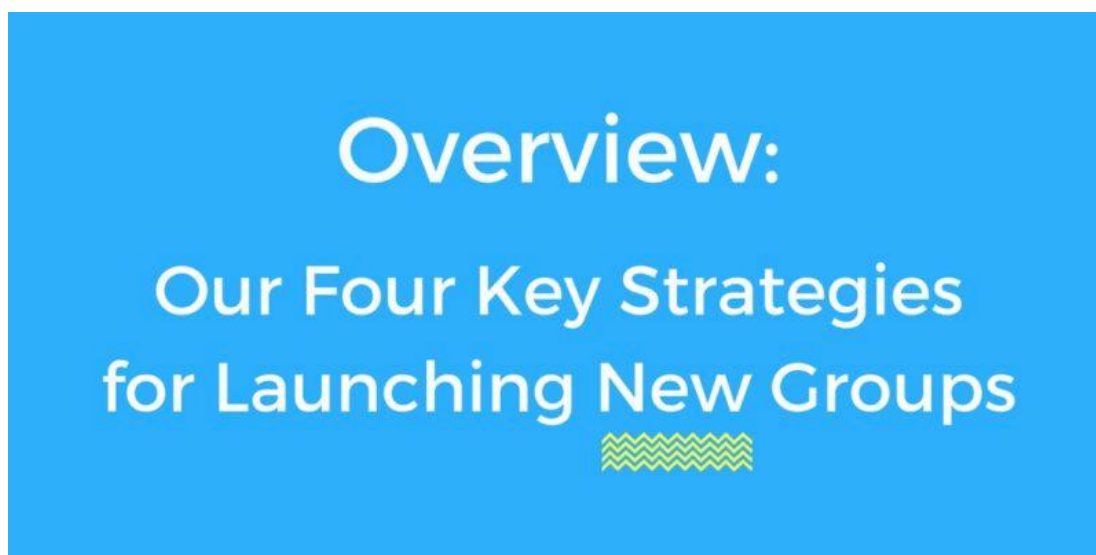


Overview: Here Are Our Four Strategies for Launching New Groups

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Over the last several years we've identified four key strategies for launching new groups. Two of the four strategies are very up-front and explicitly invite unconnected people to "join a six-week life group."

Strategies that launch off-campus groups:

1. An annual church-wide campaign, usually in the fall, allows us to really leverage our senior pastor's influence and invite our whole congregation into a single conversation. The church-wide campaign strategy provides an effective way to invite another wave of unconnected people to **start a new group** with a couple friends or **join a new group** that is forming.

2. We hold two or three small group connections every year. Both in conjunction with a church-wide campaign and completely separate, a small group connection makes it possible to invite large numbers of unconnected people to an event that forms new groups and identifies new leaders.

Strategies that launch short-term on-campus groups*

*Our short-term on-campus strategies launch table groups that are 4 to 6 weeks long and are designed to lead to off-campus groups.

The other two core strategies take advantage of a *less up-front approach*. That is, they aren't really promoted as life groups. Instead, they are promoted as on-campus opportunities or experiences. We believe people who aren't ready to join a group that meets off-campus will often sign up for an on-campus study.

Both of our on-campus strategies are short-term (4 to 6 weeks) and carefully orchestrated to lead to off-campus groups. Attendees are seated at tables by affinity. The selected studies generate great discussion. Table leaders naturally emerge over the first couple weeks. We begin introducing the idea that "they may want to continue meeting off-campus after the study is over" in about week three or four (i.e., "You may be having so much fun together you'd like to keep meeting. We'd love to help you do that. You just can't meet here!").

1. A slate of short-term on-campus opportunities is offered a couple times a year. The studies we offer are carefully selected, featuring topics we believe will appeal to unconnected people. We typically offer separate studies designed to appeal to couples, men and women. Mark Gungor's Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage attracts a roomful every time we offer it. We've tried Authentic Manhood, 7 Questions, and Act Like a Man for guys and Frazzled Female, The Best Yes and Comparison Trap for women (but are still searching for the best topics for men and women). We plan to try The New Rules of Love, Sex and Dating for single adults later this summer.

2. We've offered a "book club" approach both of the last two summers (and even called it a book club for women). Our best sign-up happened when we offered Bad Girls of the Bible and Act Like a Man.

Takeaway on our four strategies:

Taking advantage of several strategies allows us to specifically target several types of unconnected people every year. Ranging from the very overt and up-front approach of the church-wide campaign and small group connection to the more stealthy approach of the book clubs or short-term on-campus opportunities, we can successfully connect a broad range of unconnected people.