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LEAD YOUR TEAM: PLANNING AND STRATEGY

THE FIRST TWO WEEKS ON CAMPUS

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It takes a tremendous amount of energy to begin the school year. It is no wonder that you feel exhausted at the end of the first week. Sixteen hour days are not uncommon. Add to that the grumbling and groaning of the usual few, including your leaders, and you have the makings for discouragement. You may hear some or all of the following from students. “I’m not sure how much I’m going to be involved in Crusade this year.” “I think I’ll be phasing out of Crusade this year.” “I think I could be more effective for Christ without the Crusade stigma.” “I’m planning on being more involved in God’s instrument, the local church, this semester.” If these don’t sound familiar, they soon will.

Your team need to know that this is not a “business as usual” time. Life will probably not be very balanced during this time. You will be building and flying the airplane at the same time. “Thriving on Chaos” will probably be your theme. This isn’t the time to schedule your vacation. It’s time to roll up your sleeves and get to work.

The leadership retreat

To ask your leadership students to return a few days before the beginning of school is essential to a strong start. They need to be involved in the thinking and planning of the school year if they are really to own the goals and methods of the ministry. Don’t assume that they are on board and aligned with what you are doing. They need to be remotivated and recharged. A weekend leadership retreat, right before school begins is very helpful for renewing vision and hearts for reaching students. This also gives you time to delegate responsibilities for the opening weeks on campus. You must also organize who will be taking surveys, sitting at tables, etc. and for how long.

THE OPPORTUNITY

All weeks on campus are not equal.

THE OPPORTUNITY
TO REACH
HYPER-LOCAL
CAMPUS/
SPIRITUALITY
STRATEGIC
TECHNOLOGY
SCIENCE
HEALTH
EXPERIMENTAL
RESEARCH/
INNOVATION/
EXPERIMENTAL
DEVELOPMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL
BIOLOGY/
POST-HUMANITY
ERHOLPMENT/
POLICE
WIRELESS/
ETHERNET



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Visibility

Visibility is the art of making the movement known on campus. Being visible on the campus says “What we’re involved in is significant.” The goal of visibility is that everyone on campus knows that you exist. Much of what we do visibly during the first two weeks will determine what kind of students we will attract to the movement. If we want to attract bold students, we need to be doing bold, visible things. The best way to galvanize returning students is to throw them to the lions during the first week--get involved in evangelism and follow-up of new contacts.

Posters and flyers are great, but there is no substitute for people to people contact. You have no doubt found that people become involved in Crusade through social contacts--friends and roommates. Students want to see identifiable faces behind the publicity. They are asking, “Are these the kind of people I want to be involved with?” Hand out flyers and use them for extending personal invitations. Printed publicity simply lends credibility to the personal invitation. Whatever publicity you have printed should be representative of who you are. Make it sharp!. A few more dollars spent here will well be worth it.

Suggestions for visibility

Set up several Campus Crusade for Christ tables around the entrances to the campus. Have a place for Bible study sign-up, surveys to fill out, a Crusade brochure/calendar, the Fall Conference Brochure, and an assortment of Crusade literature.

You may want to offer free refreshments at each table. Posters need to be placed in every living area--especially in the target audiences you will be focusing on. Two types of posters are helpful. One is for your weekly meeting, the second is for a Bible studies in that particular living group.

First day of school picnics are a great way to socially start the year. This is something that Crusade students can invite someone to immediately. Charge a couple of dollars and barbecue some burgers, set up a volleyball net and soccer field and let the good times begin. Other campuses have an all-campus party or Freshman volleyball tournaments to kick the year off.

Gathering Christians, reaching non-Christians...or both?

The first two weeks of school are essential for getting evangelistic contacts as well as locating Christians who are interested in growing and reaching others. An effective ministry includes existing Christians who are “found, trained, and mobilized” as well as non-Christians who are to be “won, built, and sent.” For instance, Keith Davy at the University of Nebraska designated the first two weeks on campus as “Christian rush.” He and his team purposefully



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targeted the believers since they will be the source of manpower for the movement. Their reasoning is that since few other groups are actively sharing their faith, the non-believers won't be going anywhere. However, remember this...if you target the unbelievers, the believers will come along. If you target the believers, you probably will not attract one non-Christian.

The easiest way to contact students is through a brief four or five question survey designed to give you quality contacts. On the first day of school most students are conditioned to filling out forms. To take 30 seconds to fill out a brief questionnaire seems like the most natural thing in the world to do. Design your survey so it will be easy to determine two things:

- Their spiritual condition (Christian or non-Christian)
- Their spiritual interest.

This way you can have a large pool of contacts with which to begin the year. Naturally you will want to have their school address, phone number and their year in school. This is particularly helpful in reaching affinity groups, target audiences or the Freshman class. Leave your survey open-ended enough so as not to obligate yourselves to call everybody if you do not have the resources to do so. Take your surveys in and around the areas or target audiences you will be reaching this year. Because Freshmen are so strategic, take your surveys outside of the Freshman dorms, during Freshman orientation, or in predominately Freshman classes. Do you need someone to lead your music? Target the music school.

Conserving the fruit

It is imperative that we see the follow-up our contacts as of utmost importance. Divide your contacts by target audiences or living groups. Set a deadline (a commitment) by which all contacts will be contacted—usually around three weeks. After three weeks mail a flyer or activities calendar to all those you couldn't contact. This puts the responsibility on them to find you—and they will if they are really interested. By doing this you will be setting your agenda for the first two weeks—that of following up on every contact God has given you. Contacts will be “cold” after two weeks and “dead” after three weeks anyway. To have a stack of “dead contacts” on your desk will simply keep you from moving on to your next evangelistic strategy. Your goal is to present the gospel to all who will listen. It should not be unusual to have between 30-40 evangelistic contacts during the first two weeks if all we are doing is evangelism. Be faithful with these and God will give you more.

Bible studies, Discovery Groups, Cell Groups, Connection Groups, etc. should begin no later than the second week on campus so you have something to invite students to immediately. Schedule the times and locations of your Bible studies before the year begins. This way you have something to invite students to immediately. Often we make the mistake of starting groups too late in the semester. You don't have to wait until you contact everyone, coordinate



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schedules etc. before you begin. Students can always join in later. Don't waste your time.

Another option

In order to free students up for evangelism during this critical period and in order to conserve the fruit of existing Christians you may want to begin the year with larger open (even coed) Bible studies. Crusade students can invite and bring their friends to these open studies without having to take time to prepare their own groups. Small groups can begin after the Fall Retreat.

The first appointment

Because you will have scores of contacts, it is imperative that your team knows what to do when they sit down with a new contact. Always go in pairs. Often you can simply drop by a dorm room of a contact that you have. Without getting too complicated, you need to share the Four Spiritual Laws with him or her and a brief testimony of how you came to Christ and why you got involved in Crusade. Even if you suspect this student is a Christian, he or she will now know what we believe and perhaps for the first time will see someone actually share their faith. You also need to tell them about Crusade. A brochure which explains your ministry and opportunities for involvement is very useful at this point. Invite him or her to your Bible study or follow-up appointment.

What about returning students?

Because of their commitment and involvement, some of your students will be candidates for immediate appointments. The best thing to do is not to immediately talk about how tough their summer was but rather to jump in the battle together. You can catch up socially at the leadership retreat, socials or an evening at your house. Now is the time for harvesting so begin immediately sharing your faith together with the contacts you have. This is a great catalyst to walking in the Spirit. It also adds an urgency to what we are doing and demonstrates the need for laborers. Jesus involved Himself in the work of the Father, invited others to follow Him and occasionally looked over His shoulder to see who was taking the challenge. Go, and do likewise. There are a number of other students who come back expecting to be discipled because they have been around for three years. A mistake many team leaders make is committing to too many people too soon. Don't over-commit yourself to the wrong people. Pray, pray and pray some more. The principle is this: Spend the maximum time with those who will assume the maximum responsibility for the future of the movement. Our commitment to any student should be a reflection of his faithfulness and commitment to the Lord, to Crusade, and to you. We are obligated to follow-up all new or interested Christians, but choose who you will be discipling.

Your first meeting of the year



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Your first meeting of the year is an statement of who you are and what your purpose is on campus. Are you a nice little club that gathers weekly to sing praise music with your eyes closed, or are you a movement of dynamic, Spirit-filled Christians who know how to enjoy life and are involved in the Great Commission? Gear this meeting to the first-time guest. Remember the questions he or she is asking:

- “Do I like these people?”
- “Do these people like me?”
- “What is their purpose?”
- “Do I want to get involved?”
- “How can I get involved?”

Somehow your first meeting should be directed to answering these questions. Let the meeting speak for itself. Rather than saying, “We like to have fun”--Have some fun! Rather than saying “We believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God”--speak simply and authoritatively from the Word! Make the atmosphere more festive than serious, informative than exhortative. Make it spiritual but not overly pious or religious. Give the students an opportunity to sign up for small groups. Have a great time.

Ministering to your staff

It is probably a good idea to meet daily with your team for the first week. Because they are giving so much, it would be very beneficial for you to encourage them daily from the Word and pray together to help recharge their spiritual batteries. Communication and a resolved commitment to walk in the Spirit is essential. No matter how urgent the hour, Jesus’ words still ring true, “...apart from Me you can do nothing.” One additional note: In this job we can’t wait until all the work is done until we have fun. Help the staff enjoy their job. Take your team out for a 7 am golf game, go to breakfast, watch a video, eat some ice cream--enjoy your team.

Other good ideas I’d like to try: