

A Six-week Outreach Campaign Strategy

This kind of campaign can work well in any season which is most appropriate in your culture. Please adapt it to your season and situation.

Three months in advance, choose a topic for the campaign.

The key to getting newcomers to attend services is to have a topic that appeals to Christians and pre-Christians alike, and have materials that can be used midweek to go along with the sermons preached on weekends. Some relevant topics used by churches are:

- apologetics questions
- marriage
- family
- biblical end times prophecy

Two months in advance, recruit small group leaders for the campaign.

Small groups are vital to caring for and retaining newcomers. We will talk in depth about "caring" in a later training session.

Six weeks in advance, prepare your plan for sharing your special campaign.

Methods will vary depending on what works best in your culture, and your capabilities for inviting. In some places this might mean:

- Suggestions for inviting people by personal invitation. Helping people with what to say.
- In some locations, you may want to prepare printed materials such as flyers, business card-sized invitations and or postcards.
- Some locations have gone to almost 100% electronic publicity & promotional materials. Therefore you will need to be prepared to plan a campaign based on email, social media, and other electronic means of sharing.

One month in advance, share with your church about the upcoming series and how people can invite others using your plan.

Encourage your people to begin praying about people the Lord might want them to invite, and to think about what time of the week they would like to be in a small group.

Three weeks before the campaign, focus sermons on the benefits of being part of a small group.

Encourage members to sign up for a small group that will meet mid-week during the campaign. Encourage sign-ups every week until the series has been going for three weeks, at which time the group sign-ups are closed so that group members can bond together and move ahead.

Two weeks before the campaign give a second sermon on the virtues of small groups, the relevance of the upcoming series, and encourage people to invite friends to join them at church and in the small group they will be attending.

Ten days before the campaign, begin distribution of your promotional materials, inviting people to the relevant series.

One week before the campaign begins, preview the series and encourage everyone to invite their friends the next Sunday.

On week one of the series, provide culturally relevant ways to welcome newcomers.

Here are some ideas to do this:

- Some churches have a special dinner to welcome newcomers after the church service.
- Some pastors invite newcomers to their home for a special reception during the week.
- Some churches arrange for a special visit to the homes of newcomers.

On week three of the series, announce that current small group sign-ups are closing and this is the last day to sign up and join one.

Groups are open to newcomers in weeks 1, 2, and 3. Closing them enables the group to bond and share more intimately. The goal of the group is to bond well enough to continue meeting after the Campaign is finished.

Campaigns typically last six weeks. This is long enough to gain some momentum, but short enough to not discourage people from making a commitment.