

Building a Spiritual Movement

Do you ever wonder why some sports teams almost always have a winning season? They never seem to lose! If you are part of a team like that, it's a great feeling! Their competitors hope and pray in vain that they will lose. How can these teams keep winning season after season?

It usually goes back to a winning tradition built by a coach who knows how to develop people and a team. He's always building the program from the ground up. Especially important to this coach is that the younger players understand and master the basics of the game. It is the mastery of these basics that are the building blocks for a winning team.

Building an ongoing ministry on the campus is much the same. If we make sure the basics are being done and that their motivation is from God, then we will be doing what it takes to build a lasting ministry.

My coach always told us that before we stepped onto the playing field, we had to have made a personal decision to give our best effort. You and your leadership team must make a similar decision before launching the ministry.

1. First, your team must be convinced that God wants to do something special through the ministry on campus.
2. Secondly, the team must be committed to trusting God and working hard to see a campus outreach succeed.

If you and your team agree with these two statements, then let's look at a few of the basic building blocks of a growing ministry.

Pray Consistently

Psalm 127:1 says, *"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain."* Trusting God to see students' lives changed is a spiritual work; God tells us that He is responsible to grow the ministry. We are tools that He uses, but the power for the work is in His hands. A big part of our work is to place the ministry and the lives of people in God's hands and ask Him to do mighty acts. Enlist others – students and adults – to pray with you.

Develop a Sense of "Cause"

Have you ever seen pictures of people who chain themselves to trees so a big piece of machinery cannot

advance and destroy some parcel of land? Or how about a man who stands in front of an army tank driven by his own countryman, daring him to advance the tank by killing him? These are examples of people who hold deep beliefs in a cause.

For the ministry to grow, the ministry leadership will have to instill a similar sense of “cause” into the hearts of students. You do this by communicating why the ministry is important in clear and simple terms. Remind people that investing themselves in the souls of people is the most important thing we could possibly be involved in. Challenge students to make sure that their friends and peers will be with them in Heaven. Talk about the “cause” wherever you go.

Sow Broadly

Jesus told a parable about a farmer who went out one morning to sow some seed in his field. Some seed fell on hard ground, some on rocky ground, and other seed fell among the thorns. However, some seed fell on good soil and brought a great harvest. The idea is that the more seed we sow, the more will grow to maturity.

I have a friend who is always seeing people he talks with pray and receive Christ. I was impressed with this and I asked him about his “secret” methods. He told me that he had no “secret,” only that he shared his faith many times to get the response. He saw many people trust Jesus because he told many more people about Him. The principle is simple – talk with as many people as you can about the Lord and the ministry. Some will not join you, but many others will.

Master the Basics

Have you heard the story of Vince Lombardi? He is widely accepted as one of the greatest football coaches of all time. At one point in his career, his championship caliber football team was struggling badly – instead of winning by large margins, they were losing to inferior teams. Coach Lombardi decided to start over. One morning at practice he held up a football and said, “gentlemen, this is a football.” These were professional players – but they had lost their grasp on some of the basics of the game.

Your ministry team members do not have to own seminary degrees to excel in the work. Trust God greatly, dedicate yourself to a few basic things and the ministry will likely expand. Make it simple:

- Pray.
- Share your faith in Christ.
- Build those who respond to Christ.
- Train those who want to grow in Christ.

- Give responsibility to students who can lead others spiritually.

Ask Many People to Be Involved

Telling lots of people about the Lord and the ministry (broad sowing) should result in interest from people at a number of different levels. Asking people to be involved is a big part of a growing group. Adults can provide homes to meet in and money for supplies and food. Christian students can join your leadership team; those who don't know Christ are those whom you'll seek to lead to God.

Give away jobs to faithful people. Here are some roles people can fill:

- Coordinate prayer.
- Lead Bible studies.
- Organize socials.
- Plan outreaches.
- Lead follow-up plans.
- Coordinate adult helpers.
- Coordinate meeting places.

As your campus movement implements these basic building blocks, you can be confident that God will use you to make a difference in the lives of many on your campus and grow your own relationship with Him as well.

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