and new member programs. Some go even farther with in-depth Biblical teaching, explaining the context for serving, and conducting sophisticated seminars to help members determine their spiritual gifts. But the track ends before the train station. Members are left on their own to figure out the implications of their gifts for



ministry and they lack assistance with locating a place to serve. The result is a program with a great start, but the actual number of people who are placed trained, and serving is limited.

These congregations are encouraged to study the overview chart and refer to the *Starter Kit, Section 2* for assistance with Building Blocks 4, 5, 6, and 7.

The Activity Imbalance

It is the mainline churches which most frequently suffer from the "activity imbalance." Elaborate volunteer management systems catalogue ministry opportunities with carefully developed position descriptions; records on members are well kept; hundreds of people are interviewed and placed. Yet, what appears to be lacking for many is a connection for these individuals between their service, the mission of the church, and their own spiritual growth. People are matched to a ministry based upon a written survey or an interview, but they do not have a sense that they have been empowered with the knowledge about how God made them suited to the task. They may feel that the priority is to fill a vacancy in a program, rather than to help them grow and contribute to the church in the unique way that God designed.

As a result, the lay ministry program is sometimes seen as outside the central focus of the church, or as a program whose main value is to provide volunteers for the other programs. The director in these churches is often placed lower in the church hierarchy, and much of the potential for contributing to a healthy church is lost. Continuing the earlier metaphor, the train arrives at the station, but the passengers are unclear about where they are, and much of the benefit is lost.

Activity-focused churches are encouraged to study the overview chart and read the *Starter Kit, Section 1* for vision and context support.

A full system develops with solid organizational support and combines the strengths of both imbalances. This creates a complete track for the members to be assimilated into the church, learn about their Biblical calling to serve, and discover their gifts. It continues on with a system to match and guide members to potential ministry opportunities based on their gifts, calling and life experiences. Once placed in service, members receive ongoing training, nurturing and support, both about how their ministry is seeding their growth as Christians and how it is contributing to the mission of the church.

"You can inoculate people against the life of the church by throwing them into the committee structure without them seeing either the personal or organizational significance of their work. They get burned out as they do their duty without joy. ...Lay people are called to the ministry of the church not just the business of the church. ...They need a personal sense that what they are involved in is making a difference."

Michael Foss, Pastor,
Prince of Peace Lutheran
Church, Burnsville, MN



IDEAS FOR ENHANCING EXISTING PROGRAMS

Here are some practical suggestions to help you improve your existing lay mobilization program. Involve your Lay Ministry Committee as you explore ways to develop your program.

Add to the Interview Process:

- For churches where the Lay Ministry Director conducts all the interviews, consider developing a team of “ministry mentors” who conduct interviews. The ministry mentor gives each member more time and stays with the person throughout the process of matching and placement. See *Step 4: The Interviewing Process*, in *Section 2* of the *Starter Kit*.
- Gift-assessment tools can enhance the interview process and provide a common language for discussion and placement purposes. See *Section 3: Resources & References* for a listing of available tools.
- If your interviewing process focuses on new members, consider expanding to include long-term members and those who have served faithfully for years in one ministry area. Both groups may appreciate the attention and the opportunity to reexamine their role in the church.
- Expand your interview system to include exit interviews. Members gain valuable experience and insight as a result of service. Spend time with persons completing a term of office, or finalizing a ministry commitment, and learn from them.

Connect Lay Ministry with Christian Education:

- Help members better connect their ministry to their spiritual growth through specially designed educational programs, such as Bible studies that focus on spiritual gifts.
- Gifts assessment and personality surveys can be taught so they can be applied to work and family, as well as service.
- Social ministry and benevolence arms of the church may elect to offer programs to focus on community need and highlight service opportunities outside the walls of the church.

Connect Lay Ministry with Small-group Ministry:

- Small groups are an excellent place to administer gifts assessment tools. Through the personal knowledge members of the group gain about each other, members can have their gifts recognized and validated by others, and gain the support of the group to use these gifts in ministry. See *Part 6 of Section 1* for more information about small-group ministry and ways that lay mobilization can support and complement a small-group ministry.



Enhance the Skills of Staff and Other Ministry Leaders:

- Time spent with staff and ministry leaders can provide them with the skills they may be lacking to train, support and affirm members in service. Allocate time at staff meetings, retreats or inservice experiences for the Director of Lay Ministry to:
 - train department leaders in more effective working relations with members,
 - address problems that members have shared about the church in ways that enable staff and leaders to hear their concerns,
 - teach staff to successfully invite members into ministry,
 - teach other skills people have experienced a need for.

Set Goals for Program Improvement:

- Daily maintenance activities often demand so much attention that long-range planning is neglected. Nothing can energize a committee more than setting new and exciting goals for program growth and development. Examine church publications, look at your mission statement, and identify new areas for exploration.
 - If your program lacks strong community connections, consider ways to become the “church scattered.”
 - If youth have not been a focus, look at ways to involve them in service individually, in groups, or as family units.
 - Create a new recognition program, highlighting a member of the month.
 - Create plans to involve a larger percentage of the members in service.Have fun with your goals and watch your program develop!

Expand the Role of the Lay Ministry Program:

- For church leaders familiar with the business world, the changing role of the Director of Lay Ministry looks similar to the expansion of human resource departments over the last few decades. As companies have increasingly recognized the value of their human resources, the departments have expanded beyond payroll and benefits to include career counseling, employee assistance, team development, training, and other responsibilities. Churches with several years in lay ministry are seeing their departments grow to include several staff members with responsibilities for leadership development, new member assimilation, gift assessment, and, in some cases, small-group ministry responsibilities.
- Focus specifically on a leadership development program. Lay mobilization programs often become so preoccupied with the day-to-day concerns of meeting the ministry needs of the church that leadership development is neglected. An effective lay mobilization system is always identifying members with leadership gifts and consciously developing the skills and abilities of these members.



PART 8:

PROTEST SIGNS AND PICKET LINES —OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT

“Change and leadership go together. There can be no real leadership without significant change. For Christians there is a strong theological grounding for change. We must change. The way things are in the world at any moment is never synonymous with God's ultimate will. There is always a 'not yet' quality and an incompleteness about things as they are. God is always pulling us into the future with a call for an order far different from the current state of things.”

Lovett H. Weems, Jr., *Church Leadership*, p. 38

“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.”

Romans 12:4-6 NRSV

Even for Christians with a strong theological grounding for change and a sincere desire to mobilize the laity in ministry, change is rarely easy. And for those who feel that things are pretty much all right the way they are, the concept of change is even less welcome. *Protest Signs and Picket Lines* airs some of the most frequently voiced concerns about lay mobilization and offers responses to those concerns.

In *Part 8*, you will explore frequently raised concerns about lay mobilization...

- Will lay ministry add to an already overwhelming work load?
- Will this new program place my job in jeopardy?
- Is lay ministry just another layer of church bureaucracy?
- Are members qualified to minister?
- Will I lose control of my ministry when the laity are involved?
- Is there ever a right time to initiate a lay ministry program?

Protest Signs & Picket Lines concludes with pointers for managing resistance to this new area of ministry.



PROTEST #1:

"With an **overwhelming work load**, how can this church tackle even one more new program? How can I handle even one more piece of work?"

The Problem

Most church staff members have job descriptions requiring 60- to 70-hour work weeks in exchange for 40 hours or less of salary. Even if things aren't perfect the way they are, there is a certain comfort with the familiar. Lay ministry seems to add more work to this mix. One more staff person reporting to the senior or executive pastor; ministry descriptions to be written; additional training sessions to attend and additional training to deliver; a new information management system to be developed, or an existing one to be revised; and possibly, new Christian education materials to be incorporated into an established system. No wonder people already on the verge of burnout find the new system slightly less than inspiring.

The Possibilities

It would be dishonest to say that a lay mobilization system will not bring additional work. However, the long-term effect is to provide qualified, meaningful support to the staff, and to greatly expand the base of people involved in the ministry of the church. Ultimately, lay ministry is about stewardship—stewardship of the time and talents of the staff and the members alike. When the gifts, skills, talents, passions and temperament of members are carefully discerned and the needs of the various ministry opportunities are carefully described, it is infinitely easier to connect people with opportunities which both suit and interest them. And, as members have the opportunity to pursue their gifts and interests, staff find their time more available for the parts of the job they most enjoy.

A comprehensive lay involvement program brings a measure of accountability, as well. When ministry is understood as an opportunity to grow in faith and as an extension of a Christian lifestyle, members gain new meaning from the opportunity to be partners in the ministry of the church.

Yes, there will be ministry descriptions to be developed. But, with training and support from the lay ministry leadership, this job can be shared among those currently doing the work. Likewise, as gifts and talents are discerned, people with gifts in this area of administrative work will emerge to assist with the responsibility. And once created, the ministry description, with only periodic updating, will be a valuable recruitment and training tool, reducing the need to explain the position over and over.

Yes, there will be one more person on the administrative staff of the church. But it is a person whose function is to complement and support the ministries of the church, not to take valuable time needed for service to others. This is not a staff person who will compete for members' attention but one charged with the responsibility of being a "multiplier" by bringing in others to serve.



PROTEST #2:

"Is my job in jeopardy?" If the lay ministry program is really successful, will the church still need to employ me? And what if I don't have skills in this area and don't understand how to work effectively with the laity? Won't I look incompetent to other staff and members?"

The Problem

Lay mobilization is not a subject taught in very many seminaries, nor is there a plethora of continuing education programs available to address this professional development need. Some pastors honestly feel threatened by the emergence of this new area in the church, while at the same time, they see it as the way to bring the theology of "every member a minister" to life. Likewise, other staff may feel threatened by the ability of members within their congregation. If Nancy Corporate, who just resigned her job as Director of Professional Development for the Champion Company to be at home with her children, sees how our Christian education meetings are run, she may lobby for my resignation, or even take on the position as a volunteer. Involving the laity requires new skills and abilities, such as training and supervision of members—skills that not all staff have.

The Possibilities

You aren't supposed to know how to do everything in the church that needs to be done. In the many passages about spiritual gifts in the New Testament, not one says, "And ye shall find the pastor and the staff that together make up the perfect and complete body of Christ so that the members can all sit in their pews and pray." Every single one of those passages speaks to the importance of the need for the gifts of all, so that *together* the parts may form one body. Relax! For a change, you are allowed to NOT be everything and to focus on your gifts as you call others to use theirs.

Yes, it does require a new alignment of roles and responsibilities. Instead of being the ministers to all, as staff and clergy, you are now called to *equip* the people for their positions of ministry. This is a change, and not always an easy one for staff, clergy or laity. It will take time for members to come to see each other as ministers, and it will take time for clergy and other staff to release the laity in ministry. But gradually, as the vision is preached and taught, as ministries emerge and grow, the whole church blossoms as the people truly become the priesthood.

And what about the "high-powered" laity, the ones that have highly developed skills beyond the ability of many church staff? Those people are most often looking for the opportunity to use their experiences in marketplace roles or entrepreneurial not-for-profit roles. Unless they were actually interviewed for your position and weren't selected, they don't want your job.

- If Nancy Corporate resigned her job to be with her children, that is the calling that she is answering at this point in her life. She may well enjoy being involved in your department. Perhaps you can release her to begin a new ministry area that you have never had time to develop. Nancy didn't resign from a salaried position to assume a full-time volunteer position. She resigned to have more control over



her time and to use her time in multiple ways, not just professional ways. Nancy may be able to offer you some wonderful support, if you will only open your door and your heart to her experience.

- Not all members can be involved in ministry within the walls of the church. Some people may have a unique mix of gifts and abilities that are best deployed in the community. Be sure to keep a finger on the pulse of your community and of the hierarchy within your church judicatory or seminary, and you will find positions for members whose skills and gifts lie outside the scope and needs of your church.
- Pay special attention to people at life transition points: the retired; those new to your community; those between jobs. For many of these people, ministry opportunities within the church allow them to utilize skills and maintain self-esteem, at the same time that they explore other areas of their life. These people frequently have valuable talents, but require flexible schedules that preclude the possibility of a full-time work week within the church. In other words, they aren't interested in your job, but they are interested in real and meaningful ministry on a short-term or flexible schedule.

Yes, a comprehensive lay mobilization system will require you to develop some new skills, but you are not expected to do this on your own. One of the jobs of the lay mobilization team is to assist you. The Director of Lay Ministry and people within the church whose gifts allow them to minister in these ways can help staff and clergy develop ministry descriptions and learn how to invite members into ministry in their areas. They can also help you learn ways to train members for ministry and ways to recognize and celebrate their involvement. Clearly, it's important to select a skilled and capable person to lead your lay ministry program.



PROTEST #3:

"A lay mobilization program is really just more bureaucracy. I'll have to go through another staff member or work through another committee just to get to the members that I need for ministry in my areas."

The Problem

People often worry that if another department is going to be interviewing all the new members, they will never get to the ones they need for ministry in their department. Conversely, people sometimes assume that they have someone to do all the interviewing and that they can just tell them what they need and let the lay ministry department fill all their needs.

The Possibilities

Lay ministry neither prevents contact with members nor solves all your member needs. Rather, lay ministry focuses on the member and strives to connect the member to the church in both a ministering and ministry capacity, based on the member's needs and gifts. The interview process supports the member as he/she finds a base within the church home. For some members, pressing personal problems may need to be met before they can consider serving. Others may be ready to serve, but need more extensive Biblical preparation or gifts assessment prior to finding a ministry. Others may be available and hungry to serve. Lay ministry connects members within the church and creates a system where members can grow in faith maturity through ministry.

Lay ministry, with its knowledge of the gifts, talents, skills, personal life situations, temperament, and passions of members, can supply other ministry areas with the names of people who match their ministry needs profile. With a list of people who are strong candidates for the ministry positions, it is the responsibility of the requesting department to invite the member into ministry. Only the ministry area requesting the member fully understands the position, is able to answer questions, and can match the member to a specific position. However, with a list of people strongly suited to the ministry, and with an eye out for others, the lay ministry department substantially streamlines the work of other ministry areas.



PROTEST #4:

"All this is fine and good, but in all honesty, **members simply aren't qualified** to do the work of the church. It all sounds great on paper, but members in ministry are really just people volunteering in the church, and we all know that volunteers are unskilled, unqualified and unreliable."

The Problem

Although few church staff are likely to be this blatant in their objection to lay ministry, the attitude does exist. Some staff may have been forced in the past to work with members who were in fact unskilled, unqualified, unreliable, and very possibly uninterested in their ministry. No wonder these leaders are hardly thrilled by the possibility of needing to involve more of "these people" in their work. Bringing this type of concern to the surface is important. It is difficult to establish a new system when staff and ministry leaders are quietly resisting your efforts for vague and ill-defined reasons.

The Possibilities

A good offense may be your best line of defense. Among the benefits of a lay mobilization system is the fact that members are carefully interviewed for ministry, and ministry placements are made based on the person's gifts and talents. People suited for the ministry in question are almost always eager to be involved. A complete lay ministry system involves preparing of members for the specific ministry area, and a system to "return" a member to the lay ministry department if the fit between the member and the ministry is not good. Through vision-casting and education, ministry becomes more than an obligation and busywork. As members view ministry as an act of love, and as an opportunity to grow in faith, service assumes a new role in the life of the member and the church.

A few other suggestions for working with resistant staff:

- Select several highly skilled members with time to serve and interest in the ministry of the skeptical leader, and connect the two. Often a good experience can counter a previous difficult experience.
- Encourage the resistant staff persons to remember times when they served in a volunteer capacity. Ask them to remember how they felt when serving and how others supported them in their ministry.
- Involve these persons in the work of the lay ministry department. When they see the care taken in the interview, experience the gifts assessment instrument that you are using, or help with training, they often begin to recognize the care taken to match people according to their gifts and become more open to member involvement.



PROTEST #5:

"I will **lose control** if I turn the ministry of the church over to the members. If members are released in ministry, how will we know that they are prepared for service or that they are presenting the gospel faithfully and accurately?"

The Problem

The clergy and the staff have spent years in training for their positions within the church. It is threatening to release others to serve in capacities for which they may not be adequately prepared. In other situations, church leaders fear that they will lose their relationship with the heart of their ministry if others are released for direct service to those in need.

The Possibilities

In fact, a well-developed lay ministry program establishes policies and sets up training systems to ensure that members are prepared for service. Ministries requiring considerable expertise can establish a sequence of training objectives and mentors to prepare members. Members not performing well in a particular ministry can be referred back to the lay ministry program for a ministry opportunity more appropriate for their gifts and talents. A lay ministry system brings new and meaningful controls and guidelines expanding quality ministry, not diminishing it.

As members develop and extend their reach in service, the role of the staff and pastors becomes more one of equipping the laity. Staff members come to take pleasure from the opportunity to extend their reach through the work of others. Side by side, staff and church members grow in faith maturity.



PROTEST #6:

"Will there *ever* be a right time to begin a lay mobilization program? We always have something major happening in the life of the church. This new program will either compete with the other program or be problematic and confusing to the members."

The Problem

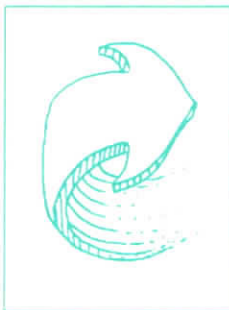
When do you begin a new lay ministry system? Some churches may be between pastors, others may have just initiated a large stewardship campaign, while for others a new small-group ministry system has just gotten under way. How, in the mix of all that is happening in the life of the church, do you determine the best time to begin a lay ministry system? How do you keep the system from competing with other programs?

The Possibilities

A comprehensive system needs to be part of the long-range planning process of the church. It represents a significant new direction and, as such, should involve the leadership board of the church, as well as the pastors, in its evolution. As part of the long range plan, the system will not depend on the leadership of just one person for momentum. Rather, it represents the church's decision to involve all members in ministry and growth in faith.

Because a lay mobilization system enhances the other ministries of the church, it does not compete with other programs or events. Its evolution can augment any event. It can be unveiled in support of a stewardship campaign, a new ministry area or any other event. What is important in the evolution of the program is thoughtful planning and dedicated leadership. With those two ingredients, the program can be synchronized to the life of the congregation.

Parts 4, 5 and 6 of Section 1 of the Starter Kit are designed to assist your leadership team in selecting the best timing and approach for your church.



Lay mobilization does represent change. Change, even when embraced and planned for, is not always well received. Understanding your own method of dealing with change and identifying a model from which to understand the change process, will help you appreciate how others experience times of transition. *Section 2 of the Starter Kit, An Addendum: Change in the Church*, deals directly with managing transition. Based on William Bridges' book, *Managing Transitions*, the addendum presents a model for considering change and its impact on your staff and congregation.



TOOLBOX



TIPS FOR MANAGING THE INEVITABLE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

No matter how carefully you develop your plans and how thoughtfully you include people in the process, resistance is an inevitable part of the change cycle. These pointers may help you manage resistance to a new lay ministry system.

- Involve a wide range of leaders in your church in the evolution of the system.* The more people you are able to involve in the planning and development phase of your program, the more people will understand what you are doing and will support your effort. A broad base of involved and supportive members also ensures a system that meets the unique needs of your church.
- Work to support church ministries most receptive to increased lay involvement.* Nothing succeeds like success. Showcase programs where the new lay ministry system can demonstrate support to established priorities within the church.
- Honor tradition.* Identify the aspects of your church culture that are important to preserve. Connect key symbols, images and rituals to the vision for lay mobilization.
- Seek quality over quantity.* It is better to do a few things well than to try too many new things at once. Be sure your systems are in place and working before you branch out into new areas.
- Pilot test your new systems.* Involve people in new practices and respond to their input before you open the systems to the entire congregation.
- Remember who your church is.* Don't abandon current needs and programs when venturing into new, challenging or experimental ministries. For example, if you have a large number of elderly, continue to address their needs as you reach into the community with a new ministry.
- Be realistic.* It takes no less than 18 months to lay a solid foundation for an effective lay ministry system and anywhere from three to five years to begin to reap the benefits of members equipped and prepared for ministry. Allow your lay ministry program sufficient time to do the job right.
- Seek necessary help.* This is a "Starter" Kit designed to help you *begin* an important new ministry. Throughout the kit you will find references to other books, training institutes and resources. Take advantage of these supports as you build a strong foundation for an equipping congregation.



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

1. Which of the six protest signs is the biggest concern to the members of your leadership board?
 - How can I handle more work?
 - Is my job in jeopardy?
 - Is a lay mobilization program more bureaucracy?
 - Are our members qualified for increased responsibility?
 - How will we maintain quality control over programs run by members?
 - Is this the right time to begin a lay mobilization program?

2. List the staff and lay leaders that will be most affected by a lay mobilization program. Of the six protest concerns, which one(s) will each staff or lay leader feel most strongly about? Have these people expressed other concerns not discussed in the protests?

You may want to meet with these leaders and listen to their concerns and ideas.

3. Do you plan to adapt, or have you already adapted, the methods for implementing your lay mobilization program to better meet the concerns of your staff and leaders?



PART 9:

SELECTING A DIRECTOR

One of the most important decisions you will make affecting the future of your lay mobilization effort is the selection of the program director. This person's ability to work effectively with other staff and members of your church is critical to the system's acceptance. Take time to determine exactly what qualities and characteristics you are seeking before you initiate the search for the leader of this ministry.

"God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, then prophesy whenever you can—as often as your faith is strong enough to receive a message from God. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If you are a preacher, see to it that your sermons are strong and helpful. If God has given you money, be generous in helping others with it. If God has given you administrative ability and put you in charge of the work of others, take the responsibility seriously. Those who offer comfort to the sorrowing should do so with Christian cheer."

Romans 12:6-8 LB

Part Nine of the *Starter Kit* is designed to assist you in the selection process. This part will help you...

- Prepare the Way
 - identify reporting relationships
 - get a system started
 - title the position for your church
 - determine an appropriate salary
 - examine the role of committees
 - structure the position
- Select the Right Person for the Job
 - identify the characteristics of successful directors
 - locate a candidate
 - design the interview process
 - avoid hiring mistakes



PREPARE THE WAY

Where does the Director fit in the organization of your church?

The most successful lay ministry systems studied to date achieved their success in part because the lay ministry manager reports directly to the senior or executive pastor.

Why?

- Because a comprehensive lay ministry system involves every aspect of church functioning.
- Because a comprehensive lay ministry system represents a departure from past operational methods employed by most churches. A ministry that truly involves members according to their talents and gifts needs to be continuously championed and supported by the Senior Pastor and requires ongoing vision casting from the pulpit.
- Because a direct reporting relationship to the Senior Pastor communicates the importance of lay involvement to the church leadership and encourages congregational support for the program.
- Because a close working relationship with the Senior Pastor is necessary if the director of lay ministry is to be truly responsive to the needs of the congregation. The director needs to be in a position to readily inform the pastor of issues and concerns of the members.

Some churches choose to begin a lay ministry system in a specified area of church operations, such as in Christian education or small group ministries. Although this may encourage more member participation in that ministry area, a churchwide lay mobilization system is less likely to emerge.

What Do We Need to Get a System Started?

1. Office requirements are modest. The director needs a desk, a telephone and a file cabinet. As the program evolves, it is important to have an accessible office, a private space for interviewing members and, if your church is computerized, a terminal for information management.
2. Budget requirements include the salary of the director, fringe benefits, a professional development allowance and funds to cover special events. The budget is covered in more detail in *Step 3 of Section 2 of the Starter Kit: Administrative Systems* and in the box on page 92 in this part.
3. Clear and reasonable expectations are critical. Most churches initiating a comprehensive lay ministry system allow 9 to 18 months for development activities. Think through your expectations and develop clear objectives to guide initial program development.



What is the best title for the Director?

There is no one correct title for this position. As a rule of thumb, titles generally reflect both the function of the position and its preferred style of operation. Utilizing the lists below, mix and match words and phrases to develop a title that best reflects the position in your church and its mix of responsibilities.

Operating Style		Function
Director		Lay Ministry (or Lay Ministries) Volunteer Ministry*
Coordinator	OF/FOR	Congregational Involvement Leadership Development
Manager		Discipleship Congregational Support
Minister		Congregational Outreach Gifts Ministry Equipping

For uniformity of discussion the *Starter Kit* refers to the position as the Director of Lay Ministry.

What is an Appropriate Salary for this Position?

The salary for a Director of Lay Ministry, a professional staff position, should be comparable to that of other senior-level staff positions in your church. Examine the pay scale for the Director of Christian Education, the Director of Youth Ministries, or the Music Director. Consider the person's professional experience and education level as well. This information will help you identify an appropriate salary. Remember to factor in health care, retirement plans, social security, a mileage allowance, professional development and vacation leave into the equation. (See "What Will a Lay Ministry System Cost" on page 92.)

Because lay ministry is a new field within the church and many communities lack continuing education for lay mobilization, allow sufficient funds for continuing education. Leadership Training Network, as well as other groups and organizations, offer seminars and training institutes in locations across the country to prepare leaders for this important work. Depending upon the continuing education program selected, you will need to budget anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 plus travel to attend one of these programs. *Section 3* of the *Starter Kit* will help you identify some of the available options.

*To avoid confusion, it's best not to *begin* a title with the word "volunteer." People become confused and wonder if the title means the manager works for free or whether it refers to the voluntary work of members of the church.





WHAT WILL A LAY MINISTRY SYSTEM COST?

A limited survey of lay ministry programs across the country yielded some very interesting findings.

Smaller Congregations:

Churches with 185 to 550 in attendance at weekend services tend to employ part-time directors. Salaries and benefits for part-timers averaged \$21,687 and directors averaged five years of experience in the field. Part-time was defined as anywhere from 20 to 30 hours of work weekly.

Funds allocated for travel, professional development, office supplies, retreats, and member recognition events and programs averaged \$2,340. Many responses indicated that it was difficult to identify the support budget accurately because many expenses are carried by the general budget of the congregation.

Larger Congregations:

Defined as 900 to 6,000* in attendance at weekend services, larger congregations generally employ full-time directors, or directors who share the lay management responsibility with one other work area; however, the vast majority of directors are dedicated lay ministry leaders. These directors earn, on average, \$39,100 annually.

Support funds were incrementally greater as well. Larger churches earmark an average of \$6,612 for the lay ministry department and also report that many expenses are absorbed in the church's operating funds.

*No respondents to the survey had a weekly attendance between 550 and 900.

What about a non-salaried Director?

Some churches have been successful in locating a person who is in a financial position to assume a major professional role in the life of the church as a volunteer. If the person meets the qualifications, has the time, and is willing to make the professional commitment necessary for this leadership position, there is no reason not to use the services of a non-salaried person in this position. Remember, non-salaried does not mean non-professional. The same expectations and standards that apply to salaried employees should be established for non-salaried workers as well, including standard work hours, year-end evaluation, a place in weekly staff meetings, and the ability to be fired.

A non-salaried director should receive a budget for professional development and other funds to carry out the requirements of the position.



Can a Committee Effectively Direct a Lay Mobilization System?

Committees play important roles in the lives of most churches and are influential in lay mobilization systems, as well. Committees are useful in:

- **The development and planning stages of the system.** Working with the pastor and church leadership, committees can investigate the role of lay mobilization in the church and make programmatic recommendations.
- **Supporting the work of the Director.** Many churches select to form and maintain a lay ministry committee to assist the director, establish program goals and support ongoing operations.
- **Initiating the system.** In some churches implementation committees actually begin implementing the lay ministry system. With a careful division of tasks and responsibilities, and an effective committee chair, some larger churches have been able to sustain program operations for up to a year, while congregations with 300 members or less have managed programs for longer periods of time.

While committees are vitally important to lay mobilization, experience suggests they are generally not an effective means of long-term, ongoing program management.

How much time does this position require?

Centralized Program Management

Full-time director of lay ministry.

The ideal option for establishing and managing a lay ministry system is to hire a full-time director. For churches with 900 or more members worshipping weekly, this option is especially desirable. The position requires considerable attention to detail and full knowledge of church operations.

Part-time director of lay ministry—no other job responsibilities.

Due to budgetary constraints or the desires of the director, many churches have initiated and continue to run programs with staff persons working half- to three-quarter-time in the position. The part-time option is particularly reasonable for smaller churches or during the development phases of the position in larger congregations.

The full-time employee with part-time lay ministry responsibilities.

Some churches divide the work responsibilities of an employee to include half-time management of lay ministry with half-time responsibility for another work area such as Christian education, small group ministry, etc. Generally speaking, this situation is less desirable than either of the other two.

Employees who "split" their time among competing responsibilities often find themselves "squeezing" lay ministry into an already crowded schedule, short-changing support to members and skimping in the time-consuming coordination functions.



Decentralized Program Management

All staff operate as lay ministry managers.

All staff members are trained to interview and assist members in identifying gifts and talents for ministry. Staff develop ministry descriptions and invite members into ministry according to their interests and abilities. Each department is responsible for supporting members in ministry and for recognizing their contributions.

It is important that all staff understand how to work effectively with members and become familiar with the principles of lay mobilization. However, it is difficult to coordinate efforts and ensure that members are placed according to their gifts and talents, not according to the needs of interviewing staff members. The lack of a centralized system tends to lead to redundancy of effort and fragments the work of the church.

One department manages lay ministry for the church.

In some churches, departments with high member involvement, such as Christian education or children's ministries, assume the role of lay ministry management for the congregation. This situation has worked with varying levels of success. Usually, the responsible department meets most of its needs for member involvement, while other departments may be less successful in having their concerns addressed. Periodically, the success of the organizing department becomes the catalyst for a churchwide effort to mobilize the laity. In other cases, a department may be charged with this responsibility as a way to pilot a program for the larger church.



SELECTING THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB:

Let's take a look at what we know about successful leaders of lay ministry in church settings. Effective directors of lay ministry are:

- **Facilitative Managers and Leaders.** Successful directors are able to juggle many tasks, recruit people to places that match their gifts, and can lead a team toward a common goal.
- **Equippers and People Developers.** Effective directors have a passion and gift for helping others to grow.
- **Spiritually Mature.** Successful directors have the spiritual grounding and character that forms the basis of their credibility with the mentoring team, as well as the grace to work effectively in a fluid and changing team-based work setting.

Characteristics of successful Directors.

Birkman and Associates, an assessment organization based in Houston, Texas profiled 21 leaders in the field of lay ministry.¹ Their study uncovered some interesting traits, abilities and characteristics that may help as you search for a lay ministry leader.

Birkman and Associates found that leaders of lay mobilization...

- have a positive outlook on life.
- trust other people.
- have a "can-do" attitude.
- thrive on responsibility and leadership.
- are team players.
- view conflict as a result of honest people with legitimate differences trying to do their best.
- believe people are capable of self-control and can work well without constant supervision.
- describe shortcomings in others as manageable and natural.
- enjoy making things happen, especially under pressure.
- like to "sell" ideas and services.
- are generally outgoing and enjoy contact with a wide group of people.
- operate well independently.
- tend to enjoy movies, going to the theater and other literary interests.
- are flexible.
- like taking initiative.
- are able to deal with conflict.
- are creative, although sometimes less than organized in their efforts!
- plan well.
- have the ability to work with multiple disruptions.

¹Tim Sadler, Ph.D. & Sylvia M. Koltzenburg, "Profile for Leadership Network: Leadership Positions for Volunteer Efforts," June 21, 1994. Birkman & Associates, Inc., Houston, TX.



In addition to the traits listed on page 95, look for a person who:

- feels called to this ministry.
- communicates effectively.
- listens actively.
- shows grace under pressure.
- organizes, collaborates and coordinates well.
- delegates capably.
- is an experienced originator of programs.
- is liked by the congregation.
- shares credit and shoulders responsibility.
- serves the church.
- believes in gifts-based ministry.

BUILDER'S NOTE

The Question of Integrity:

An energetic, dynamic and skilled member arrives ready to serve. The member's particular gifts are best suited to an area not urgently in need of assistance; however, adult ministry has a desperate need for help RIGHT NOW. What does the Director of Lay Ministry do?

- 1. In being true to a gifts-based ministry, the new member is placed according to her gifts and talents in an area other than adult ministry.***
- 2. The Lay Ministry Director places the new member in adult ministry, convincing her that this is the best and most appropriate use of her gifts.***
- 3. The situation is explained to the member. The member is asked if she would be willing to assist adult ministry in response to their immediate need, with the proviso that her gifts have been noted and will be exercised in a more appropriate ministry at a mutually agreed-upon time in the future.***

You want to employ the person who offers the third response. The needs of the church and the gifts of the members need to be held in a creative tension, balanced by honesty, a sincere desire to be of service and a commitment to gifts-based ministry.

Where do you find a leader of lay mobilization?

One of the best places to look is in your church! To date, there are very few programs that formally prepare people for this new area of ministry. Most churches have hired from within their own congregation, or have changed the job descriptions of a staff member eager to assume this new role.



It is possible to seek a candidate from the business or not-for-profit world. The characteristics listed above are equally applicable. Be sure to consider persons with experience in:

- volunteer management or community relations. The skills and management expertise of these persons relate naturally to the management/coordination functions of lay mobilization.
- human resource management from corporate settings. Like managers of volunteers from the nonprofit and public sectors, these people have skills in management and training and may be seeking an alternative work setting.
- volunteer leadership in community organizations, such as Junior League, Women's Club, Jaycees, etc. These persons are frequently highly capable candidates who would love the opportunity to use their skills in the church.

Look carefully at people who have been well served by your church and are eager to repay a debt of gratitude. A number of Directors of Lay Ministry have accepted this position so that they might serve the church and help others receive the same care and support they have experienced.

Questions to ask in the interview:

Before you interview candidates for this position, identify the skills, qualifications, temperament and gifts of the person you are looking for. Consider your work environment. What type of person would work well with your existing staff and complement the skills and talents of your ministry team? Develop your list of questions with others who know the church and the ministry.

Consider these questions as you develop your own list:

1. Describe service activities that you have been involved with in the past. Tell us about the organization, the service and the recipients. Describe your role in the organization or activity.

Ideally, you want a person with a desire to be involved in serving others, especially in ways that touch the lives of people directly. Look for leadership ability and the ability to coordinate multiple responsibilities.

2. This is a people-intensive position. Can you share with us situations when you have been called upon to initiate conversations with strangers, or times when you have needed to persuade another person about something you believe in strongly? Can you offer examples of types of situations with which you feel most comfortable?

Although few people are completely comfortable in front of audiences, you are looking for a person who is persuasive and comfortable with one-to-one interaction and talking with strangers. Public speaking ability is an added gift, although it's a skill that can be augmented by others on staff, or by members of the lay ministry committee.



3. We would be interested in learning about people you have worked with in the past. Can you share a particularly satisfying working relationship and what made the experience such a positive one?

Lay mobilization requires teamwork, collaboration and leadership. Look for the ability to take charge, involve others and work effectively with groups. Look for a person with a facilitative leadership style.

4. Help us understand a work situation that you have had that you found difficult. What factors contributed to the problems? What role did you play? Explore situations where you think conflict may have occurred. How was it handled?

Look for how difficult interpersonal situations were handled. Did the candidate manage these problems in a thoughtful and satisfactory manner?

5. From what you understand about this job, what do you think you will most enjoy?

Look for a person who is eager to put all the pieces together, who enjoys constructing and managing systems. The management/coordination function is more important than presenting seminars on gifts assessment or teaching classes. You are searching for a person who can locate others to do pieces of the process, but this person needs to understand the overall process and be capable of managing a system.

6. Describe experiences that you have had in the past that you believe are similar to the type of work that you will be doing here.

A person who understands the job to be a management/coordination position rather than a teaching or administrative position will more effectively grasp the responsibilities entailed.

7. Describe the first five major steps you would take as you begin this position.

It is important to find a person who grasps the importance of building staff support and involving members in the development phases of the system. Consider how the person approaches a large management responsibility. Whom does he/she include in the process? How does he/she organize the various tasks? You are looking for a team player, but also a person who can assume responsibility, lead an effort and involve others in planning.

Be cautious of a candidate who jumps right into new member assimilation prior to building the systems and supports to hold the program together. Make sure the person talks about recruiting and equipping others, rather than doing the tasks alone.

8. When people enter a lay mobilization system their concerns frequently focus on "What are MY gifts?" "What is God's will for MY life?" "Where is MY place of ministry?" "How can the church meet MY needs?" How, in the development process, do you honor these concerns while you help members begin to consider a new set of questions? "How has GOD evidenced his work in my life through gifts and experi-



ences?" "What is GOD doing in our church, my community, family and workplace and how can I join him?" "How should I go about obeying GOD by serving others?"

This issue addresses the need to help people focus more on God's purposes and less on their own needs. Look for a person who recognizes the issue and is open to struggling with its implications.

9. As you look over your life, where have you seen the hand of God leading you? What are your own goals for spiritual growth and development?

Each church will have its own perspective on spiritual growth and faith maturity. It is particularly helpful if candidates understand gifts-based ministry and the theological foundation for every member as a minister.



FIVE FREQUENTLY MADE HIRING MISTAKES

- Hiring a seminar presenter. While training and teaching skills are important, they are secondary to the ability to manage a whole system of members, competing ministry requests, budgets, reports and ongoing programs.
- Hiring a career counselor. The person you select will be training interviewers and mentors who may become the "ministry counselors" to the lay people in the church. You do not want a person who is more at home doing the ministry rather than equipping others to do the ministry. A director who spends too much time counseling will fail to reach the goals of enabling others.
- Hiring an administrator. An administrator is gifted at managing tasks and keeping the details in place, but this position needs a *manager/leader*. A manager understands how to support and enable other people to fulfill ministry and how to organize and coordinate tasks. A manager knows how to find and recruit people to accomplish necessary details. A manager knows how to keep people motivated and on target in accomplishing the tasks.
- Hiring a "gopher." This is a job that should report directly to the senior or executive pastor. If placed too far down in the hierarchy, the director will be unable to accomplish the task.
- Hiring a part-timer. For larger churches, the job generally requires a full-time director. Setting up these responsibilities as 20% of another job is setting up the staff member to fail.



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

This Contractors' Conference can help you begin the process of developing a job description for the position of lay ministry director. Appoint a member of the leadership board to prepare a job description from the information gathered here.

1. Components of the Job Description.

Title for the position:

The position will report to:

People that will report to this position:

Time expectations for the position on a weekly basis:

Proposed salary including benefits:

Budget for this position:

Next year's time expectations for the position on a weekly basis:

Next year's salary for this position:

Next year's budget for this position:

Expectations for this job:

[Do your expectations include the development of administrative structures and the training of interviewers and ministry mentors?]

Goals to be achieved by the end of the first year:

2. List in order the top five characteristics you will look for in a Director of Lay Ministry for your church:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3. What is the process for hiring or appointing a Director of Lay Ministry? What person, group or committee will recruit and interview for the position?

4. Is your church inclined to make one of the five most frequently made hiring mistakes: hiring a seminar presenter, a career counselor, an administrator, a "gopher" or a part-timer when you need a full-timer?



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

LOS ALTOS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH VOLUNTEER MINISTRIES STATEMENT

The Director of Volunteer Ministries is here as a resource for the congregation, the staff and the leaders of the church for the following purposes:

1. To help each member identify his or her God-given gifts and talents.
2. To help members find an area to use these gifts that would be both fulfilling to them, as well as useful to them and to the church and the larger community and world.
3. To help assimilate new members into areas of their interest, that they may feel a part of a smaller area within the larger context of the church.
4. To provide lists of volunteers to leaders and staff, that they may know who has expressed interest in serving in their particular area and may be able to call on them.
5. To help the volunteers feel valued and appreciated for their service.
6. To help the programs in the church which need the support of the congregation's gift of service.



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

LOS ALTOS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH JOB DESCRIPTION DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEERS

The Director of Volunteers will help the congregation to identify and develop their spiritual gifts and match their needs and abilities with the needs of the church and community. The Director of Volunteers will have skills in communication, organization and interpersonal relationships and will relate to many groups and activities simultaneously. The Volunteer Director will be involved in program development and event planning.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Help each church member identify his or her God-given gifts and talents, to discover areas in which to use them.
2. Relate to groups in the church as a resource for personnel and help to accomplish their programs and goals.
3. Assess volunteer needs of church and community and match these needs with the needs and gifts of the volunteer.
4. Keep updated records of active volunteers as a resource for lay leadership, staff and programs of the church.
5. Assimilate new members into church life within a month of joining the church.
6. Have clear job descriptions before interviewing and recruiting volunteers.
7. Show appreciation on an ongoing basis.
8. Keep communication open with volunteers and lay leadership, listen to needs and evaluate jobs regularly.

The Director of Volunteers will relate to Executive Staff, Senior and Associate Pastors, Discipleship and Worship Commissions, Administrative Council and New Members' Classes, Nominating Committee and special programs and events.

The Director of Volunteers will report to the Senior Pastor.



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

BRENTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LAY MINISTRIES JOB DESCRIPTION

Director of Lay Ministries

A. Primary Objectives

1. To broaden our base of ministry by promoting volunteerism, increasing stewardship of time and personal fulfillment through ministry.
2. To identify skills, gifts and interests of all members of BPC.
3. To integrate new members into program delivery, thereby increasing their sense of belonging and personal contribution to our church family.
4. To integrate long-term members into program delivery, thereby increasing retention and developing a stronger sense of community with new members.
5. To expand our base of leadership by enabling leaders through regular training programs.

B. Responsibilities

1. Staff Lay Ministries Committee

- Meet monthly with Elders to set agenda.
- Attend monthly committee meetings or be represented by Assistant Director.
- Assist Sponsor Coordinator with sponsor selection.
- Attend New Members' Desserts four times per year.
- Work with/support second Elder in developing and leading, when appropriate, ongoing training opportunities for leaders of BPC.
- Plan and participate with pastors in New Officer Orientation annually.
- Co-staff Membership Rolls Committee with Asst. Director.
- Oversee computerized personal interest & skills program, recommending update as needed.

2. Staff Membership Development Committee

- Meet monthly with Elder to set agenda and discuss upcoming classes.
- Attend monthly meetings.
- Attend New Members' Classes four times per year.
- Teach "stewardship of Time and Spiritual Gifts" section of class.
- Interview, with assistance of Assistant Director, all new members.

3. Staff Nominating Committee

- Meet monthly with Elder to set agenda.
- Attend monthly meetings.
- Interface with Senior Pastor for input and feedback.
- Work with Elder to develop an annual timeline and focus for committee.
- Lead a recruitment training session within committee annually.



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

4. Administration

- Participate in weekly staff meetings.
- Participate in annual Session/Deacon Retreat.
- Participate in Annual Staff Retreat.
- Oversee management of Assistant Director of Lay Ministries, meeting weekly.
- Make three ministry phone calls a week.
- Serve as a resource to all committees and staff in their respective recruiting efforts.

5. Education

- Two study days per month.
- Annual educational conference—one week in duration.
- Participate in Kaleidoscope—Annual Presbytery Educational Event.

6. Sharing with Greater Church

- Educate the congregation and staff through Presbytery Christian Education Committee, Kaleidoscope and consulting about the importance of Lay Ministries to the church.
- Assist other churches in establishing this position, by sharing resources already available.

C. Job Qualifications

1. Good communication skills
2. Personable, with ability to motivate people
3. Strong commitment to the importance of volunteerism
4. Good organization skills
5. Demonstrated leadership capability
6. Familiarity with members of congregation
7. Computer skills, or willingness to learn
8. Flexibility and sense of humor
9. Ability to work effectively with other of the program staff
10. Spiritually centered, committed to the mission of the church

D. Time Requirements

1. 30 hours weekly
2. 4 weeks vacation annually

E. Supervision

1. Senior Pastor
2. Annual review with Personnel Committee



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

BRENTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LAY MINISTRIES JOB DESCRIPTION

Assistant Director of Lay Ministries

A. Primary Objectives

1. To assist Director of Lay Ministries in managing and facilitating the assimilation and retention of all members of BPC.
2. To promote volunteerism by BPC members in order to increase stewardship of time and a sense of personal fulfillment in ministry.

B. Responsibilities

1. Oversee Volunteer-of-the-Day Program
 - Assist in recruitment when requested by office manager.
 - Meet with office manager regularly to assess program needs.
 - Oversee Thank You Luncheon.
 - Calendar training event annually and enlist Director's assistance and/or recommendations for trainers.
2. Co-staff Membership Rolls Subcommittee
3. Co-staff Lay Ministries Committee
 - as needed and agreed upon with Director and Senior Pastor
4. Participate in regular fellowship events
 - at least once annually to assess the people, program and needs (example: Women's Fellowship, Friendship Builders, New Mom's Group)
5. Assist Director and Sponsor Coordinator
 - meet with Sponsor Coordinator four times a year to brainstorm sponsor assignments
 - make concentrated effort to connect new members with long-time members
6. Participate in New Members' Class
 - Sunday night New Members' Class 4 times per year
 - New Members' Dessert four times per year as agreed upon with Director
 - interview all new members with assistance of Director
7. Participate in Annual Consistory Meeting
 - work as advisor to the coordinator of the event
8. Recruiting
 - respond to requests as they come into office from committees



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

9. Lay Ministries Office

- Update board in Lay Ministries Office twice per year.
- Recruit someone to do printing.
- Circulate rosters to Committee Chairs, Elders and Deacons.
- Request participation roster from all committee activities.
- Meet weekly with Director.

C. Training

1. Participate in Session/Deacon Retreat.
2. Participate in leadership training activity annually, outside BPC.
3. Participate in Leadership workshops hosted by Lay Ministries Committee (as agreed upon by Director).

D. Qualifications

1. Good communication skills, comfortable meeting people, discerning and sensitive
2. Personable, ability to model and motivate
3. Strong belief in importance of volunteerism
4. Good organizational skills
5. Demonstrated leadership capability
6. Computer skills, or willingness to learn
7. Flexible and willing to develop into a new position which may change as needs dictate
8. Ability to work effectively with other members of program staff
9. Sense of humor
10. Spiritually centered, committed to the mission of the church

E. Time Responsibilities

1. 10 - 15 hours weekly
2. Length of commitment—one year with annual extension, if mutually agreed upon by Assistant Director and staff

F. Supervision

1. Responsible to the Director of Lay Ministries, to meet weekly for planning, communication and direction
2. Annual Review—P&A Committee



PART 10:

SHARING YOUR VISION

A vision will emerge as your leadership team, church staff and lay ministry director work together to formulate a model and strategy for your lay mobilization system. This vision is precious. It can mobilize the members of your church to share Christ with a hurting, broken world.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20 NIV

Sharing your vision is critically important. How should you do it? This part of the *Starter Kit* will help you effectively share your vision for lay mobilization.

- What does it mean to share a vision?
- How do you share a vision?
- What needs to be done before beginning a Lay Mobilization Program?
- What do we need to avoid before we begin a Lay Mobilization Program?



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SHARE A VISION?

There is a difference between *having the vision* and *clearly communicating the vision*. For many of us, the theology of the priesthood of all believers is an important part of church doctrine, yet we have not been successful in moving the vision to reality.

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

1 Peter 2:9, 10 NIV

A vision does not become a dynamic, living, breathing reality until we are able to make it specific, until we are able to communicate it to the membership in ways they understand, in ways they can relate to, remember, reflect upon, and act on. In a new program, especially one with the scope of a lay ministry program, it is vital that the vision be repeated over and over again, at EVERY possible occasion, for at least the first two years, until it becomes part of the permanent culture and language of the church.

Rick Warren, the Senior Pastor of Saddleback Valley Church, identifies vision and values as principle ingredients of leadership. "People," Warren says, "are looking for something to give their life to." The greater the vision, the stronger the magnetism, the greater its value in attracting people. The job of the leader is to share a contagious vision. According to Warren,¹ a leader must be able to communicate seven things:

1. Who we are.

It is the job of the leader to define why we exist, to lift up our mission and to share it, share it, share it.

2. Where we are going.

The leader points the direction, shares the goals, identifies the destination. The leader knows where we are going and persuades others to follow.

3. Why we are going there.

Stating the reason for selecting a particular destination answers the question of why. Why this direction, why this target and not another?

4. What it feels like to be going there.

People want to be involved in a significant ministry. They want to feel good about where they are going. They want the journey to add meaning and fulfillment to their lives.

5. What others can do.

People need to be able to find a place to meaningfully involve their unique gifts and talents. We all seek affirmation and desire belonging in a cause greater than ourselves. Individuals who want to be a part of a ministry need to be able to find their place and feel that their contributions strengthen the whole.

¹Rick Warren, "How to Communicate Your Vision," Leadership Lifters, Tape 6, The class curriculum and tapes are available through The Encouraging Word, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, 714-587-9534. Used with permission.



6. How we're going to do it.

While there is an undisputed need for specifics and concrete directions, there is an even greater need for a work environment characterized by cooperation, unity of purpose and the opportunity to feel and be a part of ministry that motivates.

7. What the rewards will be.

How will I benefit from involvement? Because I selected to be involved in this ministry, what can I expect as a result of my involvement? How will I feel? The larger the potential rewards, the greater the allegiance to the ministry.

CONCENTRIC CIRCLES OF VISION SHARING

Before you share your vision with the congregation, share it with your core leaders. These may be trustees, deacons, secretaries, class teachers, or those people without formal positions who are known for their faith and commitment to the life of the church. Contact your core leaders and talk to them about their concerns and their hopes for this ministry. Keep in regular contact with them, keep them up-to-date and they will become carriers of the vision to other people in the congregation.

SHARING THE VISION



HOW DO YOU SHARE A VISION?

An articulated vision needs to be communicated. Warren offers seven ways to bring a vision to life.²

1. Personal Example

No one shared a vision more effectively through personal example than Jesus. If a vision is important to you, you must live it, demonstrating through your own lifestyle its significance. You must be vulnerable to others sharing your passion, your hopes, dreams and concerns for the dream you aspire to.

2. Verbal Slogans

People remember phrases. In this age of mega-bytes and sound blips, we must be able to succinctly capture the essence of the message. Roosevelt will long be remembered for his statement, "We have nothing to fear, but fear itself." Martin Luther King's famous speech is indelibly etched through "I have a dream." President Kennedy immortalized the request, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." The biggest mistake in sharing a vision is to over-verbalize.

3. Use Analogy and Metaphor

Jesus began each parable with "The kingdom of heaven is like..." and then wove stories based on life events familiar to all. To communicate a vision, identify an experience common to all and build on the familiar in tangible, concrete ways.

4. Symbolism

Symbols, logos and visuals reach people on an emotional level. Connect symbols verbally and visually to your message.

5. Use Multi-media Presentations

Video is the communication tool of the future. Create video tapes, audio tapes and other multi-media presentations to deliver your message. Keep presentations brief, 10 to 15 minutes in length and crisp.

6. Personal Contact

Spend time one-to-one with key people who are trusted and respected in your congregation. Share your enthusiasm and allow others to catch the vision from you. Find people who confirm and extend your vision and share it with them.

7. ALWAYS Remember the Source

Visions come from two sources: your ego or the Holy Spirit. Visions based on personal ego never last. Limited human energy wears out and the vision fails. Visions emerging from the Holy Spirit reveal God's direction and are blessed by his supporting hand. The kingdom is not ours, it is God's and he will draw us to his plan, show us the way and act in his time.

²Rick Warren, "How to Communicate Your Vision." Used with permission.

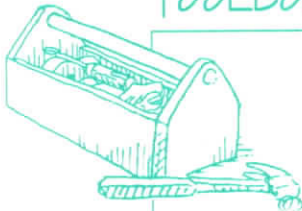


Creative Ideas for Casting a Vision for Lay Ministry

Here are some practical ways to share your vision:

- Often it is hard for core leadership to get enthusiastic about the program before they've experienced it. One way to share vision is to take the key leaders and church staff through a pilot gifts assessment and placement process that helps them restructure their current jobs for a better fit. Your best vision-casters will be those who know its transforming power. If you meet the needs of the influential leaders, they can help you expand the program.
- Celebrate ministry in worship services. Select a particular category of ministry. Identify a benefactor of the ministry area and ask that person to share what the gift of that ministry has meant to him/her. Then, honor a minister in that area and acknowledge all the people in the church who perform that ministry. Ministry areas you may want to recognize include:
 - Sunday school Altar guild Home repair Bereavement
 - Youth service Retreats Visitation Mop & hammer
 - Worship Mission Evangelism Social action
- Some people are natural vision casters. Find them and ask for their help. The more champions you have in various parts of the church, the more you will be able to receive input on how your program is viewed and the more you will have peers selling peers on the benefits of serving.
- Develop bulletin boards, displays, posters, book markers or bulletin inserts that celebrate members in ministry. Be sure to keep a camera handy for those "Kodak moments" you won't want to miss. Have good pictures blown-up to poster size to emphasize special events.

TOOLBOX



TWO CRITICAL COMPONENTS TO VISION CASTING

1. Help people feel the need.
 - Use quotes from the needs survey so people can hear what others are saying about being burned out by serving in the wrong place, or having a great deal to offer but not seeing a place to serve.
 - Help people understand what happens in specific ministries when they are understaffed.
 - Show the needs of the community in a way that awakens compassion, and develops a passion for meeting them.
2. Help people see the dream.
 - Give people clear, detailed, realistic pictures of what a better future can be.
 - Show a better future, making it clear that current needs are tremendous opportunities to make a difference in other people's lives.



- Create a series of sermons on giving, serving and growing through ministry. Combine those sermons with commissioning members for ministry, both within the church and in the larger community.
- Develop a list of hymns that celebrate ministry and service. One hymn may evolve into a “theme” song for your church.
- Encourage the exploration of Sunday school materials for all ages that focus on giving and serving. Consult with your school district for books and curriculum materials on volunteerism and service learning. Help children begin to see their natural gifts and talents in the context that God gave them to serve his purpose.
- Hold a Ministry Fair. Encourage each of the ministry areas to create a booth naming the ministry it provides and listing members involved in service. Be sure that each ministry area has a list of opportunities to invite members to participate. Invite community agencies to the church to hold a similar festival.
- Publish a directory of ministry opportunities.
- Develop an “honor roll” of members involved in ministry. Add to the list regularly.
- Present service and ministry as an expectation of membership in your new member classes and other programs. Highlight the accomplishments of members—including small as well as big events.
- Develop a way to symbolize the importance of service to the life of your congregation. You may want to create a “Giving Tree” where members place their names on leaves and place their leaves on the “ministry branch” where they serve.
- Distribute a single glove to each member who is active in ministry. The glove represents the “helping hand” that they are to others.
- Honor a Minister of the Month. Involve the congregation in the selection process.



For more information on creating and casting a vision for your congregation, see...

Barna, George. *The Power of Vision: How You Can Capture and Apply God's Vision for Your Ministry*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1992

Kouzes, James M., & Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987.

Senge, Peter. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday Currency, 1990.

Steinbron, Melvin J. *Can The Pastor Do It Alone?: A Model for Preparing Lay People for Lay Pastoring*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1987.

Stevens, R. Paul, & Phil Collins. *The Equipping Pastor: A Systems Approach to Congregational Leadership*. Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1993.

Weems, Lovett H. Jr. *Church Leadership: Vision, Team, Culture and Integrity*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993.



BEFORE YOU GET STARTED:

Consider all that needs to be done before you begin your lay mobilization program. Introducing your lay mobilization program effectively is vital to the success of the program. Here are some suggestions to help your program start smoothly.

- Do not kick-off your lay mobilization program to the whole church until you are ready to process the people who sign up.
- Anticipate the resistance to change. *Protest Signs and Picket Lines* in Section 1 and *The Addendum: Change in the Church* in Section 2 deal with this issue. Both sections offer recommendations on managing resistance.
- Make sure that the Biblical reasons for serving others have been well communicated before the kick-off. Give special attention to communicating that the program is an integral part of your church's theology of spiritual growth, not just an add-on activity.
- Make sure that the other departments in the church have had a part in the design of the lay mobilization program before it is made public.
- Introduce the program as a means for individuals to grow in Christ as they serve others rather than a means to fill volunteer slots.
- Celebrate the "heroes" of service in visible ways. Allow lay people to tell their stories of how service using their gifts has helped them grow.
- Avoid over-administrating the program so that it becomes tedious and bureaucratic. Think about the process from the participant's point of view, not from the perspective of the people who collect information.
- If your church holds congregational votes before new programs begin, make sure everyone has a crystal clear understanding of your lay mobilization vision before any vote.
- If you have already announced your program, plan a "momentum-building event," such as a job-fair day, a celebration banquet, or a large gifts assessment seminar. Build anticipation toward this event as the "grand opening" of the FULL program, even though it may have been operating for some time.
- Finally, cast the vision for the program. Cast the vision, cast the vision, and when you finally think people are understanding the need for the program, start over again. People need to hear the reason for a new program over and over again if they are going to invest in it.

* Part B: *Protest Lines and Picket Signs* in Section 1 examines common obstacles encountered when beginning a lay mobilization system.



COMMON MISTAKES:

It is important to start your program well. Here are some common mistakes churches make when they put together a lay ministry system:

- Underestimating the time required for the director to do the job well. This is a management job that involves shepherding individuals and many administrative details.
- Not preparing the other staff to feel ownership and see the benefits of a lay ministries department for their own departments.
- Not preparing the congregation so they can see how the program benefits them individually. At first glance, many people will assume that this is just another way to increase the pressure on them to serve to meet the needs of the church programs.
- Not placing primary priority on mentors. Most churches start with assessment seminars, computer matching, or making sure all the placement opportunities are cataloged. However, the critical link is the mentors or consultants who sit down with the members, interview them and coach them through the process. Selecting these mentors is the most important task. Training them can take months. The strength or weakness of any lay mobilization system rests on the quality of interviewers and mentors. *Step 4: Interview Process* in *Section 1* addresses this issue.
- Not allowing the leadership team of the church the opportunity to experience the process before the kick-off. Even if they say they support it, they need to experience the program firsthand in order to genuinely cast its vision.
- Not preparing the leaders for lay involvement. Department heads in the church and organizations in the community need to be trained on how to effectively involve members in ministry. Training should include how to prepare ministry descriptions, how to communicate expectations, how to train, how to nurture, etc.
- Getting too complicated too fast. An administrative system that is too detailed or a gifts assessment program that is too in-depth will distract from the real purpose of the program. The purpose is not to showcase administrative technology, but to structure the program so well that participants experience focused, personal attention, not bureaucracy.
- Setting expectations too high too early. A lay mobilization program needs time to begin functioning properly.
- Not communicating that the director of lay ministry is a departmental manager, not a "do-er." When you hire a director of lay ministry, some people think "Great! Now we have someone to do the boring work, like telephoning members about committee meetings and recruiting Sunday school teachers." The role needs to be clearly stated and illustrated. Only occasionally will the director personally recruit a member. Instead, the director will train others to invite members into ministry throughout the church.
- Underestimating the need to continually share the vision of lay people equipped for service and discovering in that way greater spiritual maturity.



TOOLBOX



Use the following questions to help you develop an effective strategy for sharing your vision with your congregation:

1. Pretend you are Sally Chartermember. You have been a part of the church since it began. Suddenly, your pastor and church leaders start talking about lay mobilization. How would you feel?
2. Pretend you are Bob Establishedmember. You have already been involved in a variety of church programs, including serving others. What would you need to hear about a new lay ministry program that would get you on board?
3. What methods of sharing a vision will communicate best to your church? Which methods have been overused? Which ones have not been used?
4. How will you determine when your efforts to share your vision for lay mobilization have adequately prepared your congregation for kick-off?
5. In your church calendar year, when would be the best time to introduce the idea of lay mobilization? When would be a good time of year to actually kick-off the program?



CONTRACTORS' CONFERENCE:

Are We Ready?

Are you ready to begin a lay mobilization system? Discuss the following items to determine if your church is ready to begin:

Do we have...

... the willingness to honor and celebrate what was done in the past?

... the full commitment of the senior pastor and the key leadership of the church to the ministry of the laity?

... a church governing body open to a new style of operating and expanding roles for laypeople in leadership?

... churchwide preparation for the lay ministry system?

... a willingness to select the right person to staff the lay ministry program?

... a realistic time frame and clear, appropriate objectives?

... the necessary financial resources to enable the ministry to succeed?



1-18

_____ TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

