**Harness the Power of the Discipleship Engine**

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After you’ve [defined a vision](https://maninthemirror.org/2019/04/22/3-important-steps-for-clarifying-your-vision/) for your ministry to men and begun to [communicate it consistently](https://maninthemirror.org/2019/04/22/3-important-steps-for-clarifying-your-vision/), you can then harness the power of the **Create-Capture-Sustain cycle of ministry around that vision.** Implementing this strategy helps move men forward step-by-step in their spiritual journey, with the goal of becoming mature disciples of Jesus Christ.

We’ll talk about each of these concepts more in depth in the weeks to come, but we wanted to give you a lay of the land before digging deeper because each of these steps leads to the next and they all revolve around your vision.

**Create Value**

Men exhibit two traits: some are *busy* and some are *tired*…most are *both*! Men are bombarded all week long by the noise in their lives – the career fast track, the media, co-workers, their boss, their family. No wonder men rarely take time for spiritual self-examination.

We have to engage a man’s attention by offering him something he will find valuable. Tired men need to believe that getting involved will be worth the effort. Busy men need to believe that of all the opportunities clamoring for their time, the one you are offering is top notch. You have to show them the value of getting involved.

You can provide value through a variety of experiences: a large conference, retreat, or a barbecue. Often the most valuable thing to a man is *personal one-on-one time* (breakfast, lunch, or a cup of coffee). There is no shortage of activities for men today.

A little analysis will give you the insights you need to get your men’s attention. Answer these two questions:

* What types of men are we trying to reach?
* What kinds of things will interest them?

**One more important thing to keep in mind:** when you are working with men—at any level of spiritual maturity—a good rule is: *DON’T TRICK THEM!* Don’t use fun-sounding activities to attract guys, and then get super-spiritual with them.

Remember that discipleship is a journey, and as the saying goes, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.” Take that first step by *providing real value* to the men in your church.

**Capture Momentum**

There are two common mistakes we tend to make after Creating Value for our men: (1) we do too little, or (2) we try to do too much.

We do too little when we don’t plan for the right next step for our men. So many times we create value through an event, only to have spent all our time planning the event and no time planning what to do next. This means we go from planning one big event to planning the next big event. In between those events, men aren’t involved in growing in their relationship with Christ. If we aren’t careful, men will begin to think that all it takes to grow is to go from one event to the next event.

We do too much when we invite men to an event, only to cram a year’s worth of Bible study in between the food, or at half-time of the game, or after the event when everyone is ready to go home.

In every interaction you have with a man, whether it is one-on-one over lunch, a small group kickoff, a men’s retreat or seminar, or any other activity, you should always be thinking, “What is a reasonable next step?” Then, constantly communicate these steps to your men.

Keys to successfully Capturing Momentum are:

* **Make the Follow-up Fit the Event** by determining the types of men you will be targeting.
* **Right-size the Commitment.** Don’t ask men to over-reach based on “end-of-event enthusiasm.” Make the follow-up something they can visualize themselves doing – with some of that same enthusiasm.
* **Always Have an Ending Point:** Make it short (4-6 weeks) so even if the enthusiasm fades or reality sets in, they can still see themselves “toughing it out” for just a few weeks.
* **Choose Good “Second Gear” Material**by using materials that raise significant issues and deal with them in light of the Bible. Men will make a one-time, short-term commitment to something that seems “doable.”
* **Start New Groups for New Men**because it’s uncomfortable walking into an already established group. Make it easy for new guys to come to a group.
* **Help Men Take the Next Step…on the Spot.**Have the men leading the follow-up groups in place and ready to introduce themselves with all the information (when they will meet, where, what time, etc.). Then have them sign up for one of those groups before they leave the room.

**Sustain Change**

To sustain change with men, get them into real relationships with other men who are seeking Christ. You can’t sustain the change in men’s hearts without small groups and one-on-one relationships. Why is this so important?

1. You want to help men *maintain the spiritual progress they have made.* This is particularly important for men early in their spiritual journey.
2. You want to get men into *regular prayer* and *the study of God’s Word*.

If you work hard to gain ground in the battle for men’s time and attention but then don’t find ways to sustain that effort, you’ll just find yourself starting over. The men will begin to lose heart, feeling that nothing ever changes.

A ministry to men must be more than just events; it must be about helping men become mature in Christ. Remember, it takes a long time to make a disciple. Discipleship almost always takes place over a period of years in the context of significant relationships with other men.

Here are some essential ingredients of sustaining the change in the men you are ministering to:

**Rather than showing men a list of “do’s” and “don’ts,” we must show them Christ.** Our job is not to “fix” their behavior. Our job is to make Christ ever more attractive so that He can do His life-transforming work in them. God’s grace changes men, not some effort on their part to be good enough. When we help men connect with Jesus, He works the change in behavior from the inside out. He changes the desires of the man.

**Your ministry to men will be sustained by creating a culture of prayer.** Ensure that prayer is a part of everything you do for the men of your church. Train your leaders to integrate prayer into every activity. Pray that you will become a part of what God wants to do in your church and community.

**Connect men to the best disciple-making processes in your church**. Men won’t make it on their own, left to their own devices. But together, they can become authentic disciples who can change the world. The focus of a men’s ministry leader should be to make disciples who will in turn disciple others, and so on. This was the method of Jesus. Your ministry to men will grow in proportion to your ability to build not just disciples but disciple-makers.

**The Big Idea:** To harness the power of the discipleship engine around your vision, focus on creating value, capturing momentum, and sustaining change in the men of your church.

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