



Developing a Culture of Sending Students to Start New Work – Part 3

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The nine months leading up to our first child's birth I slept great! My wife on the other hand, would experience the full spectrum of emotions and changes accompanied by many sleepless nights. I never woke up from heartburn or a kick to the ribs. Those first nine months was the easiest, most low-maintenance parenting I had ever done! However, everything changed when Noah was born. All of a sudden parenting was hard-work! The pregnancy and birth were so vital, but raising Noah and his siblings has been a full-time, all-hands-on-deck experience.

In the same way, it takes work to recruit and train people to send out, but caring for them after you send them is vital to developing a culture and your ministry's heart for starting new work. One of the best recruiting tools for new workers is a successful first example of someone who was recruited, trained, sent, and cared for.

Use the Whole Church

Whether you are a campus or a church-based college ministry, involving the local church in the sending process is critical. As a college ministry, you have a very short memory and very shallow pockets. Nobody knows your graduates from four years ago except for a few awkward super seniors who remember them as the "old people" when they were freshmen. That means that the campus team you send out this year will be virtually unknown by the majority of your ministry in 3-4 years. It's hard to garnish support for people nobody knows. The local church has a longer memory and less turnover making them a much better candidate for ongoing support for your team. Not only can they pray with insight for those you are sending, but they are in a much better position to help fund the work.

Let's face it, most college students have ample amounts of energy and availability, but they are short on funds. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't expect your students to give financially to the mission, but let's face it - it's hard to give \$500 a month to start work on a new campus if you're working part time for minimum wage. Involving the multi-generational church gives those who can give a chance to give and those who can go a chance to go. It lays the foundation for staff and students who are sent out to have adequate long-term prayer and financial support.

We are a campus-based ministry and we have been blessed by our partnerships with local churches. They are vital not only to our local mission to our campus, but to our sending process. In order to help everyone understand the partnership and expectations we put together a pathway to help our local churches and potential campus teams know what they can expect from us as well as our expectations of them. Here is the



Sending Partnership Pathway we walk through with our candidates and churches. I hope it's useful to you. Take what is applicable; throw out the rest.

Never Out of Sight, Out of Mind

Back to the newborn baby analogy: I remember it took us fifteen minutes to strap newborn Noah into the car seat when we brought him home from the hospital. He was asleep and I walked into our house and set his car seat on the table. I was a little overwhelmed and asking myself, now what? How do I parent?

If you've had kids you know that feeling. It can sometimes feel that way when you send a staff member to a new campus. Sure, they've been trained and are ready, but how do you help them from afar? Sometimes, the fear of doing the wrong thing keeps us from doing anything. I made that mistake with our first full-time staff member we sent out to restart work on a campus. The end of his first semester I was catching up with him and it was apparent that I had not been available to help him navigate the transition of restarting work. While I had prayed for him daily and celebrated the things God was doing, I had not maintained consistent, meaningful communication with him. It is very easy to feel isolated and alone when starting in a new place. It must be a top priority of senders to continue the long-term care and support of those they send.

Over the past few years here are a few ways we've learned to help support those we send out.

- Keep in regular meaningful communication with them. The first year is really important. Keep in contact with them regularly and then you can taper it off the longer they are on the field.
- Is your staff working through a book or did you find a good resource? Order enough for those you've sent out to have one too.
- Care Packages. Have your students and staff pray for them regularly and write notes to them once or twice a semester. Gifts cards always help sweeten the deal.
- Go see them. Even if they are across the country, spending a few days on their campus and meeting their students will mean the world to them! Send a student team to them over Christmas or Spring Break.
- Missions and Retreats. Are you hosting a retreat or a mission trip they can piggyback off of? Remember, young ministries have almost no budget. We host a fall retreat and invite our new ministries to come while we absorb the overhead so they can focus their funds on getting students there.
- Invite them back to speak to and recruit your students. It might take them a while to develop a leadership pipeline where they are producing their own staff. Be open handed with your graduates and students.
- GroupMe - We have a GroupMe (a group texting app) for all of our sent staff. We encourage them to share prayer requests and celebrations with each other. When one weeps, we all weep. When one rejoices, we all rejoice. Especially early on in a new work, it is vital to have something to celebrate even if it isn't on your campus.



- Zoom Calls - if you have several teams out on several campuses, bring them together regularly to pray for one another. We all need more people praying for our campus!

It doesn't matter how you do it, just make sure you do it! Care for them. Each team you send out will be different and that is okay, but start somewhere. Talk to them about their expectations and what they want to see from you and those in your ministry. Give them the space to speak back into the sending process. You never really know if a boat will float until you put it out into the water. In the same way, let those you send out provide feedback on where the leaks are in your sending process.

This may be the first time you've thought about starting new work on a campus. You may be knee deep in planting and restarting work. You could be wondering what the next steps are. Whatever step you are in in the process of being a multiplying ministry is okay, just don't let it be the last step you take. Keep learning and keep moving forward. In the same way you'd want to coach your staff as you send them out to try something new, it's a good idea to find someone who's done it before that can coach you through the process. If I can be of any help to you, let me know. Feel free to email me at claytonbullion@gmail.com or if you'd be interested in being in a cohort with some others who are looking at doing the same thing check out: www.campusmultiplicationnetwork.com.

This is a resource that was put together as part of the training process for Campus Multiplication Network. The vision of CMN is to equip leaders who desire to plant new ministries on college campuses until there is no campus left without a multiplying gospel movement. We provide training and coaching for collegiate ministry leaders who are looking to accelerate evangelistic growth and start new multiplying campus ministries. For more information, you can email campusmultiplicationnetwork@gmail.com