

## **Area Leader Strategy**

Most churches do not need this layer of leadership. In most churches the Small Group Point Person serves in this role for the entire small group ministry. For larger churches, who have over 250 groups, these are people who each oversee about ten Community Leaders.

Area Leaders are full-time pastors on staff at Saddleback. They care for groups by affinity. For example, our Singles Ministry has an Area Leader, a down line or “span of care” of Community Leaders, and individual small groups who all meet under the affinity of being “singles”. Our major affinities are Men’s, Women’s, Couples, Singles, Workplace, and Online. Any affinity can have more than one Area Leader based on the number of small groups they have. To give you some perspective, twelve years ago when we had 260 groups, they were all under me—I was the affinity! As your groups expand, your ability to expand by affinity and geography will grow.

The Area Leader has many of the same duties of the Small Group Point Person of most churches. For example, an Area Leader of Women’s Ministry might plan a Community Event just for women, whereas a Small Group Point Person might plan a Community Event with a wider scope of appeal. While their strategies must be in keeping with the vision and mission of the overall Small Group Ministry, how the ALs accomplish their individual goals may vary greatly. Methods that might work for the Singles Ministry might not work for the Online Ministry. The key is empowering the various Area Leaders under the general umbrella of Small Group Ministry while avoiding the trap of the “silo” mentality. Our Area Leaders carry the strategic initiative of the Small Group Ministry, and we have to not only allow them to do that in the way that best fits their particular affinity, we need to encourage them to do so.

# Area Leader Strategy 1:250



## CONNECTION

Affinity Events to bring awareness across the church.

*Ex. Campaigns, Men's Conference, etc.*



## COMMUNITY

Affinity Events which utilize people's gifts to reach 25 to 100 people.

*Ex. Retreats, Seminars, etc.*



## CURRICULUM

Affinity based tools and resources to support small groups.



## CARE

Care for Community Leaders using the Health Assessment/Planner, training, events, and meetings.

The Area Leaders primary roles and goals are arranged into the diagram above.

**CONNECTION** – This is a church-wide event promoting the Small Group Ministry or an Affinity (examples - 40 Days of Purpose or Community Campaigns, Men's conferences, and Couples Seminar, etc). These are generally held one time a year, and gather people from the church and community into small groups.

**COMMUNITY** – Community Events mobilize the giftedness of those in your church or the community (examples – classes, retreats, and seminars). They are a great way to specialize on specific topics for a target audience. For example, a few years back we had a woman who led couples who were expecting babies through Lamaze training. We open these types of events to the public, and the result is twofold. One, your people are given an opportunity to use their giftedness. Two, offering such events to the community attracts people to your church. Whether you are holding a Connection event, or a Community event, the ultimate goal is to increase awareness and get these people into a small group.

**CURRICULA** – Area Leaders review the affinity based tools and resources to support small groups. They provide input and suggestions on curriculum, tools, seminars, and workshops that serve to strengthen the small groups in their care.

**CARE** – A primary part of the Area Leader ministry is to recruit and resource Community Leaders. Area Leaders use the Spiritual Health Assessment/Planner, training, events, and meetings to encourage health in the lives of their Community Leaders. The Community Leaders cannot encourage the community of small groups in their care if they do not “get it”. The Area Leader's job is to ensure they not only get it, but they also pass it along.

## Small Group Ministry Strategy

PURPOSE	GOAL	OBSTACLE	STRATEGY	LEADER DEVELOPMENT
Fellowship	Connect to Community	Isolation	Campaigns	LT1 LT2 Skills LT2 Reconciliation
Discipleship	Being Like Christ What's your next spiritual step?	Immaturity	Curriculum Pathway	LT2 Health LT2 Inductive Studies
Ministry	Ministry to Believers	Insignificance	Serving Pathway	LT2 Empower
Evangelism	Mission to Unbelievers	Inadequacy	PEACE (personal, local, global)	LT2 PEACE
Worship	Surrender to Christ	Intimacy (lack of)	Health Assessment Health Plan Spiritual Partner	LT2 Character Health Assessment Health Plan