

CASE STUDY 5: Developing the Small Group Culture

In your talks with the church leaders on the impact they want small groups to have on the church, you discover that the church really has struggled getting people into groups. They tried to assign people to groups to make sure cliques didn't form and no one was left out. They figured this would enhance the quality of people in their church but found that people just formed their own groups or just didn't go to group at all. Another thing they tried was forcing groups to break up every six months with the hope that new groups would be formed and more people would get connected. This too met with a lot of resistance. They did try a campaign once but found that most of the groups that were formed didn't stay together and went right back to the number of groups they had started with before the campaign. They are frustrated and want to know how they can make groups an important part of their church and get people to see the value and the vision they have for small groups as a central part of their discipleship process.

1. Why do you think this church had little success with the strategies they tried above?
2. What would you advise them to do differently in how they start small groups? Why?
3. Based on what you have learned, what principles might help this church to start a thriving small group ministry? How would you suggest they start implementing your suggestions?