

NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS DIRECTIONS



Three years ago, my teenage son and I began a "process of discovery"—the restoration of my father's antique pick-up truck. I never imagined the closeness that could come from working on a truck. The disciplines we discovered together developed a bond which will last a lifetime. There was laughter, pain, disagreement and a lot of talk. But most important, we discovered a new appreciation for each other and our respective abilities.

In principle, teacher training is much the same. It is a process of discovery. It is a discipline. Jesus had three years to train and raise up leaders that would reach the world. The interaction among Jesus and His disciples included laughter, fellowship, disagreement among the disciples, and a lot of instruction from Jesus. As we follow His example through the gospels, we see the great value of integrating truth in human relationships. Training was not done alone, but together.

Teacher training can be a process of discovery by showing your teachers an effective model-training teachers through on-the-job ministry assignments—and then leading them to become trainers of others.

First, show your teachers an effective model. (Matthew 4:23). People learn best when they see someone model the skill or character trait they wish to learn. Through our restoration project, I've come to realize that almost all people need to see something before they can reproduce it. If you want to train teachers to be good story tellers then show them how a good story teller keeps his or her listeners interested.

Next, train teachers through on-the-job ministry assignments (Matthew 10:5-11). Without new challenges, people don't grow! People learn best when they gain hands-on experience. After a brief orientation of the assignment, it is best to involve people in ministry as part of the training program. Through the reality of experience, teachers-in-training discover what they don't know. This can refine the training process and make it more effective. Jesus used a five-step process anyone can use.

**I do - you watch
I do - you help
You do - I help
You do - I watch
You do - someone else watches**

Well, the job is almost finished and the truck looks great! The time spent "discovering" is in the hundreds of hours and the cost is five times the original purchase price of the truck, but the experience of teaching and learning from my son is priceless! The results from your teacher training can leave you with the same satisfaction.



Rick Wulfestieg, National Minister
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IDEA BANK

How Can We

T R A I N

For growth in Christian Education Ministries?

Teacher training is important because it reduces teacher turnover.

Teachers will grow in confidence and enthusiasm as they learn skills in HOW to teach. Teachers feel cared for and nurtured as they receive encouragement that they are a team moving forward "in one accord" to build up people. The letters in the word "T-R-A-I-N" can help us understand not only why we provide training, but HOW to provide training.

T is for "TEAM-BUILDING"

Activities which build team spirit and which help to develop relationships will help workers feel like they are an important part of the group. Team-building activities will help your teachers receive support, feel affirmed and significant, and avoid isolation and burnout while they catch the excitement of working with others.

R is for "RECEIVING ENCOURAGEMENT"

Training can be a time to give your teachers spiritual encouragement and renewal, emotional connections and uplifting intellectual stimulation. It is a time to share positive, upbeat, and inspirational communication with teachers who may have become discouraged, isolated, or disillusioned. Training is also a time to encourage and communicate with new teachers who may feel unsure about what they are doing.

A is for "A LOOK AHEAD"

You need to clearly communicate to your congregation the philosophy, goals and objectives of your Christian education ministry. Where are you going? What do you want to accomplish? Communicating philosophy, goals and objectives will help your members, parents and teachers see a real purpose in building people!

I is for "INVESTING IN RELATIONSHIPS"

It is important to plan time in your training event for teachers to fellowship and socialize with each other. As teachers give up their own time to be with the body to serve others, they need to be able to establish relationships with people who are doing the same things. Give teachers some time to laugh, relax, and get to know each other better.

N is for "NECESSARY FUNDAMENTALS" being taught.

Get back to basics by equipping your teachers to understand their students, to learn proper teaching techniques, and to inform them about your church's own particular "policies & procedures." A few examples of subjects you might cover include:

1. Teacher job descriptions – What do you expect of them?
2. C. E. ministries policies and procedures – What are the particulars of your church?
3. Curriculum and resources – What is available for them to use in teaching?
4. Age-group characteristics – Who are the people they will be teaching?
5. Age-level meetings – What are the actual logistics of their own class?
6. Specific workshops – What are the particular skills they need to learn?
(lesson preparation, discipline, creative teaching techniques, building self-esteem, etc.)

MAKE YOUR TRAINING "SPECIAL"

Choose a THEME, and carry it out through decorations, "party favors," refreshments, etc. Plan games that can be used for "getting-acquainted," learning, or just for fun. Offer prizes like simple kid's "party favors" and similar items. Implementing these principles can make your training sessions more appealing and worthwhile for busy teachers and ministry staff.

THE TRAINING BUFFET

HOW TO HAVE A BALANCED DIET IN YOUR TEACHER TRAINING

by Rod Light, Training and Resource Development, Foursquare National Department of Christian Education

Have you ever wondered why teachers will not show up for teacher training meetings? The truth is many of our teachers are stretched to the breaking point. One more commitment often puts them over the edge. In fact, some people will refuse to teach if they are required to attend regular teacher meetings. Do not give up hope. There is a better way! Consider a buffet approach to teacher training. Since everyone has different priorities, work demands and family schedules, how about offering training to fit in with their lifestyle?

Imagine a beautiful buffet complete with an assortment of salads, hot and cold entrees, a selection of breads and desserts, and beverages to meet every taste. Prime rib may not be a choice for the person who only eats chicken or fish. The person with a hearty appetite will choose a different meal than the salad lover. Perhaps our teacher training should be more like a buffet than a continuous serving of roast beef, mashed potatoes and mixed vegetables.

The Menu

What will you serve? Will the variety meet the needs of your diners? When planning your training buffet, plan to meet the need of all your teachers. For the novice, begin with basics like using curriculum, leading a child to Christ, effective classroom control, and creative teaching methods. For veteran teachers, feature topics like strategic use of teaching objectives, applying the Bible to life, and how to ask effective questions.

The Preparation

As you prepare your training buffet, ask yourself, "Do we provide enough selections to meet every need? Have we sought the input of our teachers to determine what they need in Christian education training?" Investigate training materials that are available to you. Talk with other Christian education leaders in your community about resources they use. Call your District C.E. Representative to discuss materials they recommend. Contact the National Department of Christian Education for newly released teacher training material.

The Presentation

Experts in the field of food service know that presentation is everything. Providing the correct number of choices on the training buffet is also important. Outline three or four training options you will include in your buffet. Remember, just as with a food buffet, your teachers should only be required to participate in one or two of your options at any one time. Here are a few suggestions:

Selection 1: A teacher meeting for those who like a more traditional approach.

Selection 2: A library of audio training tapes (15-30 minutes each) which may be checked out and listened to at home or while driving to/from work. (A good resource would be taped workshops from a teacher training conference.)

Selection 3: Video tapes of nationally recognized trainers can be viewed at home at the teacher's leisure.

Selection 4: A library of books to read or magazine articles which may be legally photocopied if they are used for educational purposes.

Selection 5: Internet web sites can provide a wealth of training information.

The Follow-up

Plan a method for follow up.

1. Tell your teachers ahead of time what is expected of them when they participate in the buffet.
2. Determine your method for checking out and returning items.
3. Provide a written question/answer sheet to be returned to you after the training option has been completed. Or, plan a personal conversation either on the phone or by e-mail to discuss observations of the teacher and to answer any questions brought to mind by the training.

Scripture-based Prayers for your pastor

Praying a hedge around your Shepherd

As Christian education leaders, we sometimes become frustrated with our church leadership. As a result, we might expend a lot of energy criticizing our leadership, trying to win support for our cause, or isolating ourselves from the people with whom we ought to be close. The Bible gives specific instructions to pray for leaders to keep us working as a team as we build God's Church. Here are a few examples:

Lord, I pray for discernment in exposing any schemes of the enemy against my pastor. Show our congregation how to pray against the spiritual forces of darkness in heavenly realms. And Lord, protect us as we wage warfare on behalf of our pastor (Ephesians 6:11, 12).

Father, I thank You that no weapons formed against my pastor will prosper. Rumors and gossip will be turned aside. I pray that my pastor will dwell in the shadow of the Most High God and will be delivered from terror, doubt and disease (Psalm 91:5,6).

Renew my pastor in the Holy Spirit. Quicken my shepherd's body with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11). Renew his/her vision and confidence (1 John 5:13,14).

I pray that the eyes of my pastor may be enlightened to know the hope to which we are called and know the riches of our glorious inheritance in the saints. Let my pastor know the incomparable great power which is in

us who believe (Ephesians 1:18, 19). Let my pastor see the full revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12).

Lord, I lift up the hands of my pastor and his/her family. Place them in the shelter of the Most High to rest in the shadow of the Almighty. Preserve their family time. Cover their home. Meet their financial needs in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). Command Your angels to guard them as they travel and win the lost.

Let my pastor's preaching be in the energy of the Holy Spirit. Let him/her proclaim Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:28).

Send the spirit of prayer upon my pastor (Romans 8:26). Send others to join us in praying for our pastor (1 Timothy 2:18).

In Jesus' name, may church hurts, abuse and ungrateful forces move. May mountains of criticism, inordinate expectations, stress, and fatigue be cast into the sea. May every need, vision and dream of my pastor be completed (Mark 11:22-24).

Forgive those who hurt and speak against my pastor. May he/she walk in forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32- 5:1). Let every thought be taken captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

O Lord, take my pastor's hand so that he/she will not fear. Lead my pastor through difficult times. Strengthen my pastor and help and uphold him/her with Your righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

Excerpted from Tekyl, Terry. 30 Scripture-based Prayers for Your Pastor. Pentecostal Evangel October 11, 1998. From Tekyl, Terry. Prayed On or Prayed For. Hedging your Pastor in Prayer © 1994. Bristol Books.

Key qualities to look for in a good teacher

Spiritual Health and Maturity

1. A genuine experience of salvation.
2. Filled with the Holy Spirit.
3. Called to the ministry of teaching.
4. Committed to the task of teaching.

Positive Attitude

1. Willing to "serve" and give out of a heart of love.
2. A person of "faith."
3. A sense of humor.
4. Enthusiastic.
5. Love and enjoy the students.

Passion for the Harvest

1. A burning vision for the harvest and a strong burden for the lost.
2. Willing to contact the students outside the classroom.

Value and Agenda Harmony

1. The teacher must have shared values and expectations with the pastor and the church.
2. The teacher must work to bring harmony and unity to the church and to resolve conflicts.

Growing Expertise

1. The teacher needs to be teachable with growing expertise in their field.
2. The teacher should increase his/her understanding of teaching methods and the student's needs.

Humility

1. The teacher needs to have a humble attitude of service.
2. The teacher must have a humble attitude about himself/herself.

Availability

1. The teacher needs to have the time to intentionally teach others.
2. The teacher needs to be in the class room early before the student arrives.

Excerpted from a workshop, Qualities of a Good Teacher led by Linda Allen, Christian Education Representative, Eastern District. Used with permission

How to Succeed as a Small-group Leader

In a survey of more than 700 cell leaders the characteristics that distinguished successful leaders had more to do with their lifestyle than with their personality, background, or how long they'd been Christians.

Consistent devotional life. Time spent with God is the single most important factor in successful cell leadership. Making this a priority means battling the three main hindrances: drowsiness, distractions, and busyness.

Balanced home life. If small group ministry succeeds at the cost of the leader's family life, the cost is too high. Engage your family as part of the cell-ministry team, and spend time together discussing observations of the meetings.

Leadership development. The life of 17th century preacher John Wesley illustrates the need to develop leaders in our small groups. Wesley left behind a 100,000 member church because he utilized small-group leaders

whom he had trained. Invest the time it takes to search for, train, and deploy new leaders.

Inviting new people. Group leaders must be vigilant about inviting new people, understanding that for every 25 people invited, 8 to 10 will actually show up, and only half of those will continue attending after a month.

Visitation. Leaders must not only invite new people but follow up by making immediate personal contact with each newcomer.

Natural evangelism. The small group atmosphere is the most effective way to expose unbelievers to the gospel. As they experience the warm atmosphere of an accepting, loving group and sense a freedom to share their hearts, evangelism will naturally happen.

Taken from: How to Succeed as a Small-group Leader, Current Thoughts & Trends, October, 1998 Used with permission

I am a Disciple of Jesus Christ

I am a part of the fellowship of the unashamed. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I will not look back, let up, slow down, back away or be still. My past is redeemed, my present directed, my future secure. I am finished and done with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, myopic vision, mundane talking, mediocre giving and dwarfed goals. I no longer need preeminence, prosperity.

I now live in His presence, learn by faith, love by practice, lift by prayer and labor in His power. My pace is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven. The road is narrow, the way is rough, my companions few, my guide reliable, my mission clear.

I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, lured back, diluted or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I won't give up, back up, let up or hush up, 'til I have preached up, prayed up, paid up, stood up and stayed up for the cause of Jesus Christ.

I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I must go 'til He returns, give 'til it hurts, preach 'til I drop, tell 'til all know and work 'till He comes. And when He comes to get His own, He'll have no problem recognizing me; my colors will be clear.

Evangelist Rudy Hernandez of Grand Prairie, Texas, shared the preceding statement during the May 7, 1998, National Day of Prayer evening simulcast. It was written by a young Christian after a camp meeting. Allow this passionate declaration to stir your own heart to renewed commitment to Christ, and to intercede for a spread of such holy commitment and discipleship among believing youth in America.

Heart Window Decorating

Items needed: plain or construction paper, scissors, spray can of artificial snow.

Fold several pieces of paper in half and cut out heart shapes in varying sizes. Use the pieces of paper that the hearts have been cut out of as stencils. Tape them to the window in an interesting arrangement and spray with artificial snow. Remove the stencils to see the heart shapes on the window. □

Altar Building

Items needed: rocks, felt markers.

Place students in a circle. Give each student a rock and a marker. Have each person write their name on their rock. Pass the rocks around the circle and have the other students initial everyone else's rock. Then take the students to a place where you can build an altar. It should be a location where the rocks won't be disturbed. One at a time, have students place their rocks in a pile. As they do this, each person needs to say why he or she needs the rest of the groups to hold him or her accountable. When you are done, you will have an altar by which to remember your commitments. □

A leader's role is to raise people's aspirations for what they can become and to release their energies so they will try to get there.

David Gergen in U.S. News & World Report.



When will the Good News Bears be available?

We have to first apologize for the lateness of the revised Bears program. When we got into the project, we didn't realize how encompassing the changes would be. However, we believe it will be an even better resource than first expected. The actual manual will be sent to the printer by the end of December, but we need to allow about two weeks turn around time. The resource manual is still being edited by an outside source.

We have added three new badges: Friendship, Worship, and Skating. The look on some of the clip art bears has been updated. And several new Bible Discoveries and Fun Nights have been added. We have re-formatted the lessons to make them teacher-friendly. A sample of a Bible Discovery is enclosed in this mailing.

New T-shirts are being printed with the two new logos (pictured above) to be delivered by January 1, 1999. We are currently looking for quality patches at affordable prices.

Thanks for being patient with us. We will keep you informed about the progress. Our goal is to provide you with excellent resources at an affordable price.

ATTITUDE CHECK

As a teacher, who you are is often more important than what you do.

BE TEACHABLE. Learn along with your children. Keep a journal of methods that work for you. Learn from other teachers.

POLISH YOUR LISTENING SKILLS. Know when to be "all ears" and when to let it "go in one ear and out the other."

VALUE PARENTS. Let them know about your curriculum and what

you're teaching. Tell parents how much you appreciate them bringing their children to Sunday school.

REALIZE THAT ANYTHING YOU SAY CAN MAKE A LASTING IMPRESSION. Gently guide children into believing in God.

BE PROUD OF BEING A TEACHER. Remember that teaching children God's love and forgiveness is important.

From Attitude Check, Children's Ministry Magazine, January/February 1994. Used with permission.

DIRECTIONS

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