



Ministry Alignment Exercise

A Workshop Guide for Evaluating Your Disciple-Making Strategy

Our team at discipleFIRST is committed to helping you and your staff make disciples who make disciples. This Ministry Alignment Exercise is designed to help you clearly evaluate how well your current ministry programming and events align with Jesus' disciple-making pathway.

This exercise will guide you and your team to identify where your existing programs, events, groups, and studies fit within the four phases of the disciple-making pathway—based on their **primary purpose**. The goal is to gain an honest, accurate picture of your ministry alignment.

We encourage you to revisit this exercise regularly (annually, bi-annually, or quarterly) as part of your ongoing ministry evaluation rhythm. Doing so helps ensure your ministry initiatives continue to fulfill their intended purpose and contribute to making disciples who multiply.

One of the most valuable outcomes of this exercise is the discussion it creates among your leadership team about the effectiveness of your ministry initiatives and how each one supports your overall strategy.

If you have questions during the process or would like to share your results, you can schedule a free coaching call with our team at:

disciplefirst.com/explore-and-evaluate-disciplefirst-coaching

The Disciple-Making Pathway



EXPLORE



CONNECT



GROW



MULTIPLY

Disciple-Making Pathway Principles to Remember

1. People are on the pathway, not programs.

Programs are a means to an end. As we often say, "Your programming is how you organize relationships."

2. Movement along the pathway happens through the work of the Holy Spirit and personal invitation.

While environments matter, people most often take their next step because someone personally invited them to do so.

3. The pathway is linear, but people progress at different speeds.

People grow spiritually in a progressive consistent pattern, but the timing and journey looks different for each individual. Some may move quickly, others slowly. People may pause, take steps backward, or have long pauses due to life's unexpected challenges.

4. If you see misalignment or imbalance, don't move too quickly to remove a program.

First consider how to **Reposition, Repurpose, or Retool** it. Ask: "How could this same event more effectively accomplish its intended purpose—or serve a different purpose altogether?"

Ministry Programming Exercise

Step 1: Set Up the Workspace

Use the provided worksheet on page 5 or draw a grid on a whiteboard with the **four phases of the disciple-making pathway** listed across the top, including the **primary purpose of each phase**.

This exercise can be:

- Done individually first and then combined into one master list, **or**
- Completed together as a group discussion.

Step 2: List Your Current Ministry Initiatives

List all current ministry initiatives, including:

- Programs
- Events
- Studies
- Groups

Include initiatives that are:

- Weekly
- Seasonal
- One-time events

Place each initiative under **one of the four phases**, based on what you believe is its **intended primary purpose**.

Step 3: Assign One Primary Purpose to Each Initiative

Each initiative must have **one—and only one—primary purpose**.

To determine the primary purpose:

- Consider the **target audience**.
- Ask, "What is the main need this initiative is designed to meet for most participants?"

Example:

If you are listing Sunday School, even though teachers and leaders may be serving or multiplying, the primary purpose for most participants is likely **connection and community**. Therefore, Sunday School would be placed in the **Connect** phase.

When working as a team, expect discussion and disagreement here. That discussion is a key part of the exercise and often reveals important insights.

Tip:

As you work, pay attention to areas where you may have:

- Too many initiatives, or
- Too few initiatives

Most churches naturally have more activity in the **Explore** and **Connect** phases. The goal is **not** to have an equal number of initiatives in each phase, but to ensure:

- Every phase has at least some intentional initiative, and
- Each initiative is clearly fulfilling its intended purpose.

Too many initiatives can also create confusion, making it difficult for people to identify their next step or commit to deeper stages of the pathway.

MINISTRY MAPPING WORKSHEET

EXPLORE Reach the Unchurched	CONNECT Connect the New Believer	GROW Train to Multiply	MULTIPLY Encourage Multipliers in Fruitfulness

Step 4: Evaluate Overall Balance

Once all initiatives are listed, step back and discuss the following questions as a team:

- Which of the four phases appears to be your church's strongest?
- Are there any phases with no programs, events, or groups listed?
- Which phases seem to need the most attention?
- What does this exercise reveal about the overall health of your church's disciple-making process?

Step 5: Evaluate Effectiveness by Purpose

Now revisit each initiative and evaluate whether it is actually fulfilling its intended purpose.

Example:

You may have listed a Men's Outreach under the **Explore** phase, intending it to reach unchurched men. However, if most attendees were already believers and very few unchurched people participated, then the event is not effectively functioning as an Explore initiative.

In that case, discuss whether:

- The event can be adjusted to better reach the unchurched, **or**
- It should be repositioned into a different phase (such as Connect).

As a team, discuss:

- Which initiatives are not fully accomplishing their intended purpose
- Whether they should be **retooled, repositioned, repurposed, or removed**

Step 6: Identify Next Steps and Action Items

Finally, list concrete next steps coming out of this exercise:

- Are there phases where new programs, groups, or events are needed?
- What are **three specific improvements** your team can begin working on immediately?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Next Steps and Support

Our team would love to help you process your results or take action on what you discover. Change can be complex, and you don't have to navigate it alone. We're here to help you become more effective in making disciples who make disciples.

If you would like coaching support or feedback on your results, schedule a free coaching evaluation [here](https://disciplefirst.com/explore-and-evaluate-disciplefirst-coaching):

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