

It astounds me time after time as I travel and work with churches, to see the number of times there is no comprehensive, accurate tracking being taking place of a churches regulars, visitors, converts and absentees.

**Tracking: Introductions to Keeping track of the flock:
Chapter 14 [from "Winning the Backdoor War"]:**

Winning the Back Door War is inseparable from God's command in Proverbs 27:23: "Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks." The diligent shepherd in Luke 1 could catch (and correct) a mere 1% loss far (knowing he had only 99 sheep out of his total flock of 100) by counting, and tracking them.

As someone put it so aptly: " If Jesus thought people were valuable enough to die for, aren't they also valuable enough to be counted and missed, pursued and brought back? While some foolishly consider counting " unspiritual" to N-O-T count is the far greater indictment in light of our Lord's concern for his sheep and lambs, as epitomized in Ezekiel 34.

Second Samuel 24: 1-10 is used as a rationalization excuse by some, while totally disregarding numerous times Moses was ordered by the Lord God t count the children of Israel, their tribes, flocks, herds, etc.

#1 Name the two basic components of an efficieint tracking system"

1) A) Every persons primary information is vital. Acquire it by phone, visit, interview at the church, bulletin insert (for several consecutive weeks), or by writing, e mail or other nmeans. It should be required on all New Member class applications, so its systematically gather at least at that point. Otherwise, you can not track them.

B) You need to establish "triggering criteria" to signify what specific ministry responses take place. In other words, when somebody's absent once, twice or three times, what happens at your church? Far too many, a massive majority, Most churches don't have an operative, pre-determined, efficient and effective ministry response to these common events.

#2 Name an Information Age means of Multiplying any churches "Span of care."

"tele-care", when done properly, is a very productive " High-tech:" potentially very "High Touch" ministry that can greatly increase the "spa of care" any church implements. People must feel cared for, or they will go, and find a place providing that care.

Surveys show that female voices garner less hostility in doing both tele-care and in telse-surveys. When calling church members to get information, you're going to get a lot less negative feedback if ladies from he church make the calls.

#3 Why is tracking people more important now than ever before. Relate it to "fiber-board' analogy.

Tracking is much more important now, because our society's social fragmentation rate has "gone ballistic." The sense of disconnectedness that the average person suffers is higher than ever before in our national history.

When a pine board is cut out of a solid tree trunk, no glue at all is required for that board. But when thousands of fragmented, broken woodchips are compressed to create fiberboard, is it going to take more or less glue? More glue of course. How much more glue? An almost infinite amount more.

One further question: the smaller the fragments, (as the pieces of wood or people's relationships are broken further and further) will it require more or less glue. More glue, once again.

#4: What are 10 major signs of fully assimilate, healthy church members (or conversely) 10 warning signs signified by their absence?

1. A healthy RM identifies positively with the church's goals.
2. Faithful worship attendance at least 3 times monthly.
3. Involvement regularly in a Sunday School class or other small group
4. They're taking steps to become involved and stay involved.
5. They are growing spiritually, not "plateaued" or in decline.
6. They should have 7 friends in the church
7. They are using their identified spiritual gifts in a role or task. Having a ministry at the church (no matter how infrequently they participate in it) gives them a degree of ownership. This helps the church be (to them) "my" church.
8. They tithe and give regularly
9. They personally participate in the Great commission. They pray for the lost, and consider their life and words a witness. They invite friends and acquaintances to church.
10. They refer to the church as "my church", not "their" church 9 as referring to someone else.

#5, Describe an easy 5 column vital-sign tracking system grid:

What if you took some of these ten 'healthy member' vital signs, and made an easy tracking system for your church. remember the diagnostic charts doctors place at the foot of a patient's bed in hospitals? This achieves a similar function.

The congregations names would go down the left column horizontally (as headings, across the top of the page would be.

	Worship Service	Sunday School care group	Role and Task involvement	Friends	Total
Smith , Julie					
Strang, Dan					

Now it would be easy to use this with a number-scoring system to indicate which areas were, strong, average, or weak and cause for concern and contact, etc.

This can be easily set up on a computer spread-sheet, but is also easily utilized in a notebook or ledger (if needful)

Let's say, that we use a 4 point grade system such as in High Schools. Four signifies 4 times a month, (also an A) a grade of 3= a B, a "2" would be a "C", and a "1" or "0" would be a "D".

In the above example, Julie Smith is a regular Sunday morning attender, but has no connection with Sunday school or care group. Column 3 tell us she very infrequently volunteers, gives financially rarely and has very few friends in the church.

With a possible total Assimilation “grad-/score” of 20, Julie Smith totals up only a 5. her is a “warning’ core and her name would go on a special care list, realizing she’ll soon go Inactive, unless something changes to improve her church relationships.

In contrast to her, see the scores of the next hurch member. Dan Strang scores “ a total of 19 points out of a possible 20. He is a healthy, fully assimilated church member.

You could add in many of these “Healthy member vital signs” and get a printout of all those with scores as “healthy” above 14. Another selective print-out could record all those who are marginal (perhaps scores of 9-14), and then a print-out of those needed intensive assimilation score (Scoring 1-8).

There is a more in depth way of looking at this point-scoring concept in Bob Logan’s excellent book, “ Beyond church Growth.”