

FREE GUIDE FOR CHURCH LEADERS

Before You Hire Your Groups Pastor

Before you hire, know what your groups ministry needs.

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START HERE

A free guide, with no strings

> **We love the church. We want to see the church do more of what it does best: make disciples.**

If your church is posting a groups role, or carrying groups without a groups pastor yet, this guide is for you. It is free. There is no catch and no pitch. Use it whether we ever talk or not.

A new hire can only build on what you can already see. Before you write the job description, get a clear picture of what your groups ministry actually needs: where people stall between a first step, a group, and real care, and how your Leaders are being cared for.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1 · LOOK FIRST

Review the path your people walk before you write or revise the role.

2 · PULL THREE NUMBERS

You can probably get these this week from a standard report in your church database.

3 · ASK BETTER QUESTIONS

Use the candidate questions to hear how a person thinks about people, Leaders, and systems.

4 · HAND THEM A MAP

Give the first 90 days plan to the person you hire, so week one has a clear next step.

Who this is for: senior pastors, executive pastors, search teams, and the volunteer point person who is carrying groups when there is no groups pastor yet.

BEFORE THE JOB DESCRIPTION

What to look at first

Start with the path, not the vacancy. Write the job description from what your people need, not only from the last person who held the role.

1 The path

Trace the route a person walks from a first step, to a group, to real care. Where do people stall? A full roster can hide a stall. The job you write should help people land, not only add more groups.

2 The Leader bench

How many Leaders do you have, how many Coaches, and how many Leaders each Coach is carrying? A healthy span is 3 to 5 Leaders per Coach, with 5 as the ceiling. Leaders who are being led lead better.

3 Follow-up habits

When someone asks to join a group, does a real person reply within 24 hours? When someone is absent, does anyone reach out within 48 hours with "We missed you"? Follow-up is leadership.

4 The real job

Is this role supposed to recruit Leaders, build a coaching structure, own the pathway, preach, run care, and launch a campus? If the description asks for everything, the hire will not know what "done well" looks like in year one.

A SIMPLE TEST

If you cannot name, in one sentence, where people stall and what this hire is being asked to fix first, you are not ready to write the job description. The next two pages will help you get there.

THREE NUMBERS TO PULL THIS WEEK

A shared picture, not a pile of data

You can probably pull these from a standard report in your church database. No new setup. Compare yourself to yourself: this semester versus last semester. Read the names, not only the rates.

NUMBER 1 First-step conversion

The question: Of the people who finished your first-step class, how many are now in an ongoing group?

What it tells you: whether your main on-ramp works. A first-step class is often where people say they are ready. This number shows whether that yes turns into belonging.

How to pull it: completers now in a group, divided by all completers in a set window. Count attendance, not only sign-ups. Someone who signed up and never came did not land.

What to do with it: for each person who did not land, ask whether there was a personal invitation into a specific group, or only an announcement.

NUMBER 2 Class-to-group conversion

The question: Of the people who finished a short-term course, how many joined an ongoing group?

What it tells you: whether trust built in a short course carries into ongoing community, or ends when the course does.

How to pull it: the same steps as Number 1, using course completers. Run it separately for each kind of course. Different courses often convert very differently.

What to do with it: ask course Leaders to name the ongoing group each person could step into before the last session. Better still, invite the course to continue as a group.

NUMBER 3 Two-semester retention

The question: Of the people in a group last fall (or any starting semester), how many are still in a group two semesters later?

What it tells you: whether people are being formed over time, not only counted in a weekly headcount. Moving groups is not leaving.

How to pull it: still in a group, divided by the starting list. This number is only as good as your attendance logging. If Leaders do not log attendance, fix that first.

What to do with it: if most people leave between semesters, the leak is the re-launch. If people leave mid-semester, the leak is inside the group: belonging, care, or fit. A "We missed you" habit within 48 hours of an absence helps with both.

THE INTERVIEW

Questions to ask candidates

These questions help you hear how a person thinks about people, Leaders, and systems. Listen for specific stories, not only values.

About the path

- Walk us through how a new person at your last church went from a first visit to a group, and then to real care. Where did people stall, and what did you change?
- How do you know a hand-off actually worked?

About Leaders

- How have you identified and invited new Leaders, not only announced a need?
- Tell us about a Leader you developed into a Co-Leader or a Coach. What did you do in the first 90 days with them?
- How many Leaders can one Coach care for well, and how do you know when the span is too wide?

About follow-up and health

- When someone signs up for a group, how quickly do they hear from a real person?
- When a group member is absent, what happens in the next 48 hours?
- What numbers do you watch, and what do those numbers represent to you?

About the first 90 days

- If we hired you, what would you do in your first 30 days, your second 30, and your third 30? What would you not change yet?
- How would you learn this church before you try to reshape the ministry?

> A good hire can describe a clear first 90 days without needing to remake the whole church in a month. The map on the next pages is one you can hand them on day one.

FIRST 90 DAYS

First 90 days for the new hire

A simple plan for weeks 1 to 12. One focus, one move, one question each week. You do not need a perfect system on day one. You need a clear next step.

WEEKS 1 TO 4

Goal: Know the people, the path, and the real load before you change much.

WEEK 1 Meet the Leaders

Focus: Relationship before recommendations.

Moves: Sit with Coaches and Leaders. Learn names, group rhythms, and what they would love help with.

Ask: Have I heard from the people who actually lead, not only from staff?

WEEK 2 Walk the path

Focus: See what a new person experiences.

Moves: Trace the path from first step to a group to care. Join one group as a guest. Request to join a group yourself and time the reply.

Ask: If I were new here, would I know where to go next?

WEEK 3 Pull the three numbers

Focus: A shared picture.

Moves: Pull first-step conversion, class-to-group conversion, and two-semester retention. Put them on one page next to your group count.

Ask: What do these numbers say about where people stall?

WEEK 4 Map Leader care

Focus: Who is carrying whom.

Moves: List every Leader and their Coach. Note any Leader with no Coach, and any Coach carrying more than 5 Leaders.

Ask: Does every Leader have someone who is for them?

LISTEN AND LEARN CHECKPOINT (END OF WEEK 4)

- [ ] You know the path a new person walks
- [ ] You have the three numbers on one page
- [ ] You have a Leader care map
- [ ] The Leaders have met you

WEEKS 5 TO 8

Clarify the win

Goal: Name the one or two things that will help people land and Leaders get cared for.

WEEK 5 Name the stall

Focus: One diagnosis, not ten projects.

Moves: Share what you learned with your supervisor and two or three key Leaders. Name where people stall between a first step, a group, and real care.

Ask: Can we say the need in one sentence?

WEEK 6 Fix one hand-off

Focus: A warm invitation beats an announcement.

Moves: Choose the leakiest hand-off. Assign a named person, a specific group, and a reply within 24 hours.

Ask: Who owns the next yes for a new person?

WEEK 7 Build the miss-you habit

Focus: Follow-up is leadership.

Moves: Set a simple 48-hour "We missed you" practice for absences. Give Leaders a short script they can send.

Ask: If someone is absent twice, has anyone reached out?

WEEK 8 Coach the Coaches

Focus: Leaders who are being led lead better.

Moves: Meet with each Coach. Clarify the span of 3 to 5 Leaders. Help any overloaded Coach share the load.

Ask: Does every Coach know what "care well" looks like this month?

CLARIFY CHECKPOINT (END OF WEEK 8)

- [ ] The stall can be said in one sentence
- [ ] One hand-off has a named owner
- [ ] A miss-you habit is in motion
- [ ] Coaches have a clear span of care

WEEKS 9 TO 12

Build what lasts

Goal: Leave the church with a system it owns, not a burst of activity that depends only on you.

WEEK 9 Raise Co-Leaders

Focus: Share the load on purpose.

Moves: Ask every Leader to name one person who could become a Co-Leader. Offer a simple way to invite them.

Ask: Who is already leading informally?

WEEK 10 Tell the story

Focus: People move when they can see the fruit.

Moves: Share two or three short stories of people who landed in a group and were cared for. Put the three numbers beside the stories.

Ask: Can the church see what groups are for?

WEEK 11 Health check

Focus: An honest pulse, not a performance review.

Moves: Review the three numbers and the Leader care map with your supervisor. Name one strength and one next step for the coming season.

Ask: What should we protect, and what should we improve next?

WEEK 12 Set the next season

Focus: Clarity beats drift.

Moves: Confirm the next launch, the training dates, and who is inviting new Leaders. Thank Leaders and Coaches by name.

Ask: Is the next 4 to 6 weeks clear for Leaders?

BUILD CHECKPOINT (END OF WEEK 12)

- [ ] A Co-Leader pipeline has started
- [ ] Leaders and Coaches have been thanked by name
- [ ] The next season is on the calendar
- [ ] The church can see the path

YOUR NEXT TWO STEPS

Free help, if you want it

This guide is yours to keep either way. If you would like a first look at your pathway, or a thinking partner before you write the job description, both of these are free. No cost, no obligation, no sales pitch.

STEP 1

Take the Church Groups Pulse Check

A clear first look at where people stall between a first step, a group, and real care. Start here before you hire, so the new person walks into a picture you already share.

groupspulse.church/church-pulse-check

Leaders can also take the Group Leader Pulse Check at groupspulse.church/pulse-check.

STEP 2 · OPTIONAL

Schedule a free conversation

If you want a thinking partner as you get ready to hire, you can schedule a free conversation. We can walk through what you are seeing, name the one thing worth working on before you write the job description, and pick a next step you can take this week.

calendar.app.google/seaSHzpdkQDiyyyg6

Glad you are leading.

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