

Book notes

Activate

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Thomas, Kerrick & Searcy, Nelson. Activate. Regal, 2008.

Dr. Bates used Activate as part of his DMin. Project at Harding University Graduate School of Religion. Bruce ministers at the Blackstone Valley Church of Christ, Cumberland, RI.

- What we learned from the dissertation
 - a heart of compassion for lost people (this is teaching from God's word)
 - different kinds of groups reach different kinds of people (diversity of group styles is needed)
 - we need to develop more small group leaders (to avoid burnout and to help new Christians learn and lead)
 - we need to befriend more people (those who are friends came near 70% of the time. So is there someone new in my life that I'm trying to get to know? Am I taking some risks to get to know them?)
- A **Semester Approach** has a lot of advantages
 - a clear beginning and end date
 - easier for people to make short-term commitments
 - allows a time/structure for group promotion and sign-ups
 - easier for people to get into a group when everyone starts at the same time
 - more diversity of options for style and content
 - people already think in terms of a semester approach to life
 - allows for growth through a stress and release cycle

Our structure will be on 4 F's: Focus, Form, Fill, Faciliate

Focus the Groups

- What kinds of groups?
- When will they meet?
- What is our overall attendance goal?
- Whose names are on our list to be a potential leader of a group?

Form the Groups

- A group is formed when the following questions are answered:
- *Who is the leader of the group?*
- *Who will be the co-ordinator of the group*

Qualifications for Leading Groups

A leader should be:

- an adult baptized believer at Blackstone Valley

- who attends regularly
- someone who has been an attender in a small group at least once
- someone willing to go through training

Notice the short list, why? We need facilitators, not experts! Jesus disciples weren't experts; they were just people willing to follow direction. If you can do that, you can be a small group leader!

What kind of group is it?

Where and when will the group meet?

Fill the Groups

- Make sign-ups available 4 weeks in advance. What is our sign-up goal?
- Use positive peer pressure. Small group flyer – advertising the groups for that semester
- web site
- target interests in the church *and* outside the church

Facilitate the Groups

- Train the leaders

Expectations of group leaders:

- Facilitate the group meeting each week
- Pray for group members once a day (use the prayer cards at church if that is helpful)
- Meet with *Great Groups* director (Bruce) once a month for coaching, encouragement, prayer, and additional training
- Recommend a new leader at the end of the semester

Expectations of group coordinator:

- Is selected by the group leader.
- Help with group administration: (food sign-ups for each week, taking prayer cards, sending out reminder calls/emails, taking attendance)
- Pray for group members once a day
- Facilitate the group twice a semester
- Help leaders structure the first group meeting (group agreements, ice breakers, importance of time)

Help leaders establish group goals