

Learning Community

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There are four key themes in the Learning Community process:

Gathering 1: Disciple-Making Culture

This covers the key principles, practices, values and learning points that help to create and establish a strong culture of missional disciple making. We will look at how shared mind-set (paradigm), personal practices and core values (identity & call, invitation and challenge) can help people take personal responsibility for their own discipleship and begin to live out their identity, faith, vision and call being a living example as a disciple who makes disciples. The challenge to the team will be to become living examples as disciples and an embodiment of the vision you are pursuing.

Gathering 2: Leader-Developing Culture

This gathering looks at how to identify, develop, train and release leaders. This will include looking at vision and values, training infrastructure, intentional discipleship environments (Huddles) and leadership principles. Skills, strategy and self-awareness will be developed in leaders and a culture of innovation, releasing potential in others & allowing the freedom to fail will be created, meaning the culture begins to multiple leaders not just recruit volunteers.

Gathering 3: Community engagement & Influence

This gathering focuses on how to create, value, and release the 'spiritual households' that impact their neighbourhood or network of relationships through incarnational mission and intentional community. There will be input on developing a balanced three-dimensional lifestyle of faith, community, and mission and how that life can be expressed in many different ways and contexts. We will train around empowering leaders to create patterns and practices that help communities grow and flourish.

Gathering 4: Movement Orientation & Activation

Teams look at the principles and practices of establishing a strong resourcing centre — how to establish prayer, develop training, practice hospitality, care and community. Teams focus on the mission centre as a resourcing base, with the aim to create a legacy by reproducing and resourcing leaders. The culture of these movements should have passionate faith, a contagious community, missional zeal and rapid multiplication.

The Process

The Learning Community's aim is to support and resource leaders and their teams on a journey of missional discipline making. It is based around four gatherings, which take place every six months over a period of two years.

The gatherings include prayer, worship and devotional times combined with practitioner input and coaching, as well as opportunities for the teams to connect, share experiences and learn from each other so these relationships can continue between gatherings. There is also on-going support and consultation from the Learning Community team.

There is usually preparation work/reading before each gathering. Each has a different theme and consists of a weekend retreat spent together as leadership teams moving through three parts of a process.



Part 1: what is?

Each team does an analysis of the organization they are leading. They are encouraged to look at the strengths, weaknesses and effectiveness of the current models they are using. It is an opportunity for the leadership team to take an honest look at their current progress (breakthroughs and battles, successes and struggles). Each team will present some aspects of this to the other teams.



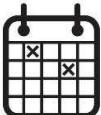
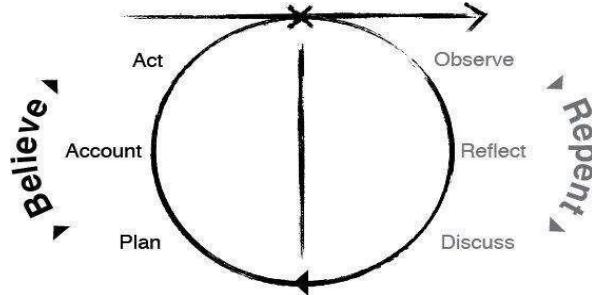
Part 2: what could be?

Teams engage with input around the theme of the gathering. The aim is to introduce new concepts, principles and ways of thinking or working. Experienced practitioners and consultants are invited to speak to the Learning Community as well as people from participating teams speaking out of their strengths and experience. Within this context, each team looks at 2-year faith goals and are encouraged to allow God to inspire, challenge and stretch them.

During these first two parts, we ask the Lord to speak about aspects of our thinking and practice. Our model for processing these challenges is based on Jesus' statement in Mark 1:14-15:

"After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!'"

We suggest that the Kingdom of God moves forward through 'kairos' (time) events which require us to change the way we think (repent) and step out in faith (believe). As this happens, we move into Part 3 of the Learning Community process.



Part 3: what will be?

Based on the analysis and input from the previous two parts, each team applies the new information to their own culture, model and missional context. Each team makes a six-month plan with measurable and achievable objectives and confirms their 2-year faith goals. This plan will help improve their effectiveness in moving towards their God-given vision and the goals keep the big picture in front of them. Over the 6 months between each Learning Community gathering, the teams remain accountable for their progress towards their goals and for the implementation of their plans.