

## 5 WAYS TO REACH YOUNGER MEN

At every Men's Leadership meeting I've attended for the last five years somebody would ask about how to "Reach" Younger Men. Traditional men's groups have aged and young men are not showing much interest in joining established men's organizations. Although AGE is an element in our intentional outreach, the REAL issue is something altogether different! Age is simply a symptom, NOT the central problem.

Dr. Pat Morely, founder of **Man In The Mirror** borrows an industry saying that states the issue well:

***"Your System is PERFECTLY designed to deliver the results that you are getting"***. In other words, what we are experiencing today is a direct result of the process we are using. To get different results, WE NEED TO CHANGE THE PROCESS!

### CURRENT STATE:

- Existing Men's groups are aging and membership is declining.
- Younger Men are not interested in joining existing groups.
- Many groups meet once a month over a meal without any larger "Purpose" for meeting. The meeting time is often inconvenient for busy, young family men.
  - Some meetings are nothing but a rehash of last month's data. Funds, attendance etc.
- Men's events are drawing smaller numbers.

Three things are affecting the size of men's groups, but all three can be overcome rather simply.

- Men have multiple distractions today that include:
  - Family activities, challenging careers, Cable TV/Internet/Gaming.
- Fewer Male Relationships. Men's circle of friends is shrinking.
- Church as a whole is not relevant to their lives.

### YOUNGER MEN ARE OPEN TO THE CONCEPT OF CONNECTING AND SERVING

Coach Bill McCartney, founder of Promise Keepers, offers this quote:

***"Josh McDowell shared with our staff recently that 41 percent of churchgoing kids say they have no role model they respect. Another 20-22 percent say they "maybe" have a role model. Josh says this is likely higher than any previous generation. Part of the answer has to be that young people will be drawn to stay in church because they see role models there who can feed them truth, in contrast to what they get from peers. Building up strong role models in the church can make a difference."***

Men still have the same DNA, the same Basic Needs. There are felt and unfelt needs, including spiritual, fellowship needs. As evidenced by looking at numerous churches, even if men won't join with UMM, they WILL form their own peer groups and activities!

## FORMING NEW MEN'S GROUPS & UNITS

1. Make a PLAN and STICK TO IT regarding the purpose and structure of the meeting.
  - a. Start on time, End on time.
  - b. Have an Agenda and Stick with it.
  - c. Manage Business in Committee - not in main gathering.
2. Invite the younger men to lead in the Planning. PUT THEM IN CHARGE - Empower the Young Men to plan and facilitate the meetings.
  - a. Offer Guidance, but let them lead
3. Support things the younger men are interested in.
4. DO NOT NEGLECT THE SPIRITUAL COMPONENT! Be intentional to offer 'Spiritual Food' for men's souls!
5. CHOOSE "MAN FRIENDLY" Meeting Space and Time.
6. HAVE MAN FOOD & SOCIAL TIME. Men get to know one another over shared meals where there is sufficient time to talk before getting into the heart of the meeting.
7. Provide Opportunities to Serve.

## 5 WAYS To REACH Younger Men:

### 1. SUNDAY INVITATION

- a. Have printed handouts that describe PURPOSE-MISSION-GOAL along with INVITATION
- b. PROMOTE EVERYWHERE- ALL THE TIME
- c. TRAIN GREETERS to seek out and personally greet younger men and place men everywhere. DON'T form a "Gauntlet" that traps folks. Non-threatening, friendly and personal invite works best.
- d. Include personal testimony and photo of a young man likely to be known in congregation.
- e. Watch & see how the majority of young men dress, and dress similar. 1 Cor. 9-20-22
- f. Set up table in church lobby every Sunday for at least FOUR WEEKS. Length of time is important.
- g. HAVE Donuts & Drinks!
- h. Emphasize formation of New XYZ for/with/by 'Young Men'.

### 2. MUTUAL INTEREST AFFILIATION

- a. Create "Entry Portals" for men with activities where men share a common interest. Have a "Right Next Step" already planned and calendared to invite men to participate.
- b. It is OK to have multiple special interest groups of all sorts.
- c. Conduct a Church Interest Survey. NOTE: The National Sporting Goods Association surveyed men in America on their outdoor sports participation. Look at what they came up with:

**NUMBER OF MEN INTERESTING IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES:**

Fishing: 26.5 million  
Bicycle riding: 20.4 million  
Camping: 27.1 million  
Hunting with firearms: 15.8 million  
Hiking: 13.2 million  
Downhill skiing: 3.1 million  
Backpacking: 8.4 million  
Boating: 14 million  
Kayaking/rafting: 2.8 million

**Other Possible Activities:**

- GOLF
- HOBBY
- HUNTING/FISHING
- SPORTS
- Participate in Sports
- Watch Sports TV
- Attend Sports together
- GET A BUS TRIP TOGETHER!

One church put together a men's outdoor adventure fair in its parking lot. Men of all ages walked through various stations of outdoor sports, participated in a fly tying workshop and casting clinic, and fished from a pond stocked with 1,000 trout

**3. COMMUNITY/WORK PROJECT**

- a. Work Project
- b. Church Project
- c. Mission Trip
- d. Neighborhood Clean Up Saturday
- e. Single Mom's Oil Change
- f. Ramps Ministry for Mobility Challenged
- g. Home Repair for Elderly & Single Parent homes
- h. Scout Hut

**4. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

- a. COOKOUT
- b. VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER w/AWARDS & Recognition.
- c. BEAST FEAST
- d. SCOUTING
- e. RETREAT
- f. FATHER/SON - FATHER/DAUGHTER BANQUET
- g. MEN'S MOVIE NIGHT

## h. MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL

## 5. REFERRAL

- a. FORMALIZED REFERRAL SYSTEM
- b. Intentional, Pro-Active Referral Solicitation
- c. Prepare written and verbal "Elevator Speech" describing the "What, Why & How" of your ministry invitation. Offer a compelling reason for the referral request. Safety assurance for the referrer.
- d. Start by asking Pastor, then Church Leadership
- e. Print up Referral Cards to give folks to fill out.
- f. Have a dedicated follow up process in place. Personal phone call, short personal visit with explanation and then make the ask.
- g. SUNDAY BULLETIN INSERT
- h. Request "Nominations" for a legitimate Leadership or volunteer role/activity. "Do you know anyone . . . "
- i. CHURCH WEBSITE - When signing up men online for ANYTHING - ALWAYS ask them to list the name and contact information of a friend whom they think might be open to XYZ activity.
- j. BRANDING - EVERY DOCUMENT/ONLINE posting has an INVITATION which includes a REFERRAL
- k. Mockup a Web Page

## Other considerations:

- Ask a Men's Ministry Specialist to help in your planning.
- Conduct Leadership Training
- Hold a Visioning & Goal Setting Meeting with GCUMM Consultants Facilitating.