

The Path for Leading Church Multiplication Movements

by Robert E. Logan with Tara Miller
CoachNet® International Ministries

Jake planted a church five years ago that grew quickly and began multiplying. He has seen three new churches come out of his original church so far, and Jake wants to ensure a continuing legacy of multiplication. He has formed a loose network between the churches, but as they continue growing and multiplying, he's not sure how he will be able to keep providing the resourcing and support they will need to stay on a positive track. More and more demands are made on Jake's time, and some days he worries that if he gives out, the vision of church multiplication will end with him.

Bill serves as a denominational leader. He has a vision for revitalization and growth, seeing new life breathed by the Spirit into the churches he helps oversee. He can see each congregation growing toward increasing health and vitality as they pursue Kingdom ministry, reaching out to help the poor, the broken, the hungry. He can see each congregation growing and multiplying. But some days he feels like he spends most of his time arguing about minor policy issues that have little Kingdom impact, and not even seeing change there.

The adventure of the great commission, the living out of the great commandment, people coming to Christ, and living out their faith and calling. These are the visions that keep us going, the pictures we can see with the eyes of our hearts, if not yet with our own eyes. We get glimpses, tastes, enough to keep us going and give us hope, but we do not yet see the full fruition of the all that potential we know is out there.

Why not? We've prayed. We've called on the Holy Spirit. We've attended seminars. We've read books. Yet challenges and obstacles along the way prevent our vision for church multiplication from materializing. What is missing?

Need a plan?



Jake wants to start a church multiplication movement that is strong enough and healthy enough to survive without him. What does he need? He needs to cast vision across churches for continued multiplication. He needs to raise up new planters. He needs to support and resource those planters. He needs to support and resource the parent church pastors who go on to parent daughter churches. He needs to create a cohesive, self-replicating movement out of a loose association of churches. And most of all, Jake needs a way to not do this all by himself.

Bill wants to see his denomination revitalized and the churches grow healthy enough to begin multiplying. What does he need? He needs buy-in from pastors. He needs to find

a way to work with churches at all different levels of health, receptivity, and readiness. He needs to provide resources and structure for a whole network of churches as they grow at varying paces toward multiplication. And Bill, like Jake, cannot do this all on his own.

Bill and Jake both need a path... a clear structure for creating a healthy, multiplying movement.

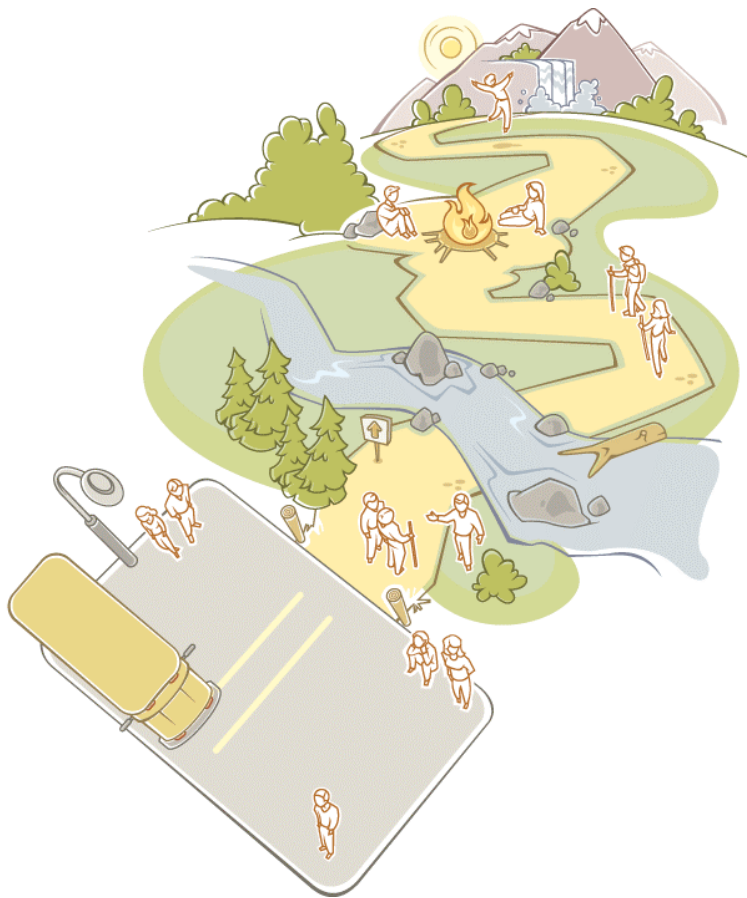
The Path

Think of creating a church multiplication movement as hiking a path.

To even get to the path, the motivation has to be there to leave the parking lot. The parking lot is where we sit and decide whether we want to make the journey up the path. What path do we want to travel and why? What are the costs? Will it be worth it to go there? Who will want to go with us? Those who decide the journey is worth it leave the parking lot and arrive at the trailhead.

At the trailhead, our guide gives us an overview of the trail. Where exactly are we going? What kind of terrain can we expect along the way? Who else has made the decision to join us at the trailhead? What are the major milestones we will pass along the way? And then we confirm our decision to hike the trail by taking the first step.

At the beginning, our guide leads the way. We follow, matching their pace, taking notice of their technique, imitating them. After all, they know this trail; they have hiked it before. The guide provides some initial direction: "We are starting slow in order to get used to the altitude. Sometimes people want to start strong, but haven't yet gotten used to the terrain and air and run out of energy before our first break point."



Soon, the instructions taper off and we are walking alongside the guide. We begin to gain confidence; we can do this. We check in with the guide only periodically now. The terrain gets rougher and begins to go uphill. Some of us begin tripping on tree roots. Most of us are beginning to breathe hard. Finally, over the next ridge, a campsite comes into view and the guide calls for a break: "We'll stop here, build a campfire and cook dinner." Sighs of relief are heard all along the path. We need rest, we need refueling, we need a chance to catch our breath.

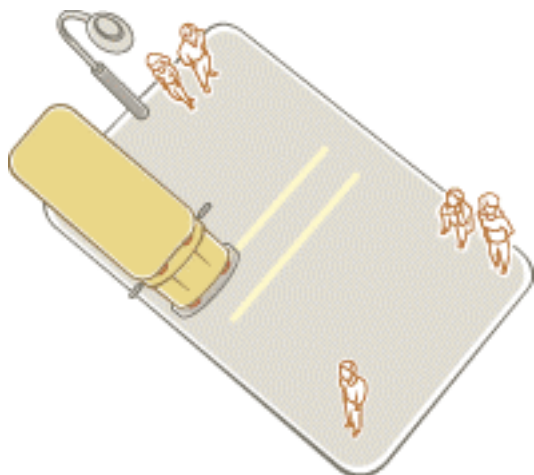


As we all sit down around the campfire ring, rehydrating with our water bottles, fellow journeyers begin asking each other questions: "How did you avoid those tree roots?" "How did you handle the altitude?" "Where did you get those shoes?" Tips are exchanged and adapted to the needs of the hiker. The conversation becomes sprinkled with laughter as common struggles are shared-- and somehow seem less daunting in the sharing: "Oh, you struggled with that last hill too? I was afraid I'd be the only one out of shape." "No, I probably would have stopped in that last valley if I'd been hiking this trail alone. But I'm feeling ready to head out again now." After dinner and sleep, they start out again the next morning.

Smaller breaks scheduled throughout the day provide a great opportunity to discuss questions with the guide and celebrate progress: "We've arrived at the waterfall. This is the one I told you about at the trailhead. Isn't it glorious?" Longer breaks in the evening provide time for stories to be exchanged over the campfires and relationships to be forged with fellow journeyers. The consistent pattern allows for recharging, learning, and connection when people need it, providing structure for the journey

At last we arrive at the destination. Everyone can feel the sense of accomplishment. "It was hard but we did it!" "Aren't you glad we didn't stay in the parking lot?" "There were times I thought I wasn't going to stick with it, but I'm so glad I did." Congratulations are exchanged all around and energy is running high. We begin exchanging plans for future hikes. "Hey, some of us are going to hike a 14er next month. Want to join us?" "That sounds great, but I've always wanted to hike the Grand Canyon. I think that's next on my list." "What about you?" "Me? I want to take my nieces and nephews along next time-- I bet they'd love this!"

Steps along the Path of Church Multiplication



Motivation: the parking lot

The parking lot is the waiting place, a place for sitting and deciding whether to take the journey. This is the time for counting the cost. Will creating a church multiplication movement be worth the time, energy and effort required to get there? As denominational or network leaders, your goal is to see new churches get started... churches that will be healthy, grow and multiply. To do that, you'll need to create a resourcing

system, empower planters, and connect them to each other. You'll need to count the cost, then you'll need to attract planters and help them count the cost.

The parking lot is where you select your church planters, they select you, and mobilization begins. You can help them decide on or confirm their call to start church, and you can assess whether they are a good match for your organization. Mutual commitment to work together toward the same goal must be agreed upon. They will also be assessing your organization. What will attract church planters to you? Often financial backing is not the deciding factor. Consider what you offer to planters in each of these categories:

- vision and a sense of forward movement
- relationships
- clear, consistent communication
- a strong resourcing network
- training and coaching
- connection to a larger movement

Once a planter decides to work with you, a formal assessment can be completed and the planter can submit an initial proposal and target group. Completion of these steps brings the planter to the trailhead for orientation.

Initial orientation: the trailhead

Once church planters are formally committed to working with you, they arrive at the trailhead. At this point, a general orientation will be needed to answer many questions about what exactly the working relationship will look like. The trailhead stage is often called "intensive church planter training" or "boot camp," depending on the organization.



Although much of the orientation will center around giving planters the initial information

they need to get started, the most critical task at this stage is forging a relational connection between the planters and the coaches. For the coaching relationship to be fruitful, they must meet early in the process and form a solid connection. Upon meeting the coaches, planters will be asking themselves three questions, "Can I trust you? Are you helpful? Do you care?" Only if yes is the answer to all three questions will a planter take full advantage of the coaching relationship being offered. For this reason, a relational environment at the orientation where there's enough time to get acquainted is essential.

The orientation stage ends when a planter, with the help of their coach, produces a valid plan. That plan will move them away from the trailhead as they start down the path.

Show-how training: the trail's beginning

Beginning to carry out the plan moves a church planter out onto the trail... they begin the hike. Now is the time for on-the-job training. The planter's assessment results and the plan they've created may provide some clues as to areas where they most need development (e.g. raising funds, developing strategies, recruiting core team members, casting vision for evangelism, time management, etc.) The key is determining where the needs are and what steps will best meet those needs. A coach may provide hands-on training or may connect the planter to other resources or mentors as needed. In some cases, a new planter may want to shadow a more experienced planter for a day.

Not everything a planter will need to know can be covered in the orientation—skills training and content can be layered throughout the path. To the degree that learning doesn't incorporate experience, it begins losing value. So getting planters engaged in the harvest immediately after orientation is critical to their moving forward on the journey. The show-how process builds in a degree of quality control and troubleshooting as they move forward. If something isn't working, it's best to have that become apparent early on so it can be changed. Show-how training at the beginning of a planter's experience provides individualized, hands-on training... in the form of coaching.

Ongoing coaching: checking in with the guide



Coaching forms the central thread of the church multiplication movement structure, and ensures that the needed resources flow in at the appropriate times. Coaching takes place directly during the show-how training, in a more individualized fashion along the way as progress is made, and in a peer-coaching context within the networks. So in a sense, the whole journey is coaching. But underscoring the importance of ongoing coaching along the way encourages consistent progress.

Ongoing, consistent coaching is what helps planters stay on target as they make progress. More frequent coaching increases fruitfulness. Ed Stetzer, in Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age, published a study demonstrating that church planters with weekly coaching meetings had twice the fruitfulness in their church plant than those who did not. Fruitfulness, in this study, was measured through attendance.

The value of coaching is directly proportional to preparation that goes into it. One method that can vastly increase the value and consistency of coaching is use of an online coaching system that tracks progress and follow-up items, and allows participants to set the agenda beforehand.

Resourcing networks: campfire conversation

Planters need to connect with one another. The power of knowing you're not in it alone, that other planters are going through similar experiences, is not to be underestimated. Form networks that connect planters to one another for support and mutual encouragement. Even if you have networks of pastors of existing churches in your movement, create a separate network for church planters. They don't have as much in common with the existing churches, as first generation churches have a different set of challenges and concerns.

A network is a supportive, relational environment that facilitates personal spiritual growth and the accomplishment of biblical mission. Although networks are not primarily about fellowship, they incorporate it. And although they are not primarily about learning, they incorporate that too. Ultimately, networks are about mission. They are designed to create a regular, intentional context for church planters to spur one another on toward their mission of planting healthy new churches. Planters can pray together, asking God to draw each member toward personal spiritual growth and increased ministry fruitfulness, and hold each other accountable for accomplishing their goals.

The C2M2 network on CoachNet has resources for leading networks. For example, the New Church Incubator (NCI) includes 20 curriculum units for church planter networks on topics such as personal spirituality, core values, ministry systems, etc. that can be used in any order, according to the needs of the planters involved. Material for networks of parent churches is also available. Resources such as these provide a framework that allow networks to accomplish their intended purpose and support those who are committed to traveling down the same path together.

End of the trail: celebration at the destination

The end of the trail will see the birth of new churches in your network. This is the accomplishment of mission, all that we've been working toward. It's a time for celebrating and for recognizing how far you've come. Milestones have been passed



and destinations have been reached. As these new churches are planted, you'll need to focus on communications-- that includes communications among the planters themselves and communications to your existing churches. That communication helps build bridges between new churches and existing churches, creating a unified movement of multiplying churches. Planters need to feel more tied into existing churches, and existing churches can grow in their desire to multiply by hearing about the successes of planting.

Yet the mission is not over... not until the great commission has been fulfilled. This path is only one of many. And it can be traveled again and again and new generations of churches are planted. At the end of the path, you'll need to begin asking the question, "Who else can join us?" and encourage others to ask that same question. Planters who have been through this first round can begin engaging raising up and multiplying other planters to build toward a movement. Together, be on the lookout for potential new planters. Generally, the most fruitful places to look are within the newly planted churches. New planters provide the seeds of the next round of church multiplication, making the system reproducible and sustainable.

Individualized application

The model of the path is flexible enough to be adapted in a number of different ways, according to needs of a particular church planting movement. Variations of the path can be developed, creating systems that are relational, flexible, mission-focused, and multiplication-oriented.

So what does the path look like for church planting in *your* framework? How can it frame the way you work with *your* people in order to accomplish the vision? Here are some key questions to help you think through your path, customizing a system for resourcing church planters:

Questions for reflecting on your current system:

- What's working well?
- What's not working?
- What needs to change?
- What are the next steps?

Questions for the parking lot:

- How can we become more attractive to church planters?
- How can we assess church planters more effectively?
- How can we cast the vision for church planting throughout all areas of the organization?

Questions for initial orientation:

- What outcomes do we want to accomplish through our initial training?
- What would be best left for on-the-way training?
- What steps can we take to build a strong relational connection between planters and coaches?

- What assistance and resources can we provide for planters while they create a comprehensive plan for their church plant?

Questions for show-how training:

- How can coaches make the best use of planter assessment results to fill in any gaps that exist?
- What are the primary areas where show-how training would be helpful?
- What resource people do we have who can help us with show-how training needs?

Questions for ongoing coaching:

- How can we ensure ongoing, consistent coaching for each of our planters?
- How can we maximize the effectiveness of coaching sessions through CoachNet's online coaching tool and networks?
- How can we coach our coaches toward excellence?
- How can we ensure that coaches help planters get connected to the resources they need?

Questions for resourcing networks:

- What structures do we have in place for planters to connect to other planters? How well are the networks functioning?
- What are you trying to accomplish through planter networks?
- What training, curriculum and resources do we provide to our network facilitators? What else might they need?
- How is coaching integrated into our networks?
- What adjustments need to be made in our networks?

Questions for the end of the trail

- How well do we celebrate? How can we improve?
- How can we assess the effectiveness of our process?
- What will we do differently next time?
- How can we communicate accomplishments to our constituencies?
- How can we encourage planters to raise up more planters?
- How can we encourage parent church pastors to mobilize other churches to give birth?
- Where is God leading us next?
- Who else should join us?

This path can be traveled many times, making use of what has been learned and improving systems along the way.

For people like Jake, the planter who wants to launch a church multiplication movement out of his original church... something that reproduces itself and takes on a life of its own, and for people like Bill, the denominational leader who wants to see his churches grow in health and multiply themselves producing a movement that yields 30, 60, 100 times what was sown, this is the path.

Because this path is flexible, it will look different in the two contexts, suiting the culture and meeting the needs of the particular planters and pastors. Jake's planters may decide to conduct parts of their networks online and may rely more on coaching than on orientations for the communication of content to planters. Bill's path may include additional work with existing churches, helping them to increase their health so they can become parent churches. He may employ various seminars to cast vision and resource those pastors. The key is discovering what will work best in each unique ministry context.

Yet each path, in order to take you where you need to go, must build in multiplication. Only with ongoing reproducibility will church planting develop into a full blown church multiplication movement.

C2M2

With your goals in mind, CoachNet has developed Cultivating Church Multiplication Movements (C2M2). This interactive, online resource was created to aid the process of multiplying churches across the globe. C2M2 helps leaders facilitate intentional church multiplication within denominations, church associations, and apostolic networks. Simple, straightforward, and reproducible, the intentional process embodied within C2M2 has proven an effective path for developing multiplying movements.

The C2M2 network is comprised of ten sections. Each section represents a key area essential to overall effectiveness, and contains coaching guides, activity sheets, reflections questions and checklists to aid you in developing and strengthening your church multiplication movement. The associated media referenced in each section can be downloaded from the CoachNet® website.

1. Spiritual dynamics
2. Shared vision
3. Planning for church multiplication
4. Mobilizing church planters
5. Assessing church planters
6. Training church planters
7. Coaching church planters
8. Healthy church multiplication
9. Developing multiplying networks
10. Funding a church multiplication movement

Visit www.coachnet.org to find out more or purchase a C2M2 membership.

A few first steps

Get coaching

Not sure where to start? Connect with CoachNet for leadership coaching. We can come alongside you to help you clarify your vision, reflect on your options, and create and implement a plan for a successful church multiplication movement.

Design your own path

Depending on your goals and your ministry context, your path will need to look different from others. We'd love to talk with you about how to design your own path—a customized approach that will work in your organization with your people. We help people work with flexible templates that change along with the needs and culture of each ministry. Talk with us and design your own path.

Learn to coach with excellence

The central thread of a church multiplication movement is coaching. Do you need to strengthen your coaching skills? Do you need trained, quality coaches in your ministry? Do you want to create a reproducible coaching system? You'll want to check out CoachNet's coach certification program, available to both individuals and groups. Instead of providing a seminar and then hoping that the coaches-in-training develop high quality, CoachNet's coach certification creates a holistic system for training coaches: skills training, on-the-job coaching experience, coach mentoring along the way, skills assessment, and customized planning for continuing improvement.

Connect with us for details. We're here to help as you move toward your God-given vision of living out the great commission and the great commandment.

CoachNet International Ministries

1-888-318-7920

support@coachnet.org

www.coachnet.org