



## ***WHAT SMALL GROUPS DO WE HAVE?***

**How To Use:** This is an excellent exercise for a leadership training session.

1. Make ten series of three columns each in a spreadsheet. It would be best to insert a colored column between each of the series as a buffer.
  - Label the first column in each series *for each day of the week as well as the entire Sunday program*. Use the following columns for Sunday: Sunday School, Sunday Morning, Sunday Afternoon, and Sunday evening and any other variation you believe is necessary. Column one in the remaining six series will be for Monday-Saturday.
  - The second column in each series is for the average attendance.
  - The third column records “Number of New Students.”
  - There will be a minimum of thirty columns in the spreadsheet plus the color coded columns.
2. Record the name of each small group that meets at each of those times /days in the appropriate column. This includes Sunday School classes, youth classes, children’s non-Sunday School classes such as AWANA, etc. Small groups are important to children, too!
3. Record the average attendance of each small group. (Sunday School classes are normally small groups, too.) This figure is usually different from the group’s enrollment since it is rare for everyone to attend at the same time. The average attendance number is important because the dynamics within small groups break down when the group exceeds fifteen in attendance. Some insist that this breakdown occurs at levels of even ten or twelve.
4. Review each small group’s enrollment and identify those new students (not necessarily new members) who have joined the group in the past two years. Enter this number on the spreadsheet in the column “Number of New Students.”
5. At the bottom of the spreadsheet *identify those specific ministries that you are purposely trying to develop or need to develop*. Note: at this

- time the ministry may not line up with an existing small group. For example, one ministry should always be personal evangelism. A Commitment to the Great Commandment *and* the Great Commission is the beginning step to a healthy church. Therefore, we need a small group in which people can learn how to evangelize and develop an evangelism strategy. Also, do you have a partnering/mentoring ministry between young and old? A men's organization can help develop the young men into Christian fathers. Does the church have a prayer partnering ministry? Is there an opportunity for five people to gather to share personal prayer concerns and pray? Is there a leadership training course for the core? What about missions? Is there a small group developing a missions focus for the church?
6. Each of the ministries identified in Step 5 can solve a significant need in this church. How big is that need? Is it bigger than something else that the church is already doing? If it is, perhaps it should have a higher priority in the church scheduling/budget process. It may be best to schedule a more appropriate day/hour when this ministry can be developed on a higher scale.
  7. Each new ministry will assimilate people in the following ways:
    - Every new ministry requires resource people. This beginning stage generates involvement. Involvement requires preparation and preparation increases the performance level.
    - Every new ministry meets an *identified scriptural* need. New members can often relate to those needs in ways that the current "status quo" members cannot.
    - Every new ministry represents a challenging opportunity for personal growth. Sunday School has a tendency to be very generalized, but these new ministries have a specific targeted audience. It is my experience that the people in that target will respond to such a challenge if it is conveniently scheduled.