

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

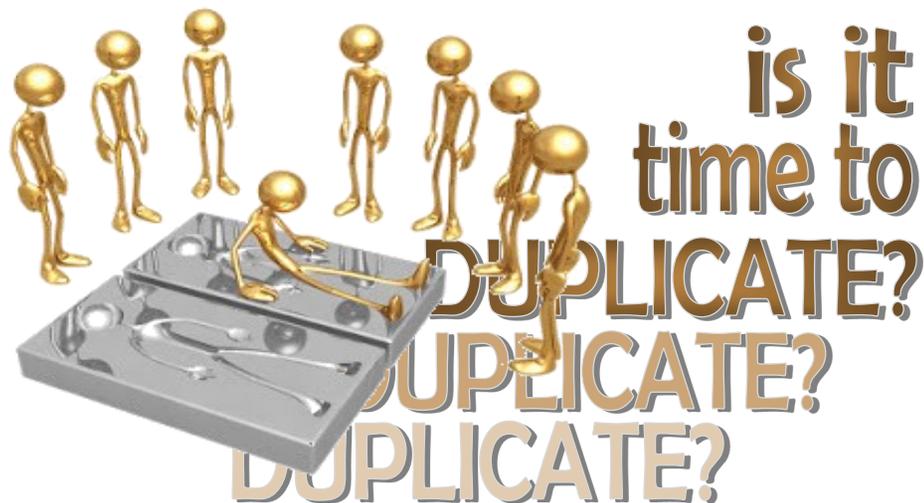
Hebrews 13:7

It's a tricky question - when is it time to hive your group off into two smaller groups instead of one larger group. There is no simple answer. Some would say once you hit a certain number. Others when things get stale. Still others when you have another leader ready to go.

No matter which way you look at it, duplicating your group brings with it a certain level of risk. People may remain in a group buckling under sizeable numbers because...

- They're intimidated with the idea of duplicating the group.
- They're worried that duplicating may mean splitting up friendships they have developed
- They're worried a new group may not have the verve that the current group used to have (though it may no longer have it either)
- They believe there is a risk that both groups, old and new, might fold
- They find security in things the way they are and are reticent to lose that.

Whatever the reason, there are ways to see the process done well. We have aimed to provide you with some starting points to begin thinking about how duplication may work for your group.



Keep in mind that despite the risks some people may be wary of, duplicating your group can be a very rewarding experience. It offers the chance for new blood, invigorated purpose, new hands getting experience to be involved new ways. If it's the right time for your group, consider jumping into the process if duplication.

Different Ways to Duplicate

- The apprentice leader stays with the current group, while the leader steps out and forms an entirely new group.
- The leader stays with the current group, while the apprentice leader steps out and forms an entirely new group.
- Either the leader or the apprentice steps out, and the current small group divides between them to form two new groups.
- A new group is formed outside of the current group, and several members of the current group break out to join it.

Principles to Help

NUMBERS DO MATTER - Too small a group and you may lack the critical mass to sustain yourselves. However, too large a number and you may find things unwieldy, people staying silent, or avoiding meetings. A good range is between 6 and 14. Do you have enough people to duplicate, or do you have so many that duplication is overdue?

PURPOSE - Perhaps there are segments of your group that attend for different purposes or affinities. Dividing the group along these lines may provide people the opportunity to fulfill those purposes.

NOT PERMANENT OR TOTAL - divisions need not be permanent. Groups can periodically get together for fellowship, or they can continue to meet at the same place and time for fellowship before splitting off for the rest of their evening (or they may gather at the end). This can help maintain connections that some may fear losing in a duplication process.

IN THE END - group health is the goal. If your group is functioning well with a higher number, then carry on. But if you find things stagnating under the weight of large numbers, maybe it's time to consider duplicating your group.

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