

Apprentice Leader Development Process

As a Small Group Leader, it is your privilege and responsibility to coach your apprentice through this process and prepare them to lead their own group. Without giving up your final responsibility as chief shepherd of your group, seek to affirm and empower your apprentice toward maturity in their faith and in their leadership. We value team-leadership here at Heartland and therefore we hope you will approach this process from a team perspective.

I. Objective

1. Provide a safe relational environment for your apprentice leader to:
 - a. Understand the areas of responsibility for Small Group Leaders at Heartland.
 - b. Experiment in leading various aspects of shepherding in preparation for leading their own group.
 - c. Enjoy safe places to wrestle through their questions, concerns, failures and fears.
 - d. Experience opportunities to celebrate their wins and where they saw God at work.
 - e. Process their learning through open dialog and targeted questions.
 - f. Feel encouraged and strengthened in their shepherding role.
 - g. Determine whether God is calling them to shepherd their own group.
2. Monitor their growth and follow-through in each of the Checklist areas.

II. Overview

By the end of an apprentice's first year, they will:

1. Complete the Heartland Foundations on-line training.
2. Have taken the Core Workshops.
3. Be active in personal spiritual growth.
4. Engage in Heartland's Leadership Community.
5. Have gained practical leadership experience.
6. Where applicable, be prepared to launch their own group.

III. The Checklist / Roadmap

This checklist is like a roadmap to guide you through the process of preparing your apprentice to lead their own group.

This is not laid out in calendar format nor a step-by-step progression. Instead, it is designed to give you a comprehensive list of all the areas of preparation and then let you determine their next step, depending on where they are at in their own development or needed areas of growth.

However, we would suggest that you start immediately with Sections A and B to get them started off well.

Each section also has a list of possible questions to assist you in giving your apprentice opportunity to process their learning.

Please track your apprentice's progression and connect with your coach on how they are doing.

A. Heartland Small Group Foundations On-line Training

- Section 1 – What is the Church
- Section 2 – The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA)
- Section 3 – History of Heartland Alliance Church
- Section 4 – Heartland's Major Initiatives
- Section 5 – Heartland Small Group Basics

Possible questions to process their learning:

- What have you learned about the church? The C&MA? Heartland?
- How do you think the major initiatives could be lived out in our small group?
- Which strategy for growing group do you suggest we try first?
- Where are you at regarding leading your own group one day?
- What stood out for you as you read the qualifications and job description?
- What concerns do you have over the qualifications or job description?
- What gets you excited about leading small group?
- What fear do you experience at the thought of leading a group?
- Reiterate in your own words what it means to be a small group leader at Heartland.
- Tell me about your believer's baptism.
- What has pushed your buttons the most as you work through the Membership Manual?
- Where are you most aligned with Heartland theology and practice?
- Where are you most misaligned with Heartland theology and practice?

B. Core Workshops

- Shepherding – Basic
- Prayer in Small Group
- Preparing and Conducting Meetings
- Facilitating Discussions

Possible questions to process their learning:

- From the workshop you took, what are one or two take-aways you can implement right away?
- In light of that workshop, what ideas/changes would you suggest for our group?
- What challenged you the most?
- What will you need to trust God for the most?

C. Personal Spiritual Growth

- Regular practice of spiritual disciplines
 - Prayer
 - Fasting
 - Bible reading
 - Silence and solitude
- Hearing God (curriculum and personal practice)
- Hearing God for others (see Appendix A in Hearing God curriculum)
- Spiritual Gifts Inventory (available as curriculum)
- Know and live out the *Five Values of Heartland*
- Pursue God's presence and depend on God's power, both personally and in their leadership

Possible questions to process their learning:

- Which discipline do you find the hardest to do? The easiest? Why?
- How is hearing God going for you?
- What has God been speaking to you about lately?
- What do you struggle with in hearing God? How does He seem to speak to you?
- What are your top three to four spiritual gifts? How can you grow in them through our group?
- What spiritual gifts have you prayerfully observed in each person in our group? How can you help each person identify and grow in their spiritual gifts?
- Which of the five *Values* do find the most difficult to live out?
- How are you pursuing God's presence?

D. Leadership Community

- Fall Orientation
- November Huddle
- January Workshop
- March Huddle
- May Huddle
- Appreciation Event

Possible questions to process their learning:

- What do you find most meaningful in connecting with other leaders?
- On a scale of 1-10, with one being low and 10 being high, where would you rate your value of leadership community? Why did you choose that number?
- Based on your experience so far, what suggestions could we give Heartland's Small Group Lead team that would improve your experience, and/or what affirmation could we give to encourage them?

E. Practical Leadership Experience

- Lead prayer time
- Facilitate a group study
- Organize a service opportunity
- Plan a social/party that includes family (if kids are not normally a part of group time)
- Assist in choosing a small group study
- Host a group night at their home
- Regularly dialogue and pray with leader over spiritual needs and issues of people in the group
- Contact group members outside of group time for encouragement and prayer
- Screen potential new people for the group
- Empower others to serve by identifying, recruiting and delegating an area of responsibility to a member of the group
- Participate in a coaching call or visit
- Administrative communication with office, i.e. group updates, responding to email requests ... etc.

Possible questions to process their learning:

- In what area of leadership do you find yourself depending most on God's power? In which area do you need to increase your dependency?
- What did you find most challenging about leading that last responsibility?
- What makes you most nervous/anxious/fearful about leading that area?
- In which area do you find yourself having a fair level of confidence?
- What area of leadership have you not yet experienced that you would like to try?

F. Prepare to Launch

- Gain clarity and affirmation from God to launch their own group
- Determine the vision of the new group
- Together with leader and coach/pastor, navigate the dynamics of preparing the existing group to multiply
- Confirm timing of launch
- Identify and recruit their own apprentice
- Decide on strategies to grow the new group
- Plan time of celebration and commissioning

Possible questions to process their learning:

- What aspect of launching your own group creates the most angst within you?
- What gets you most excited?
- If there was something we could have done differently in your learning process, what would that be?

IV. Key Coaching Principles and Suggestions

1. Leadership development is about empowering others to pursue their God-given contribution to the kingdom of God. This may feel like more work for you as a leader, but remember that:
 - a. Though we, as leaders, are *responsible* for everything, we don't need to *do* everything, nor should we do everything. When we do, we rob others of the joy of serving and glorifying God through exercising their spiritual gifts.
 - b. When we are doing less active-ministry, it frees us up to more of what our role really is ... seeking God for and evaluating the spiritual/emotional/relational health and maturity of our group; thinking/processing the big picture, how to enable others to grow, what is the group's next steps ... etc.
 - c. As we learn to delegate, our role and time-priorities change from *doing* ministry to *empowering others* to minister ... that becomes our ministry.
 - d. Meditate on Ephesians 4:11-16.
2. Be genuine but give encouragement every *time* you see them do something well.
3. When giving difficult/constructive feedback, always use the sandwich approach:

Encouragement
Difficult/constructive feedback
Encouragement

4. If God puts them on your mind / heart, send them a quick text or email to ask them how they're doing. And when it's true, tell them you're praying for them.
5. It's always best to process their learning as soon as possible after completing whatever activity/responsibility they were doing. People often forget when too much time has passed.
6. Talk to your coach if you have any questions, concerns or are not sure how to handle a particular situation.