

Church Leader Training

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY NEEDS



FAMILY LEADERSHIP
INITIATIVE

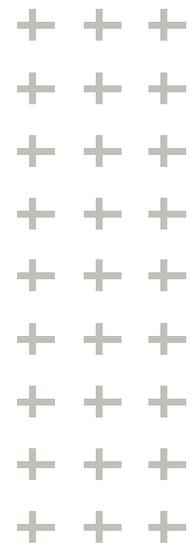
Welcome

It is important to know the community in which you minister. During this session you will learn to:

- **Discover yourself, the people around you, and your neighborhood.** *Page 4*
- **Engage with individuals where they are.** *Page 9*
- **Invite and help individuals to discover God's plan for them.** *Page 12*

You will likely find that you have more influence than you think.





Discovering Yourself and Your Community

1 Write your name.

2 Write a small detail about yourself.

Examples:

“I like bike riding.”

“Winter is my favorite season.”

3 Use a Bible to find a verse that is a blessing or promise from God. Sometimes it helps to Google “blessings Bible verses” and pick one that you like. Let the verse speak to you. Don’t overthink it.

Examples:

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 4:19*

“Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.” *Jude 1:2*

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Church and Neighborhood Demographics

Let's take time to discover your church's assignment. Just like where you live is a part of your ministry, where your church lives is part of your collective ministry. Every neighborhood has a unique personality. Just like an individual is made up of small details, a neighborhood is made up of wonderful and diverse people. All of which God loves and wants a relationship with. These wonderful and diverse people are assigned to your collective ministry. Let's do a little research and find out who these people are.

Go to <http://www.city-data.com/city/Grand-Rapids-Michigan.html> and enter your church's zip code to gather data for the worksheet on the following page. These websites may also be useful in gathering information:

- <https://www.towncharts.com/Michigan/Demographics/Grand-Rapids-city-MI-Demographics-data.html>
- <https://www.census.gov>
- <https://www.urbanchurchcenter.org/Center>

The "Study of Congregations" is available for download and has tons of useful information.

Demographic Data

Discovery

Your Church

AGE

Younger than 5 _____

5-17 years _____

18-64 years _____

65+ years _____

Median age _____

SEX

Male _____

Female _____

ETHNICITY

White _____

Black or African American _____

Hispanic or Latino _____

American Indian or
Alaskan Native _____

Asian _____

Hawaiian American
or Pacific Islander _____

Other _____

Your Neighborhood

AGE

Younger than 5 _____

5-17 years _____

18-64 years _____

65+ years _____

Median age _____

SEX

Male _____

Female _____

ETHNICITY

White _____

Black or African American _____

Hispanic or Latino _____

American Indian
or Alaskan Native _____

Asian _____

Hawaiian American
or Pacific Islander _____

Other _____

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Your Church

HOUSEHOLD

Household size _____

Home ownership _____

EDUCATION

High school or equivalent _____

Some college, no degree _____

Associate degree _____

Bachelor's degree _____

Graduate or professional degree _____

Your Neighborhood

HOUSEHOLD

Household size _____

Home ownership _____

EDUCATION

High school or equivalent _____

Some college, no degree _____

Associate degree _____

Bachelor's degree _____

Graduate or professional degree _____

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How do your assumptions compare to what your research shows?

Neighborhood Walk

A neighborhood walk is an excellent tool to use when discovering resources within a community.

- 1 Define the area where you plan to focus.
- 2 Create a verbal definition, based on streets and landmarks. (Example: North to Franklin Street, East to Eastern Avenue, South to Burton Street, and West to Division Avenue)
- 3 Use your smartphone to record a video of a walk through a neighborhood.
- 4 While you walk the neighborhood, take note of:
 - What sounds you hear.
 - Types of buildings you see.
 - Who lives here. (Children? Seniors?)





Engaging with Community Members

Your neighborhood is your ministry field. You are assigned to know your neighborhood—and the people in it. To get to know someone and their point of view, you really have to listen to what they have to say.

A good ear will strengthen your relationships. The stronger your ties to the community, the better your FLI program will be.



What are people in your neighborhood talking about?

What are their interests?

What are their needs?

Active Listening

City Mouse and the Country Mouse

Adapted Aesop Tale

Once upon a time, there was a mouse that lived in the country. This mouse had a cousin who lived in the city. The country mouse decided to invite the city mouse to the country. The city mouse was very happy to hear from the country mouse. The city mouse prepared to go to the country right away. The city mouse took the long journey to visit the country mouse.

The country mouse lived in a modest home underground next to a field of corn. The city mouse knocked on the door. The country mouse answered. They both yelled with delight at the sight of one another. The country mouse said, "You must be hungry from your long journey."

"Yes. I am," replied the city mouse.

The country mouse prepared a simple meal, and as they were eating, the city mouse thought for a moment then asked, "Do you always eat such modest food?"

"No, this is quite a meal for me," replied the country mouse, "Is it not to your liking?"

"Just the opposite. It has been a long time since I have eaten so simply," the city mouse replied.

"You must come to the city cousin. I will show you such rich feasts you could not imagine!"

Excited to try this grand feast, the country mouse traveled to the city.

After their long journey, both mice arrived to the city. They arrived at the home of the city mouse. It was a two-story, brick house with white, trimmed windows and a forest green door in a row of similar houses. The city mouse invited the country mouse inside and into the kitchen. The country mouse had never seen so much food in one place. The two mice settled down to eat.

They had just begun when a cat approached the kitchen. "Follow me!" Said the city mouse. Quickly the two mice scampered away to a hole in the wall. "Wait here," said the city mouse. "We can finish our meal when the cat leaves." In the hole, the country mouse was scared and could not reply until the cat went away. The country mouse had never been so close to danger before. The country mouse asked, "Does this happen often in the city?"

"Not all the time, but you get used to it. I'm quite happy here," replied the city mouse.

"The food is wonderful here, but I prefer the country," said the country mouse.

"I understand," said the city mouse. "I do enjoy our visits."

"I do too," said the country mouse. "Goodbye cousin." The country mouse returned home.

Questions

Relying on memory, answer these questions about “City Mouse and the Country Mouse.” Please do not refer back to the written story.

1 Is the city near or far from the country? Be specific.

2 Where does the country mouse live? Be specific.

3 Where does the city mouse live? Be specific.

4 What color is the door?

5 Where did the mice hide from the cat?

One-on-One Listening

You will interact with tons of people every day: At your job, at the grocery store, in your church, in your church’s neighborhood, in your neighborhood. Remember that an excellent listener is laser focused on the person talking. When you are truly listening, it is just you and the talker.



You and God
1 on 1



You during the sermon
1 on 1



You in a group
1 on 1

Helping Individuals Discover God's Plan

You are perfectly positioned to share Jesus Christ with the people you see every day.
That is why you are around them.

Your Sphere of Influence

Discovery



Directions: Read each of the following 36 statements, and record a number by each reflecting the degree to which you think that statement fits you. Your choices are from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest match to who you are, and 5 the highest. Here's a description of what each number means:

- 1 That's not me at all.**
- 2 A little like me.**
- 3 Somewhat like me.**
- 4 Pretty much like me.**
- 5 That's totally me.**

Transfer the numbers to the grid at the end of the survey and total each column.

- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ 1. In conversations, I like to approach topics directly, without much small talk or "beating around the bush." | _____ 6. I see needs in people's lives that others often overlook. |
| _____ 2. I have a hard time getting out of a bookstore without buying a bunch of new books that will help me understand what people are thinking. | _____ 7. I don't shy away from challenging someone when it seems necessary. |
| _____ 3. I often speak out of my personal background or experience in order to illustrate a point I am trying to make. | _____ 8. I tend to be analytical and logical. |
| _____ 4. I am a "people-person" who places a high value on friendship. | _____ 9. I often identify with others by using phrases like, "I used to think that, too," or "I once felt the way you do." |
| _____ 5. I enjoy adding or including new people in activities I'm involved in. | _____ 10. People have commented about my ability for developing deep friendships. |
| | _____ 11. To be honest, I often watch for situations in which someone "better qualified" can explain concepts to my friends. |

- _____ 12. I find fulfillment in helping others, often in behind-the-scenes ways.
- _____ 13. I do not have a problem confronting my friends with the truth even if it strains the relationship.
- _____ 14. In conversations, I naturally key in on questions that are holding up a person's understanding or progress.
- _____ 15. When I talk around the locker room or the drinking fountain, people really listen.
- _____ 16. I would rather delve into personal life issues than abstract theoretical ideas.
- _____ 17. It is not unusual for me to attend special events or concerts and bring along a car full of friends.
- _____ 18. I would rather show love through actions than through words.
- _____ 19. I think the world would be a lot better place if people would stop being so sensitive about everything and just speak the truth!
- _____ 20. I enjoy discussions and debates on difficult questions.
- _____ 21. I intentionally share my mistakes and struggles with others when it will help them consider solutions that could help them.
- _____ 22. I prefer discussing a person's life before getting into the details of their beliefs and opinions.
- _____ 23. I tend to watch for worthwhile events to bring people to (such as enriching seminars, retreats, classes, or church services).
- _____ 24. I have found that my quiet demonstration of love and care sometimes help people open up and become more receptive to what I think.
- _____ 25. A motto that would fit me is: "Make a difference or a mess, but do something."
- _____ 26. Often when listening to teachers or TV commentators, I mentally (or even verbally) argue with their positions and logic.
- _____ 27. People seem interested in hearing stories about things that have happened in my life.
- _____ 28. I enjoy long talks with friends, and it doesn't matter much where we are or where we're going.

- _____ 29. I am always looking for a match between the needs and interest of my friends and various books, classes, and programs that they would enjoy or benefit from.
- _____ 30. I think the world would be a better place if people would talk less and take more action on behalf of their friends and neighbors.
- _____ 31. I sometimes get in trouble for lacking gentleness and sensitivity in the way I interact with others.
- _____ 32. I like to get at the deeper reasons for opinions that people hold.
- _____ 33. I am still amazed at how God has worked in my life and I would like others to know about it.
- _____ 34. People generally consider me to be an interactive, sensitive, and caring kind of person.
- _____ 35. A highlight of my week is when I can take a guest with me to a helpful learning event, including church.
- _____ 36. I tend to be more practical and action-oriented than philosophical and idea-oriented.

Discover Your Evangelism Style Scoring Grid

Below, record the number you wrote next to the corresponding survey question. Add the numbers in each column and record the totals.

EVANGELISM STYLES					
Direct	Intellectual	Testimonial	Interpersonal	Invitational	Serving
1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36
TOTALS					

"Becoming A Contagious Christian," Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels

Six Styles of Evangelism

1 The Direct Style

Biblical Example Peter in Acts 2

Theme Verse 2 Timothy 4:2 (NIV)

Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction.

Characteristics

- Confident
- Bold
- Assertive
- Skips small talk, gets right to the point.
- Has strong opinions and convictions.

Cautions

- Confident
- Bold
- Assertive
- Skips small talk, gets right to the point.
- Has strong opinions and convictions.

Suggestions for using and developing this style

- Ask friends for feedback on whether or not you have the right balance of boldness and gentleness. Keep in mind Paul's phrase in Ephesians 4 "speaking the truth in love." Both truth and love are essential.
- Prepare yourself for situations where you will stand alone (Read about Peter in Acts 2 and other scripture). The non-believer you confront with the truth will sometimes feel uncomfortable. Even non-confrontational Christians who are with you will sometimes feel discomfort. That's okay. Under God's guidance, challenge people to trust and follow Christ, and he will use it.
- It is critical that you listen and value what others say before telling them what you think they need to hear.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the person you hope to reach.

"Becoming A Contagious Christian," Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels

2 The Intellectual Style

Biblical Example Peter in Acts 17

Theme Verse 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- Characteristics**
- Analytical
 - Logical
 - Inquisitive
 - Likes to debate.
 - More concerned with how people think than how they feel.

- Cautions**
- Avoid getting stuck on academic points, arguments and hairsplitting points of evidence. These are mainly to clear the path back to a central gospel message.
 - Remember that attitude is as important as information. 1 Peter 3:15 says to have “gentleness and respect.”
 - Avoid becoming argumentative.

Suggestions for using and developing this style

- Set time aside to study. This style, more than the others, relies on preparation. Take serious action on what it says in 1 Peter 3:15: But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.
- Avoid doing all your preparation in an academic vacuum. Get out and talk to others. Try out your argument and answers on real people, and make refinements as needed.
- Develop your relational side. Talk to people about everyday events, and what is happening in their life and yours.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

“Becoming A Contagious Christian,” Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels

3 The Testimonial Style

Biblical Example The Blindman in John 9

Theme Verse 1 John 1:3 (NIV)

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

- Characteristics**
- Clear communicator
 - Compelling storyteller
 - Good listener
 - Vulnerable about your personal life, ups and downs.
 - Overwhelmed by the account of how God reached you.
 - See links between your experience and that of other people.

- Cautions**
- Be sure to relate your experience to the life of your friend. You need to first listen to them and be able to connect your story to their situation.
 - Do not stop with merely telling your story. Challenge them to consider how what you learned might apply to their life.
 - Don't downplay the value of your story because it seems too ordinary. Ordinary stories relate best to ordinary people.

Suggestions for using and developing this style

- Practice so you will be able to tell your story without hesitation.
- Keep Christ and the gospel message as the centerpiece of your story. This is an account of how He changed your life.
- Keep your story fresh by adding new and current illustrations from your ongoing walk with Christ.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

"Becoming A Contagious Christian," Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels

4

The Interpersonal Style

Biblical Example Matthew in Luke 5:29

Theme Verse 1 Corinthians 9:22 (NIV)

When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.

Characteristics

- Relational warmth
- Conversational
- Compassionate
- Friendship oriented
- Focuses on people and their needs.

Cautions

- Beware of valuing friendship over truth. Telling people they are sinners in need of a savior will test relationships.
- Do not get so involved in the process of building friendships that you forget the ultimate goal: bringing people to know Christ as a forgiver and leader.
- Don't get overwhelmed with the amount of needs your friends might have—do what you can and leave the rest to God.

Suggestions for using and developing this style

- Be patient. This style tends to work more gradually than others. Look and pray for opportunities to turn conversations towards spiritual matters.
- Continually create and plan opportunities to interact with friends and new people through social events, sports, etc. this will put you in a place where your style can flourish.
- Practice telling the gospel message so you will be prepared when the opportunity arises.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

"Becoming A Contagious Christian," Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels

5 The Invitational Style

Biblical Example The Samaritan Woman in John 4

Theme Verse Luke 14:23 (NIV)

Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house may be full.

- Characteristics**
- Hospitable
 - Relational
 - Persuasive
 - Enjoys meeting new people.
 - Enthusiastic
 - Spiritually opportunistic

- Cautions**
- Don’t let others do all the talking for you. Your friends and acquaintances need to hear how Christ influenced your life. They have questions you could answer!
 - Carefully and prayerfully consider which events or church services you take people to. Look for ones that are clear with truth but sensitive to the needs of spiritual seekers.
 - Do not get discouraged if people refuse your invitation. Their refusal could be an opportunity for a spiritual conversation. Also, their “no” today may become a “yes” tomorrow.

Suggestions for using and developing this style

- When inviting people, try to get written details about the event into their hands (either preprinted or handwritten). Whenever appropriate, offer to pick them up and do something together before and after the event.
- At events, mentally put yourself in the place of the other person. Ask yourself if you were that person whether the event would relate to your concerns and mindset. Reinforce the positive aspects to the person you invited.
- Offer constructive feedback to the event sponsors consisting of specific and realistic ways you think they could improve the event and make it more compelling to the people you bring.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

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6 The Serving Style

Biblical Example Tabitha (Dorcas) in Acts 9

Theme Verse Matthew 5:16 (NLT)

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

- Characteristics**
- Others-centered
 - Works behind the scenes.
 - Patient
 - Sees needs and finds joy in meeting them.
 - Shows love through action more than words.
 - Attaches value to even menial tasks.

- Cautions**
- Remember that although “words are no substitute for actions,” “actions are no substitute for words” either! In Romans 10:14 Paul says that we must verbally tell people about Christ. You can do this in many ways as you point to him as the central motivation for your acts of service.
 - Don’t underestimate the value of your service. It is your style that will reach the hardest to reach people. Acts of loving service are hard to resist and difficult to argue with.
 - Be discerning as to how much you can do realistically, without depriving yourself or your family of needed care and attention.

Suggestions for using and developing this style

- Find creative ways to communicate the spiritual motivation behind the service you offer. It could be through a word, a card, or an invitation.
- Seek God daily for opportunities to serve others for eternal purposes. He will open your eyes to areas you might have missed. Be ready to follow His leadings, even if they seem a bit out of ordinary.
- Be careful not to impose your service on others. Pray for wisdom so you know where to invest your efforts in ways that will be strategic for the kingdom of God.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

“Becoming A Contagious Christian,” Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels



Creating an Action Plan

Discovery

My evangelism style: _____

Name of person in my circle of influence: _____

Based on the characteristics, cautions, and suggestions of my style, how can I best share the love and salvation of Jesus Christ in person?

Begin a prayer regimen specifically for that person. Here is an example:

A Prayer to Cover Someone in Need of Salvation

Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, I come to You in gladness and with thanksgiving. I know that You are God! It is written in Your Word that Jesus came to seek and save the lost. I know Lord that You wish all people to be saved and to know Your divine truth. Therefore, Father, I bring my family (say each name out loud), my friends (say each name out loud), as well as my neighbors, and my entire neighborhood before You this day. I feel You have called me as Your agent of intercession for each of them. I thank You Lord for allowing me to stand in the gap and pray for the salvation of my family, friends, and neighbors that each of them might be spared from eternal destruction. (Ezekiel 22:30)

Father, thank You for salvation. I acknowledge Lord Jesus, that You are the one that takes away each of our sins, and that it is the Holy Spirit Who convicts and convinces us of sin, righteousness and judgment. I pray Lord, that Your mercy and Your kindness will lead each of my family members, friends and neighbors to repentance and that their inner man will accept Your will for their life (1 Thessalonians 5:9). You are the One Who will deliver each of them and draw them to Yourself out of the control and the dominion of darkness and transfer them into the Kingdom of You, Heavenly Father (Psalm 98:2).

Father, I pray that each individual family member, friend and neighbor will hear the truth from someone standing in the gap and in Your presence. I ask You, Lord of the harvest, to send the perfect laborer into each one of my family member's, each one of my friend's and each neighbor's path to share Your gospel in a special way so that they will listen, understand it and receive it. I am believing by faith that the person that you send to each one of them, will help them see Your truth and make Jesus the Lord of their life. (Romans 10:1, Romans 10:10).

Having prayed all that I know to pray, I submit to the Spirit, Who also helps me present my supplication. I do not always know how to pray worthily, but Your Spirit within me is actually praying for me in those agonizing longings which cannot find words. Having done all that I stand on Your Word, and Father, I shall praise You and thank You for the salvation of each person in my family, each of my friends and each of my neighbors. I commit this matter into Your hands, and with my faith I see my family, my friends and my neighbors saved and filled with Your Spirit, with a full and clear knowledge of Your Word. Thank you, Father! In the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth I pray, Amen.

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Slide 1

Church Leader Training
IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY NEEDS



Slide 2

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- 1 Discover yourself, the people around you, and your neighborhood.
- 2 Engage with individuals where they are.
- 3 Invite and help individuals to discover God's plan for them.

Slide 3

YOUR ENVIRONMENT

PERSONAL MINISTRIES

COLLECTIVE MINISTRY

Slide 4

RESOURCES



<http://www.city-data.com/city/Grand-Rapids-Michigan.html>

<https://www.towncharts.com/Michigan/Demographics/Grand-Rapids-city-MI-Demographics-data.html>

<https://www.census.gov>

<https://www.urbanchurchcenter.org/Center>

Slide 5



MINDFUL WALKS

- 1 Define the area where you intend to focus.
- 2 Create a verbal definition of the area.
- 3 Walk the neighborhood and record a video.
- 4 As you walk, take note of the following:

WHAT SOUNDS DO YOU HEAR?
TYPES OF BUILDINGS?
ARE THERE SIGNS OF CHILDREN? ELDERLY?

Slide 6



Your Sphere of Influence



Slide 7



DIRECT
INTELLECTUAL
TESTIMONIAL
INTERPERSONAL
INVITATIONAL
SERVING

What is Your Evangelism Style?

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Slide 8

CREATING AN ACTION PLAN

My evangelism style: _____

Name of person in my circle of influence: _____

Based on the characteristics, cautions, and suggestions of my style, how can I best share the love and salvation of Jesus Christ in person?



FAMILY LEADERSHIP
INITIATIVE