

9 Principles to Guide You Through the First 6 Weeks

#1 - When we work, we work. When we pray, God works. (Hudson Taylor – missionary to China.)

Gather your committed core of people and pray together for God's leading and blessing.

Acts 1:8 and John 15 Remind us that it is God's Spirit who is working with in us and who enables us to accomplish that which He has set before us.

#2 - Get started early

Do what you can this spring. Seek permission to move into the dorms early so your group has time to take care of the start up activities. (Your RA or student activities advisor may know the person from whom to seek permission.)

During this time: pray, renew your vision, make sure everyone is aligned and on board with what you are doing. People need to be re-motivated and re-challenged and to feel ownership of the ministry goals. This also gives you time to delegate any remaining responsibilities for the opening weeks on campus. You must also organize who will be taking surveys, sitting at tables, etc. and for how long.

#3 - The first six weeks offer a unique opportunity that will not be duplicated during any other time during the school year.

The harvest is never more plentiful than it is during the opening weeks of school. The weather is warm and students are standing around in registration lines. The atmosphere is almost festive. **Studies have shown that students are more responsive to the gospel in September than they are in May.** During the first couple of weeks on campus, students are looking for

friendships. Peer groups and schedules are formed in these critical first few weeks. Christian students come to campus looking for a place to plug in and grow.

The focus of the 1st six weeks is evangelism among the first year students.

They are the most open during this time. They're used to filling out forms, so it's not hard to get them to do a survey. They aren't as busy with their schoolwork; they are seeking friends. Along the way you'll gather other Christians who are interested in growing and reaching others with the gospel, so no need to make them your focus.

#4 - Everyone on campus needs to know we are there ... Visibility

Being visible on the campus says "What we're involved in is significant." Much of what we do visibly during the first two weeks will determine what kind of students we will attract to the movement. **See visibility tips.**

#5 - There is no substitute for people to people contact.

People become involved in CCC primarily through social contacts--friends and roommates. Students want to see real faces behind the publicity. They are asking, "Are these the kind of people I want to be involved with?" Hand out flyers and use them for extending personal invitations. Printed publicity lends credibility to the personal invitation.

#6 - Have a harvesting plan

It is imperative that we see the follow-up of the students who signed up at the tables for more information or who filled out a survey



as of utmost importance. Divide this list by year, level of spiritual interest, and location. **Set a deadline (a commitment) by which all contacts will be contacted--usually around three weeks.** After three weeks mail a flyer or activities calendar to all those you couldn't contact. This puts the responsibility on them to find you--and they will if they are really interested. By doing this you will be setting your agenda for the first three weeks--that of following up on every person God has given you. People won't remember filling out a survey much beyond that. To have a list of people you haven't contacted on your desk will simply keep you from moving on to your next evangelistic strategy. Your goal is to present the gospel to all who will listen. **See follow up tips, small group tips, open house tips, etc.**

#7 - Define Success

Determine the criteria by which you'll know whether or not these first 6 weeks have been a success. Set some reasonable but faith-filled goals.

As we think about success there are two aspects – what we desire to see happen and what we can make happen (goals). We could desire to see 3 first years trust Christ in these first six weeks. Our part in seeing this happen is sharing the gospel with first years and praying. God has His part. And the students have their part in responding. We only have control over the first.

Sample goal evaluation questions –

- Did we expose the entire first year class at least once to the gospel (using FSK's, ESC ad campaign...)?
- Did we follow up every one who gave a "follow up type" answer on the survey within the first 3 weeks of doing a survey?

- Did we faithfully pray for 3 first years to come to Christ?

Success in ministry is praying & working in the power of the Holy Spirit and expecting results from God.

#8 - Expect to be tired

It takes a tremendous amount of energy to begin the school year. It is no wonder that you feel exhausted at the end of the first week. Long days are not uncommon. Add to that the grumbling and groaning of the usual few, including other leaders, and you have the makings for discouragement.

Commit to be disciplined with your time. This isn't the time to renew long lost friendships or join new clubs. Your focus is going to be on meeting the first year students and getting off on the right foot with classes – not to mention the little details of student life, like buying books etc.

#9 - Walk with God and have a good time.

No matter how urgent the hour, Jesus' words still ring true, "...apart from Me you can do nothing." Help one another ... don't forget to encourage each other, pray together – even quick prayers on the phone, enjoy the process, laugh....

Follow Up Tips

Because you will have many students to contact, it is imperative that your team of know what to do when they sit down with a new student. Always go in pairs. Often you can simply drop by a dorm. Begin by building some rapport. Without getting too complicated, you need to share the *Four Spiritual Laws* with him or her and a brief testimony of how you came to Christ and why you got involved in CCC. Even if you suspect this student is a Christian, he or she will now know what we believe and perhaps



for the first time will see someone actually share his or her faith. You also need to tell them about CCC. Invite him or her to go to dinner with you, to your Small group, or set up a follow-up appointment.

Survey Tips

This way you can have a large pool of students with which to begin the year. Naturally you will want to have their school address, phone number e-mail, and their year in school. This is particularly helpful in reaching affinity groups, target audiences or the freshman class. Leave your survey open-ended enough so as not to obligate yourselves to call everybody if you do not have the resources to do so. Take your surveys in and around the areas or target audiences you will be reaching this year. Because freshmen are so strategic, take your surveys outside of the Freshman dorms, during Freshman orientation, or in predominately Freshman classes. Do you need someone to lead your music? Target the music school.

Open House Tips

You may not have a weekly meeting, but it is helpful to have an open house that you can be inviting everyone to the first week. This open house is a statement of who you are and what your purpose is on campus. Gear this meeting to the first-time guest. Remember the questions he or she is asking:

- "Do I like these people?"
- "Do these people like me?"
- "What is their purpose?"
- "Do I want to get involved?"
- "How can I get involved?"

Somehow your first meeting should be directed to answering these questions. Let the meeting speak for itself. Rather than

saying, "We like to have fun"--Have some fun! Rather than saying "We believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God"--speak simply and authoritatively from the Word! Make the atmosphere more festive than serious, informative than exhortative. Make it spiritual but not overly pious or religious. Give the students an opportunity to sign up for small groups. Have a great time.

Small Group Tips

Small groups, Cell Groups, Connection Groups, etc. should begin the second week on campus so you have something to invite students to immediately. Schedule the times and locations of your small groups before the year begins. Most staff and students make the mistake of starting their groups too late in the semester. You don't have to wait until you contact everyone, coordinate schedules etc. before you begin. Students can always join in later.

In order to free people up for evangelism and gathering during this critical period and in order to conserve the fruit of existing Christians you may want to begin the year with larger open small group. The times and places can be pre-set and printed. CCC students can invite and bring their friends to these open studies without having to take time to prepare their own groups.

Visibility Tips

- Set up several "Campus Crusade for Christ" **tables** around high traffic areas of campus. Have a place for Bible study sign-up, surveys to fill out, a CCC calendar, the Fall Getaway Brochure, and FSK's. You may want to offer free refreshments at each table.
- **Posters** need to be placed in every living area--especially in the dorms / houses where first year students live.



Two types of posters are helpful. One is for your Open House meeting, the second is for Connection study /small groups / weekly meeting.

- If you have a **banner**, put that up.
- Advertise your Open House in the **campus paper**.
- Is there an outdoor event you can do?
- Help First Years Move in –wear the same color T-shirt.
- Give out lemonade and cookies on first year move in day.

Sample – phone call to student. Follow up with people:

- **Actually speaking with someone is better than a message on the phone or email – it’s more personal.**
- Remember what it was like for you when you first came.

A sample phone conversation could be something like this:

A. Hi, this is _____ with Real Life. We sponsored the Chocolate Extravaganza last week and gave out gift bags. I hope you enjoyed yours. When you came buy you filled out a survey indicating that you’d be interested in _____, I was wondering if you’d have some time to meet in the next few days to _____. We could go to _____. It’s a great place on campus to take a break. Is there a time that’s good for you?

B. Yes.

A. Is tomorrow or the day after better for you?

B. Tomorrow I’m finished classes by 3:00.

A. That is good for me too. I’ll meet you at _____ tomorrow at 3.

B. How will we know each other?

A. Oh, yeah. I’m _____ and I’ll be standing _____.

B. I’m _____.

A. Okay. Thanks. I’ll see you tomorrow at 3:00 . Bye.

B. Bye.

