

Servants Ministry  
Large Group Coordinator Handbook  
August 2006



# Servants Ministry

Large Group Coordinator Handbook

Written by Paul Lim

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## Preface

It is of utmost importance for you to know that the following handbook is not simply a “how to” manual, nor is it meant for you to rely on man’s wisdom to create a “picture perfect” ministry. We pray that this handbook will first and foremost prompt you to seek the Lord and His will in your life and your fellowship. This is a reference tool to give encouragement as well as insight and to be helpful about the little things so that we can better focus on the bigger, more important vision that God has placed before us.

This handbook is the first of its kind; it only begins to offer experiences from a portion of Servants’ Ministry. We hope it will be an ongoing project with expanding contributions and testimonies of His goodness for years to come. Lastly, we pray that this would point to Him *“who is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, according to His power at work within us.”* (Eph. 3:20).

### ***I. Vision of Servants Ministry***

The body of Christ is still here on earth because the Kingdom harvest is still plentiful. Matthew 24:14 tells us that when the gospel is preached to the whole world, then the end will come. Accordingly, Servants Ministry exists

*To reach our campus and to touch the world for Jesus Christ.*

His great mandate for our life time is to win souls and make them into His disciples. The vision of Servants Ministry is three-fold:

#### **SOUL-WINNING**

First, we need to win more souls of this generation and the next one. Any nations and regions that live off only the past revivals become stagnant and decay quickly. We pray that God will use us to see more people become eternal sons and daughters of His.

#### **DISCIPLE-MAKING**

Second, we want to see more dedicated disciples of Christ. We hear and see of many crowds of Christians, but how many of them are willing to lay down their life or willing go overseas and into our inner-cities? May God raise more disciple-makers.



## CAMPUS REVIVAL

Third, our focus of this Kingdom work involves campus ministry. Students make crucial life decisions during their college years -- major, vocation, life-goals, life-long friendship, etc. We desire to introduce Christ at the core of their life-decision process. Without Jesus, we end up with nothing. With Jesus, we have eternity.

### ***FIVE SIGNS OF REVIVAL***

We can discern that God is doing something real and enduring when these fruits are manifested amongst His people:

1. Changed holy life
2. Obedience to the Word
3. Passionate worship to God
4. Joyful & powerful service to God
5. Love for and reaching out to the lost

## ***II. Living Set Apart***

It is important to recognize that people, methods, technologies, and organizations themselves do not and cannot really change this world. Only God can bring about His lasting spiritual changes to this world -- and He does so through ordinary people who are willing and available. Campus ministry is a training ground in which to fulfill the call of God as we engage in learning, developing our God-given gifts, and growing through various experiences. Will you say "Yes" to His call this day?

*"As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the Rock except our God? It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect."*

*II Samuel 22:31-33*

What sets us apart from the rest of the world? Lately, many non-believers have been known to do good things by giving away their millions to the poor. Are we falling into the trap of busying our lives with things that appear to be right or good? The passage above tells us that if we will make God our refuge and live in utter dependence on Him rather than upon ourselves, we will be living the perfect way our Father has set before us. Will we actively believe Him and make Him our Rock, so that we can take part in ushering in His Glory?



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Section

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 *Purpose of Document*

The purpose of this document is to teach large group coordinators some best practices of serving as large group coordinator within a Servants Ministry college Christian fellowship. As the position of large group coordinator encompasses many different areas, subject matter for this handbook includes practical methodology in subjects ranging from spiritual guiding principles to purpose-driven planning.

## 1.2 *Target Audience*

Within a college fellowship, the large group coordinator will find this handbook to be most useful because it focuses on documenting and communicating best practices regarding the large group coordinator position. However, anyone involved in planning an event for a fellowship may also find portions of this handbook to be useful.



Section

## 2 The Position of Large Group Coordinator

### 2.1 *The Purpose and Importance of the Position*

The large group coordinator is typically the manager of all major meetings and events within a fellowship; he is ultimately responsible for event planning and execution. These events are critical means in fulfilling the purposes of a college fellowship. God uses these events to draw people into his presence, plant seeds, heal and encourage, communicate his messages of truth, and win souls. These events are also critical times of fellowship that builds a family-like unity that in turn leads to disciple-making relationships. These are steps toward campus revival.

### 2.2 *How the Position Fits into the Exec Team*

The Exec Team has the responsibility for setting the direction for the fellowship and laying the foundation for plans. The large group coordinator is responsible for then elaborating and managing the plans for events.

The Exec Team can help the large group coordinator by:

- Reviewing the purposes and agenda activities for events and helping the large group coordinator put together interesting and timely event themes or define sub purposes
- Helping the large group coordinator identify people with talents which are needed at events
- Praying for and with the large group coordinator, particularly asking God to be present and working during events
- Attending events meetings and post meeting activities regularly
- Before, during, and after meetings, making an extra effort to welcome seekers and build relationships with people throughout the fellowship
- Offering timely and appropriate feedback

### 2.3 *Typical Roles and Responsibilities*

The main role of the large group coordinator is to plan and coordinate fellowship events in light of fellowship purposes, vision, and goals.

#### **Important Characteristics to Develop:**

1. Alignment to fellowship purposes with forward-looking vision
2. Organizational skills including planning, team management, and delegation
3. Communication skills

#### **Major Responsibilities:**

1. Work with Exec Team to outline overall strategy for large groups (outline of topics, link with other fellowship plans/activities)
2. Work with Exec Team to define purpose(s) of events (worship, teaching, outreach, building the fellowship, etc.)



3. Form and lead a temporary team of activity track owners to help with event planning and preparation (publicity coordinator, presentation coordinator, etc.)
4. Develop detailed plans for each meeting, delegate responsibilities, and oversee preparations (music, speaker/guests, facilities and equipment, skits, announcements, etc.)
5. Coordinate publicity of meetings
6. Communicate with speakers/guests well in advance and as meeting approaches (clear expectations, orientation to group, necessary details, logistics and directions, etc.).
7. Lead and coordinate during events
8. Oversee post-meeting tasks (thanks/honorarium to speakers/guests, follow-up of newcomers, evaluations etc.)
9. Coordinate post-large group fellowship activities
10. Maintain files (records of meetings, speaker resource file, etc.)
11. Coordinate planning and preparation for larger fellowship events



Section

### 3 Spiritual Guiding Principles

Below are some guiding principles that I developed over the years. These were especially pertinent when serving as large group coordinator.

#### 3.1 *Always do the Dirty Work*

*Jesus called them together and said... "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave..."*

*- Matthew 20:25-27*

As the large group coordinator, I delegated many tasks (see section 5.3 for more on delegation). However, I avoided delegating dirty work, and if I did, I made sure to always at least help. Dirty work includes tasks such as setting up tables and chairs, cleaning up, carrying heavy things, etc. Doing dirty work helps you develop a more servant-like mindset and attitude. This guiding principle is related to the next one.

#### 3.2 *Lead by Example*

When you lead by example, people are more willing to follow, especially with the dirty work. Leading by example builds humility and respect for others. Leading by example goes beyond simply performing tasks to keeping a positive attitude and living a holy lifestyle, as developed by the next two guiding principles.

#### 3.3 *Pray Continuously*

*"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

*- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Consistent prayer should be a habit practiced by the large group coordinator. Pray for vision, wisdom, and guidance. Pray for the purposes of each meeting – to know God's purposes and for them to be fulfilled. Remember to pray earnestly for seekers who will attend – that they will meet and experience God, that seeds will be planted, and that they will be saved. Also pray for the smooth success of all of the tasks that need to be done.

A great practice is to have a simple prayer meeting before the beginning of each event to devote the event to God and acknowledge his control, will, and power. Before you start running around to make sure everything is ready, use that time to seek God and remind yourself of how good he is and why he wants the event to occur. Encourage others to join you for this meeting. Share concerns, share about people who are coming, and pray for them. Welcome God's presence to the event.

#### 3.4 *Enjoy the Event (and Everything Else)*

*"God is most glorified when are most satisfied in him."*

*- John Piper from Desiring God*





Serve out of your first love for God. It is so easy to get caught up in doing without remembering why it is worth it. Your service is worth it because God loved and served you, and you should want to love and serve him in return. You are doing all these things to seek God, to be where he is, to go where he is going.

When planning and preparing for an event, work hard to get everything ready well in advance. Do not plan to do much immediately before or especially during the event. Prepare ahead of time so that before each event starts, all you have to do is confirm that everything is going smoothly.

Lead by example in participating in the event. Do not trick yourself into thinking that you are too good for the event, that you are too important, or that you do not need to participate. You need to be in God's presence. You need the fellowship. You need to worship and praise. You need to hear God's messages of truth for your life. Remember that you need to be encouraged, healed, and revived along with everyone else.

Lead by example in enjoying God. Enjoy the people that come to the event. Enjoy each activity. Enjoy the fact that you are with God, doing what he wants you to do.



Section

## 4 Planning Methodology

### 4.1 Semester Planning

Before each semester begins, work with the Exec team to create a calendar of events for the semester. Fill in dates for large group meetings and special events. As far as you know, fill in speaker names for each event. Begin to discuss themes for certain large group meeting dates (such as presentation night). Pay attention to the flow of the calendar of meetings as well as the relationship to parts of the year. You may want to mix in a special theme large group once a month; certain special themes will go well during specific times of the year (e.g. an outreach theme to go with Easter).

You should not expect to create a very detailed calendar before the semester starts. However, beginning to create one will give you a big picture of the semester's layout. Fill in any gaps in the calendar in a timely manner, and set milestones for when you will begin planning for certain events.

### 4.2 Working Ahead of Time

When planning for any event, I cannot stress to you enough the importance of starting early. Taking 15 minutes to sit down and begin to think through and write down what will need to be planned and prepared 2+ weeks in advance (2 weeks for regular large groups, longer for big events and retreats) can save you much more time later. Everything from contacting speakers, reserving spaces, delegating, practicing, and even praying should be done as early as possible. Working ahead of time prevents you the stress and panic of having to "wing it" at the last minute and creates a smoother, higher quality event for the fellowship to enjoy.

### 4.3 Purpose-Driven Planning for Large Group Meetings

Meetings that are purpose-driven are most often better planned and executed. During preparation stages, everyone is more aligned to seek a set of common, defined goals. In turn, attendees gain more from the meeting experience. Below is the methodology behind planning for a more purpose-driven meeting.

#### Main Purposes for Every Meeting

Every large group meeting should repeatedly share common purposes and characteristics. These should align to the purposes of Servants Ministry and the vision of your fellowship. These purposes include:

1. Soul winning – through welcoming and following up with seekers
2. Disciple making – through teaching and encouragement
3. Campus Revival – through worship and fellowship

These purposes and visions should influence all decisions made during meeting preparation.

#### Sub Purposes for Individual Meetings

Some large group meetings may have special concepts/themes and sub purposes (or emphases). These should be defined or identified very early in the planning process. There is a distinction



between *defining* and *identifying* sub purposes. Both are acceptable and may be applicable for the same meeting.

Sub purposes are *defined* when a meeting is initially planned around a fellowship need rather than a meeting concept. Fellowship needs may include: evangelism, unity, encouragement, etc. Planning a meeting around a fellowship need can give the opportunity for the large group coordinator to be creative with the meeting's activities.

Sub purposes are *identified* when a meeting is initially planned around a concept or theme such as a night of presentations or games. Identifying and communicating sub purposes for a meeting concept can elevate expectations and build more excitement for that meeting.

Here is an example of a meeting with sub purposes/emphases:

- Concept/Theme: Praise/Presentation Night
  - Description: A meeting where each small group in your fellowship gives a presentation
  - Sub purposes and emphases may include:
    - Intra small group bonding (through practice times before the meeting)
    - Emphasis on outreach (through seeker-friendly presentations)
    - Developing gifts (through using them in presentations, e.g. developing a gift in writing through creating a script for a skit presentation)
    - Creatively worshipping God (through many types of presentations such as video, musicals, body worship, etc.)

Once sub purposes are defined or identified, they should be clearly communicated to leaders and attendees in advance of the meeting. Doing this will help set expectations, get people aligned towards common goals, and stir up excitement for the event.

## Planning Best Practices

### ***Getting Started***

Taking the purposes and sub purposes into consideration, the agenda activities of the event should be defined early in advance. Start planning early, and begin with the end in mind. Think through and write down the agenda for the night. Consider transitions between each agenda activity. Start planning with as clear vision of the event as possible.

### ***Tracks of Work and Owners***

Each agenda activity should be considered a *track of work* that leads up to the event with someone defined as the *owner* (person in charge). This could be you or someone else. Post large group activities will also need to be planned as a separate track. When someone is an owner, it does not mean that they are responsible for doing everything. Owners are responsible for making sure everything gets done on time and at a high quality. This could mean that either they do it themselves or get others to help. Delegate activities or sub activities to trustworthy people (see below for delegation tips). If you anticipate a risk that a certain activity may not be properly prepared (because of a certain person's limited availability, lack of experience, etc.), you should prepare a backup plan.



### ***Milestones and Checkpoints***

As the large group coordinator, set milestones with checkpoints for each track. Milestones (due dates) are useful for activities such as slideshows, presentations, skits, etc. that must go through phases of completion. Set these milestones with track owners at the beginning of planning and do a phone call or email checkpoint at each milestone. Example milestones for a skit could be:

- Script is written – 5 days before the event
- Skit practice 1 is held – 3 days before the event
- Final skit practice is held – 1 day before the event

At each checkpoint, ask the owner about the status and progress of the activity track, address any issues and risks with actionable solutions, offer advice or help, encourage the owner, etc. With more inexperienced owners, implement more checkpoints and offer more help. Quality assurance is critical. Before the event, take time to preview skits, presentations, slideshows, icebreakers, etc. to ensure that they are well prepared and appropriate.

### **A Typical Meeting**

A typical meeting's agenda may look something like this:

- Introduction and welcome by emcee
- Icebreakers
- Praise
- Presentation or testimony
- Speaker
- Second praise
- Announcements
- Post meeting activity

To prepare for this typical meeting, the agenda activity tracks of work could be:

- Icebreakers
- Presentation
- Post Meeting Activity

## **4.4 Planning for Larger Events**

Within a semester, your fellowship may plan to have a few larger events such as a picnic or potluck dinner. Larger events are great opportunities for outreach to seekers and should thus be especially seeker friendly (see below). When planning for these events, the agenda activities will probably include more presentations and games along with free food to draw people in and make them comfortable.

Since larger events do not fall into your normal routine of meetings, they require much more planning in advance. Special locations must be reserved. Activity tracks take longer to be prepared. Since more people come to these larger events, especially those that have not been to



the fellowship before, make sure every activity is prepared at a high quality. Ask experienced and trustworthy people to be activity track owners. Check in with them frequently.

## Retreats

Retreats are even larger events. These should be planned together with the fellowship staff and Exec Team. Retreat themes should be decided on collaboratively. Then several preparation tracks will need to be identified with owners. In addition to typical agenda activity tracks, others may include registration, marketing, small group coordinating, creating booklets, and planning special activities. Communication is essential to a smooth planning operation. Make records (e.g. a MS Excel spreadsheet) of all the tracks and owners so that you can more easily stay on top of what needs to be done. Pray and encourage frequently.



Section

## 5 Other Planning Best Practices

### 5.1 *When Things Fall Apart*

A speaker calls and says that he will show up late to the meeting. The video projector stops working. It is not infrequent that a meeting does not go through as planned. In fact, you can expect something to go wrong sooner or later.

#### **How to React**

Do not get too stressed or frustrated when these things happen. The Enemy is always looking to disrupt God's will and create distractions. God is the ultimate Organizer (as the Creator) and Satan is the ultimate Destroyer. However, we have the power through God to fight back. Pray and ask God for guidance and wisdom to make adjustments to move the meeting forward as smoothly as possible.

When you are in a tight spot, take a moment to step back and think; be creative with solutions to these last minute problems. Ask people you trust for ideas and help. These are often the times when your character and patience will be tested. These are also times when you will be challenged to grow. Be willing and flexible enough to change plans when it makes sense. Sometimes you have to learn to go with the flow with a smile on your face. You will often be surprised at how positive the results are.

#### **Participating but Staying Alert**

During the meeting, be alert for things that may not be going smoothly. Being alert does not mean being obsessive. Let things naturally set off a trigger in you like seeing the need to set up a podium for the speaker or adjusting the temperature of the room. If making an adjustment will improve the meeting and not cause too much of a distraction like opening a door or window to bring in cooler air, do not be too afraid to do so. But again, being alert should not prevent you from actively participating in and enjoying the event.

Strive to do your best. If things do not go very well or if you feel you could have put forth more effort, evaluate how you did, and try to do better next time. No large group coordinator is ever perfect. Everyone grows as they serve more and more.

### 5.2 *Remembering Seekers*

*I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.*

- 1 Corinthians 9:22

#### **Who is a Seeker?**

Seekers are newcomers. Some are Christians who are simply visiting to your fellowship. Others have had little exposure to Christianity in their lives. Some have been to your fellowship meetings before. Others are visiting for the first time.

Instinctively, we tend to plan events for current fellowship members. You do want to make sure your members are blessed; however, it is so easy not to be seeker sensitive. Compared to other fellowship meetings (such as prayer and small group meetings), large group meetings and



especially larger events should be most sensitive to the attendance of seekers. Ministering to seeker should be one of the main purposes of every large group meeting. Encourage your members to bring seekers to each large group meeting.

## How to be More Seeker Friendly at an Event

A lot can happen at the beginning and the end of each meeting. Make sure there are plenty of friendly greeters beforehand. Get contact information from all newcomers, and contact them in a timely manner afterwards. Lead by example in talking to seekers personally. If you see that anyone is alone, talk to that person and strategically ask someone (of similar age, interests, etc.) to interact with him. After talking to seekers, try to introduce them to others in the fellowship who you think they would get along with well.

As the emcee, make sure you have a proper welcoming speech in the beginning of each meeting. This includes properly introducing each agenda item and taking care to fully explain items that may be awkward or out of the ordinary to seekers. Talk about the purpose and benefits of each item as well as how it will actually happen. Setting expectations allows people to be more comfortable with the meeting. It also lessens the chance of someone becoming surprised or turned off when something happens that they are not used to. During meetings that occur earlier in a semester or during times like Easter, you should be even more sensitive to these things. Also, it is important to explain what may not be common knowledge to seekers such as the purpose of giving offering.

Icebreakers are great ways to help seekers feel welcome at the beginning of a meeting. If you do not have time for an icebreaker, try to take a moment for everyone to greet each other before you begin. Say, "Everyone please stand up and greet the people around you. We will start in 3 minutes"

### 5.3 The Art of Delegation

*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*

*The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.*

- 1 Corinthians 12:7, 12

Every person within your fellowship has spiritual gifts. As the large group coordinator, you have a *calling* to give opportunities for people to develop their gifts. Delegating is not simply relieving yourself of the burden of full responsibility. Delegating allows different parts of the body to grow in its given capacity, using gifts for God's glory.

Strategically delegating something frees up your time to be more of a coordinator/overseer and also to pray more and to think more about aligning to the purposes and visions of your fellowship. As an overseer/coordinator, you can focus less on the content of the event and more on managing the overall smoothness and quality of the event as a whole.

When I plan for meetings, I enjoy delegating. Working with people makes things more enjoyable. I have fun thinking about who will be good at a certain task. I approach delegating as a way to give people opportunities to grow and gain experience, and that is something that I want to do. I delegate everything that can be delegated as makes sense (except for the dirty work – see section 3.1 for details).



## Choosing the Right Person for a Task

You have more resources and connections at hand than you realize, and from knowing what kinds of people have been endowed with certain kinds of gifts and talents, you can delegate accordingly. When managed well, this produces better quality and more creative results than doing it yourself. Getting people involved also increases their sense of ownership in the ministry.

When you have an activity track or other task to delegate, brainstorm a list of people who could potentially do a good job. Find a fellowship directory and go down the list. Create a list of qualifications that you would want that person to have. You can also create parameters around the year or gender of that person and how much experience they need to have. Pray for guidance as you try to choose the right person.

Do not be afraid to ask anyone to take ownership of something. You will be surprised at how many people are willing and happy to help serve when you respectfully ask them to do something that they are gifted in.

## Interacting with the Person

When delegating, the person is much more important than the task. Genuinely serve and care for that person, and show that you care. Pray for them, explain to them why their task is important, and communicate any benefits of serving.

When you ask them to help serve, be polite and respectful. Do not jump right into asking the person to help. Ask about how they are doing and be interested. Be polite and respectful. Be willing to accept a "no." If they were willing to help but still declined, see if there is anything else they could help with at the meeting.

Always properly thank people after the event has occurred. Depending on the nature of how they helped, you may want to do something special for them like take them out to lunch or send them an e-card. Give them feedback - some positives and some areas of growth or improvement. Encourage them and bring them to a place where they will look forward to serving again.





Appendix

## **A Other Best Practices**

### ***A.1 Communication Best Practices***

Communication is extremely important when planning and coordinating. Err on the side of over-communication, but be concise. Be careful about the tone of your voice, but feel free to choose your words creatively. Choose your audience carefully. Emails will usually be adequate for a large general group, but with smaller groups of people, you may need to also make phone calls for a more personal touch.

To the appropriate leaders, in a timely fashion, communicate about the purpose, vision, and benefits of any events. One initial email 5-7 days before the event then another reminder email a couple days later will usually suffice. Set expectations as to what the event will look like, when it will start and end, and how much participation you expect from those attending.

### ***A.2 Reservations Best Practices***

Making proper reservations is critical to the success of an event. Find out everything about your school's policies from how to reserve spaces to usage and clean up rules and restrictions (then abide by them). Find out about all spaces that can be reserved. Explore local options such as churches, apartment community spaces, public parks, etc.

Build relationships with the people in charge of managing reservations. Be kind, respectful, and polite. Communicate with them as regularly as makes sense. Serve and love them as you would any other person. Feel free to give them gifts of thanks during Christmas season. When someone needs to unlock a space for you, be early to make sure they are not waiting for you. These people are serving and doing favors for you, so be friendly and show your appreciation!

Reserve early! Find out when reservations open up for the next semester. Know in advance what reservations you will need then fill out and submit all of the necessary paper work as early as possible. Properly renew all ongoing reservations.

Confirm reservations before each event as necessary. Make sure you know everything about the room including clean up policy, keys (or who opens/locks the space), use of technology equipment, etc. Clean up! Leave the place looking better than you found it.

### ***A.3 Speaker Care***

Speaker care is like showing hospitality to a guest. Here are some points to remember about speaker care:



- Communicate with the speaker early about the logistics of the event – event time and schedule, how much time he has for his message, directions, etc.
- Meet and greet the speaker as soon as he arrives
- Offer him water and ask if there is anything else he needs
- Prepare a thank you card and a speaker gift as necessary
- Talk with the speaker after the event; introduce him to others, invite him to post event activities
- Make sure that the speaker knows how to get home after the event



Appendix

## **B Sources**

### ***B.1 Intersivity Website***

<http://www.intersivity.org/chapters/handbooks/largegroup/>

The Intersivity Christian Fellowship organization website includes many helpful resources including a Large Group Meetings handbook.

### ***B.2 About the Author***

Paul Lim served as the large group coordinator for Grace Christian Fellowship at the University of Virginia spring of 2004 to fall of 2005. He later also served as an at large staff worker for Servants Ministry in Northern Virginia.

Email: [Lim.Paul@gmail.com](mailto:Lim.Paul@gmail.com)