

15 Concepts To Make Sure No Man In Your Church Gets Left Behind

There is no question that churches have been badly burned by the notorious start-stop, roller coaster nature of most men's ministry. However, I want to introduce you to the No Man Left Behind Model—a simple yet robust model you can adopt to build an *intentional, sustainable* men's discipleship ministry to *all* of your men.

You can sketch it on a paper napkin at breakfast with one of your leaders. The vision is to help men grow as disciples and disciple-makers. On the left, you have men who need Christ. A conveyor belt moves “every man” along toward discipleship and spiritual maturity at his own pace. The create-capture-sustain cycle is the engine that powers the conveyor belt. Multiple repetitions of the create-capture-sustain cycle keep the conveyor belt moving.

The conveyor belt is built on three foundations. And the model works best when the church in general has a *disciple-making culture*.

No Man Left Behind is *not* something you “add” to your already busy schedule. It's *not* an additional “program.” It's *not* a “curriculum.” Rather, it's a *process*. An “intentional” process. You overlay it on top of your existing ministry. It will give you and your leaders a common language to organize what you are *already* doing to maximize your disciple-making impact. And it will reveal new areas of opportunity to disciple your men—*all* of them.

The No Man Left Behind Model can help you more effectively:

- Attract new men to your church.

- Help men who need Christ come to faith.
- Help lukewarm cultural Christians renew their faith.
- Give new believers and Cultural Christians an “on-ramp” to grow spiritually.
- Assimilate men into your *existing* growth and service ministries.
- Surface new servant leaders and disciple-makers for your church.

And you will be able to do this without adding a lot of new programming and work for yourself. Does this sound too good to be true? Let’s dig in so you can see for yourself. Here are 15 main concepts of the No Man Left Behind Model:

1. An “all-inclusive” mindset: Successful churches have a vision to disciple all their men, not just those willing to join “men’s only” activities. So if you have 100 men in your church, that’s the size of your ministry to men.

2. “Ministry to men” versus “men’s ministry”: In fact, we suggest you even stop using the term “men’s ministry” altogether—it can help you shed the baggage of the old way that reaches only “some” of your men.

3. Five types of men: A “one-size-fits-all” approach may have worked 50 years ago, but those days are long gone. In the field we find five types of men at various stages on their journeys. These five “sizes” of men fit along what we call “the wide-deep continuum.” There are Men Who Need Christ, Cultural Christians, Biblical Christians, Servant Leaders and, among each of those four groups, Hurting Men.

4. Clarify your vision: In one way or another, the essence of your vision is “to disciple every man in the church.”

5. A public slogan: You will also want a “public” vision statement—a “slogan”—that resonates with your men. Something like, “Every man a disciple and disciple-maker—starting at home” or “No man left behind.”

6. An all-inclusive name: In addition to a “private” vision for the leadership team, and a slogan for your “public” vision statement, you will also want to come up with an “all-inclusive name”—one that unmistakably applies to *all* your men. Don’t ever make men feel like they have to be part of your “men-only” ministry to be part of the “Men of Grace.” Instead, describe *any* and *every* involvement men have with your church as something that the “Iron Men” (or whatever name you choose) are doing.

7. A common language: Since the term “disciple” can mean different things to different people, you will want to create a common language. Plan to preach a series on discipleship—something like, “What Is a Disciple, and How Do You Become One?” Focus on the biblical command to make disciples, texts that describe discipleship, and examples of discipleship that are already taking place in your church.

8. Create value: You can create momentum by offering men something they want—“something of value.” That may be inviting them to have breakfast, attend church, play softball, or be your guest at a special men’s event.

9. Capture momentum: It’s so disappointing to expend all that energy to turn men out, then see them drift away when the event is over. Instead, offer what we call a “believable next right step” for the men who attend the “Success That Matters” dinner (or other event)—a step to help “capture” the momentum. For example, meeting one hour a week for six weeks to further discuss, say, “Success That Matters.”

10. Sustain change: This is the silver bullet—the way you can use the model to populate the new and existing growth and service ministries of your church. At the end of the six week groups offer men opportunities to assimilate into the “existing” growth and service ministries of the church. You can also offer something “new.”

11. Repeat the create-capture-sustain cycle: The create-capture-sustain cycle is the engine that moves men along the conveyor belt. Regularly repeat the cycle with something that targets other types of men. That's how you keep it going.

12. The portal priority: Discipleship is the "portal" priority through which all the other priorities of your church can be achieved.

13. Your man code: You have an unwritten "man code" that defines what it means to be a man in your church. From the décor, to the announcements, to how men are involved in the worship service, you can create an atmosphere that says: "Men matter here. Men can make a difference. God is doing something in and through the men of this church."

14. Three strands of leadership: Successful discipleship ministries for men need strong support from the senior pastor, a committed leader, and an effective leadership team—three strands of leadership.

15. A one-year plan: Develop a one-year plan to complete one cycle (or two) of create-capture-sustain, and then re-evaluate.

Watch a 10- or 30-minute presentation of the model, download the figure above, learn about the *No Man Left Behind* book and how to get more training here.

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