

Disciple Making: Movement Multiplication Systems for Advanced Practitioners

Meta Description: For movement leaders: Deep dive into disciple-making systems that enable exponential multiplication. Advanced practices for creating reproducible, scalable disciple-making cultures.

Excerpt: The difference between movements that multiply and movements that add isn't strategy—it's discipleship. When Neil Cole's Church Multiplication Associates grew to five hundred churches, the key wasn't their church planting model; it was their resolute commitment to discipleship: "We want to lower the bar of how church is done and raise the bar of what it means to be a disciple."

For movement leaders who've already grasped the basics of disciple making, the real challenge lies in creating systems that enable exponential multiplication. How do we move from making disciples to creating disciple-making systems? How do we scale discipleship without losing depth? And what does it mean to program discipleship into the very DNA of our movements?

Reading Time: 10 minutes

The Multiplication Paradox

Movement leaders face a paradox: the more we focus on multiplication, the less we actually multiply. The movements that multiply exponentially aren't the ones with the best multiplication strategies—they're the ones that never get beyond disciple making as a core practice. This is the multiplication paradox: multiplication happens when we stop trying to multiply and focus on making disciples.

The early church provides the primary example. By AD 170, they had developed rigorous personal examinations called catechisms that required catechumens to demonstrate why they were worthy of baptism. Many were turned away because they were found unworthy. This vigorous discipleship characterized the early Christian movement, and it's what enabled exponential multiplication.

The Wesleyan movement offers another example. Within a generation, one in thirty people in Britain had become Methodist. The key wasn't their multiplication strategy—it was the high level of commitment expected of participants. The movement declined when discipleship became an optional extra, when leaders required four years of ordination studies and no longer required classes and bands.

For movement leaders, the multiplication paradox means recognizing that multiplication is a byproduct of discipleship, not a goal in itself. When we focus on making disciples who make disciples, multiplication happens naturally. When we focus on multiplication strategies, we often undermine the discipleship that enables multiplication.

The Consumerism Challenge at Scale

For movement leaders, consumerism isn't just a personal challenge—it's an organizational challenge. Consumerism infects movements when they become products to be consumed rather than communities to be joined. The challenge is creating movement cultures that resist consumerism at scale, not just locally.

The practical application involves several key strategies:

Raise the Bar Systematically: Create movement-wide expectations for discipleship, not just local expectations. This includes movement-wide standards for participation, movement-wide requirements for leadership, and movement-wide cultures that expect discipleship from everyone.

Simplify Structures: Make movement structures simple enough that anyone can participate, but demanding enough that they require genuine commitment. The goal is to lower the bar of how movement participation works while raising the bar of what it means to be a disciple.

Resist Institutionalization: Guard against the tendency for movements to become institutions that offer services rather than communities that require commitment. This means regularly auditing movement structures to ensure they're facilitating discipleship rather than enabling consumption.

Create Movement-Wide Culture: Develop movement-wide culture that expects discipleship, not just local culture. This requires intentional work on movement-wide values, practices, and structures that make discipleship the central requirement for participation.

For movement leaders, the consumerism challenge requires ongoing vigilance. Movements naturally drift toward institutionalization and consumption. The challenge is creating structures that resist this drift and maintain focus on discipleship as the central requirement.

Life Transformation Groups as Movement DNA

Life Transformation Groups (LTGs) aren't just a discipleship tool—they're movement DNA. When Neil Cole developed LTGs, he created a simple, duplicable system that could be easily transferred. The key to their remarkable growth wasn't the complexity of the system; it was the simplicity that enabled rapid multiplication.

For movement leaders, LTGs provide a model for creating movement-wide disciple-making systems. The principles are simple: Bible reading, storytelling, personal accountability, and prayer. But the impact is profound when these principles are embedded throughout the movement.

The practical application involves several key practices:

Movement-Wide Requirement: Make LTGs a movement-wide requirement, not just a local option. This means that everyone who calls themselves part of the movement is expected to be in an LTG, including leadership at every level.

Simple and Reproducible: Keep the system simple enough that anyone can lead it, not just trained leaders. The simplicity enables rapid multiplication because the message can be easily transferred.

Ongoing Commitment: Make LTGs an ongoing commitment, not just for new believers. This ensures that discipleship remains central throughout the movement, not just at the beginning.

Leadership Modeling: Ensure that movement leaders model LTG participation, not just require it of others. This creates movement-wide culture that values discipleship at every level.

For movement leaders, LTGs provide a framework for creating movement-wide disciple-making systems. The challenge is embedding these systems throughout the movement, not just implementing them locally.

DNA Groups and Movement Culture

DNA Groups (Discipleship, Nurture, and Accountability) provide another model for movement-wide disciple-making systems. Every community member is encouraged to join a DNA: a group of two to five people meeting regularly for discussion, support, and prayer.

For movement leaders, DNA Groups provide a framework for creating movement-wide cultures of discipleship. The principles are similar to LTGs but with additional emphasis on accountability and mutual support.

The practical application involves creating movement-wide structures that support DNA Groups:

Movement-Wide Encouragement: Create movement-wide culture that encourages DNA Group participation, not just local encouragement. This includes movement-wide communication, training, and support for DNA Groups.

Simple Accountability Framework: Provide simple accountability questions that can be used across the movement, creating consistency while allowing local adaptation. Questions might include: Whom have you blessed this week? With whom have you eaten? Have you sensed any promptings from God?

Leadership Development: Use DNA Groups as a framework for leadership development, ensuring that movement leaders are developed through discipleship, not just training. This creates movement-wide culture that values discipleship-based leadership development.

Movement-Wide Support: Create movement-wide structures that support DNA Groups, including training, resources, and ongoing encouragement. This ensures that DNA Groups are supported throughout the movement, not just locally.

For movement leaders, DNA Groups provide a framework for creating movement-wide cultures of discipleship. The challenge is embedding these cultures throughout the movement, not just creating them locally.

The Priesthood of All Believers at Movement Scale

Movements that change the world are "people movements"—every believer as a minister, empowered for mission. This is rooted in the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. For movement leaders, this means creating movement-wide cultures that empower all believers, not just a few leaders.

The practical application involves several key strategies:

Movement-Wide Empowerment: Create movement-wide structures that empower all believers, not just leaders. This includes movement-wide training, resources, and support that enable all believers to function as ministers.

Recognition from the Start: Recognize people as agents of the Kingdom from the moment they come to faith, not after they've completed training. This creates movement-wide culture that expects ministry from everyone, not just leaders.

Leadership as Equipping: Shift movement leadership from doing ministry to equipping others for ministry. This means that movement leaders focus on developing others, not just leading them.

Movement-Wide Commissioning: Create movement-wide practices for commissioning all believers for ministry, not just leaders. This includes movement-wide commissioning services, training, and support that enable all believers to function as ministers.

For movement leaders, the priesthood of all believers requires creating movement-wide cultures that empower all believers, not just a few leaders. The challenge is ensuring that this empowerment operates at movement scale, not just locally.

Action-Reflection at Movement Scale

Discipleship is forged in everyday life, blending action and reflection. For movement leaders, this means creating movement-wide practices of action-reflection, not just local practices.

The practical application involves several key strategies:

Movement-Wide Rhythms: Create movement-wide rhythms for action and reflection, not just local rhythms. This includes movement-wide practices for acting, reflecting, praying, and building theological frameworks together.

Formal and Informal: Support both formal and informal practices of action-reflection, recognizing that discipleship happens in both structured and unstructured contexts. This creates movement-wide culture that values action-reflection in all contexts.

On-the-Road Discipleship: Follow Jesus's model of on-the-road, in-the-world discipleship, not just in formal religious settings. This means creating movement-wide practices that facilitate discipleship in everyday life, not just in church settings.

Movement-Wide Framework: Provide movement-wide framework for action-reflection that can be adapted locally, creating consistency while allowing local expression. This ensures that action-reflection is supported throughout the movement, not just locally.

For movement leaders, action-reflection requires creating movement-wide practices that facilitate discipleship in everyday life. The challenge is ensuring that these practices operate at movement scale, not just locally.

Coaching as Movement Infrastructure

Coaching is an intentional relationship where a coach helps individuals grow in Christlikeness through setting goals, reflection, and accountability. For movement leaders, coaching provides a framework for creating movement-wide infrastructure for discipleship.

The practical application involves several key strategies:

Movement-Wide Coaching Culture: Create movement-wide culture that values coaching, not just local culture. This includes movement-wide training, resources, and support for coaching relationships.

Coaching as Leadership Development: Use coaching as a framework for leadership development, ensuring that movement leaders are developed through coaching relationships, not just training programs. This creates movement-wide culture that values coaching-based leadership development.

Movement-Wide Coaching Network: Create movement-wide network of coaches who can support discipleship throughout the movement, not just locally. This ensures that coaching is available throughout the movement, not just in certain locations.

Coaching as Multiplication: Use coaching to multiply discipleship, not just develop individuals. This means training coaches to develop other coaches, creating movement-wide multiplication of coaching relationships.

For movement leaders, coaching provides a framework for creating movement-wide infrastructure for discipleship. The challenge is ensuring that this infrastructure operates at movement scale, not just locally.

The Early Church Catechism Model

The early church's rigorous catechism process provides a model for movement-wide disciple-making systems. By AD 170, they had developed personal examinations that required catechumens to demonstrate why they were worthy of baptism. Many were turned away because they were found unworthy.

For movement leaders, the early church model provides a framework for creating movement-wide standards for discipleship. The principles are clear: rigorous examination, high standards, and willingness to turn people away who aren't ready.

The practical application involves several key strategies:

Movement-Wide Standards: Create movement-wide standards for discipleship, not just local standards. This includes movement-wide requirements for participation, movement-wide processes for evaluation, and movement-wide willingness to maintain standards.

Rigorous Examination: Develop movement-wide processes for examining discipleship, not just local processes. This includes movement-wide frameworks for evaluating readiness, movement-wide processes for assessment, and movement-wide support for maintaining standards.

Willingness to Turn Away: Create movement-wide culture that's willing to turn people away who aren't ready, not just locally. This requires movement-wide commitment to maintaining standards, even when it's difficult.

Movement-Wide Support: Provide movement-wide support for maintaining standards, including training, resources, and encouragement. This ensures that standards are maintained throughout the movement, not just locally.

For movement leaders, the early church model provides a framework for creating movement-wide standards for discipleship. The challenge is ensuring that these standards operate at movement scale, not just locally.

Conclusion: Disciple Making as Movement Capacity

For movement leaders, disciple making isn't just a practice—it's movement capacity. The ability to create systems that enable exponential multiplication through discipleship is what distinguishes movements that multiply from movements that add. Without disciple-making systems, movements cannot achieve exponential multiplication.

The challenge isn't understanding discipleship intellectually—it's creating systems that enable discipleship at scale. Movement leaders must create movement-wide structures, cultures, and practices that make discipleship the central requirement for participation, not just a local option.

The ultimate goal is not just making disciples, but creating disciple-making systems that enable exponential multiplication. When movements embed discipleship into their DNA, they create the conditions for multiplication that transcends human limitations. This is what enables movements to change the world: not strategies or programs, but disciple-making systems that enable exponential multiplication.

Related Content:

- [Disciple Making Master Document](#)
- [Metanoia: Christo-Logic and Organizational Transformation](#)
- [Fractal Nature: Advanced Movement Diagnostics](#)

Categories: Advanced Leadership, Movement Multiplication, Discipleship Systems

Tags: disciple making, movement multiplication, LTGs, DNA groups, consumerism, priesthood of all believers

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