

Consider this ...

STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING COMBAT READINESS

Because we are engaged in spiritual warfare, consider adapting the military's method of rating the combat readiness of its units. This rating system considers the effectiveness of training, the availability of proper equipment for the unit's mission, awareness of the enemy's capabilities, demonstrated ability to apply the strategy and tactics for defeating the enemy, and the health and morale of the personnel.

In adapting this approach, you might consider applying the levels of commitment described in the Blueprint workbook (pages 38 and 39) to the men in your church. For example, in the model below, the rating of the least combat ready men as C1 and those with the highest level as C5:

Overarching Strategy: Know your men.

In order for a man to change, he needs to be engaged; engaged with other men, engaged in the Word, and engaged in service. There must be intentionality, first on the part of disciplers and then on the part of the man. Spiritual growth does not just happen.

Consider enlisting a man to oversee and encourage the men in each level of commitment.

C1 – Community

Condition: These are men who reside in the geographical area of your church. This may include husbands, brothers, dads, sons, or friends who are considered to be within the ministry scope of the church or within the sphere of influence of individuals in the church, but have little or no connection to the church. They may be pre-Christian or nominal believers.

Strategy	Tactics
Recruit men of the <i>community</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the men in the <i>community</i>.• Encourage men who are a part of the group to be intentional in building relationships with men in the <i>community</i> based on family relationships, proximity, association or common interests.
Integrate the men of the <i>community</i> into the men's group through events that encourage camaraderie and fellowship..	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extend personal invitations to men in the <i>community</i> to events that do not require a high level of commitment, such as, sporting events or recreational events, men's breakfasts, Promise Keepers conferences, men's retreats.

Prayer: Pray for these men by name that they will commit to attend worship services and men's activities. *Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. (Ps 95: 6-7)*

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C2 – Crowd

Condition: These are men who have some connection or affinity with your church. The only thing these men have in common is they are somewhat committed to attend a worship service. These men may be non-believers, or at best, nominal believers. As nominal believers, they may carry baggage from their lives prior to salvation, that is, they may be wandering in the desert like the children of Israel.

Strategy	Tactics
Recruit men of the <i>crowd</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the men in the <i>crowd</i>. • Encourage men who are a part of the group to be intentional in building relationships with men in the <i>crowd</i> based on family relationships, proximity, association or common interests.
Integrate the men of the <i>crowd</i> into the men's group through events that capture men for camaraderie and fellowship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend personal invitations to men in the <i>crowd</i> to events that do not require a high level of commitment, such as, sporting events or recreational events, men's breakfasts, Promise Keepers conferences, men's retreats. • Organize and encourage men in the <i>Crowd</i> to participate in service ministries, such as, workdays, community projects, short-term mission trips.
Assimilate the men of the <i>crowd</i> into the ministry through events that capture men for growth and encourage camaraderie and fellowship..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend personal invitations to men in the <i>crowd</i> to events where men are exposed to the gospel or are encouraged to make a commitment to Christ, such as, men's breakfasts, Christian Super Bowl parties, tournaments, Promise Keepers conferences, men's retreats.

Prayer: Pray for these men by name that they will become a part of the fellowship. *We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.* (1 John 1:3)

C3 – Congregation

Condition: These are men who regularly gather on a Sunday morning in the local church. They most likely have made a commitment to Christ, worship and to the purpose of fellowship. These men may not have experienced the freedom that comes with making Jesus the Lord of their lives.

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Strategy	Tactics
<p>Recruit and integrate the men of the <i>Congregation</i> who do not give evidence of a commitment to discipleship into the ministry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the men in the <i>congregation</i>. • Encourage men who are committed to discipling to be intentional in building relationships with men in the <i>congregation</i> based on family relationships, proximity, association or common interests. • Encourage the men in the congregation to be involved in one-on-one or small group discipling.
<p>Promote advanced training opportunities through events that have a significant spiritual component.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the men of the congregation to participate in Biblically-based seminars or workshops, such as, time management, financial management, marriage enrichment, fathering, monthly or quarterly men's breakfasts, men's retreats. • Organize and encourage men in the congregation to participate in service ministries, such as, workdays, community projects, short-term mission trips.

Prayer: Pray for these men by name that they will fully commit their lives to the Lord. " ... *But your hearts must be fully committed to the LORD our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.*" (1 Kings 8:61)

C4 – Committed

Condition: These are men who have made a commitment to Christ, worship, fellowship and discipleship but are not deeply involved in ministry. They are in the process of unloading the baggage from their previous life and growing in a deeper relationship with and trust in the Lord.

Strategy	Tactics
<p>Recruit and integrate the men who are <i>committed to the church but who are not involved in ministry or leadership.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the <i>committed</i> men in the church.
<p>Mentor committed men for ministry and leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help these men understand spiritual gifts and their personal application. • Lead these men into a deeper understanding of discipleship. • Help these men understand the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. • Encourage these men to establish accountability with a partner or group.

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Engage these men in ministry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ministry and leadership opportunities. • Encourage these men to partner with or assist someone already in ministry. • Encourage these men, as appropriate, to step into a leadership role.
Connect these men to other men who need discipling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage committed men to identify men in the community, crowd or congregation with who they can build relationships. • Identify activities for relationship-building that create and capture interest in the ministry and commitment to the Lord.
Assimilate committed men into men's ministry leadership roles.	

Prayer: Pray for these men by name that they be prepared for works of service. ... *to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.* (Ephesians 4:12)

C5 – Core

Condition: These are the men who have the deepest level of commitment. They lead ministries or are actively engaged in serving the church. These men may be encountering spiritual battles in their ministry, family, or personal lives.

Strategy	Tactics
Encourage the men in the <i>core</i> to continually go deeper in their walk with Christ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide in-process training on spiritual growth and the challenges of life. • Provide the men in ministry and/or leadership an opportunity to recharge.
Connect these men to other men who need discipling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By building relationships with men who need a closer walk with the Lord. • Participate in or lead discipling ministries such as, one-on-one, small groups, Sunday school classes.
Encourage the men of the <i>core</i> to continually sharpen their ministry skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor for leadership. • Organize and encourage men in the congregation to participate in service ministries, such as, workdays, community projects, short-term mission trips.
Prepare men of the core who have been called to full-time ministry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an internship program to equip those who are called to full-time services.

Prayer: Pray for these men by name that they will not grow weary in doing good. *Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.* (Heb 12:3)