

Why Start A Triad

We have found that using a simple triad model can be significantly more effective in empowering pastors to set and achieve goals of church planting.

Planting churches is without question a difficult road to walk down, and many pastors and church leaders hesitate to try it for fear of not having enough of resources to pull it off effectively. The time, energy, people, and financial commitments can seem overwhelming and, for some, make planting churches seem impossible.

Yet, Jesus calls us to multiply our communities. To bring the power and presence of the risen Christ to more folks in our communities, as well as the cities and towns just down the road.

Forming church planting triads empowers pastors to:

- Cultivate vision and support
- Build shared resources
- Plant more churches

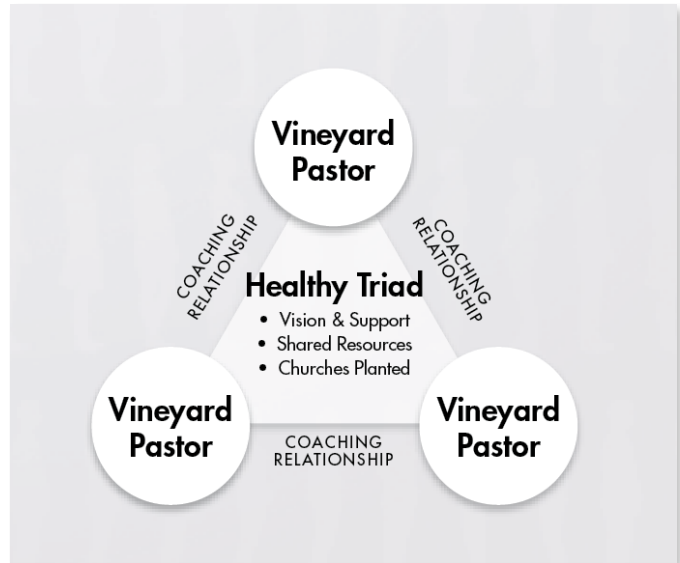
Building Healthy, Deep Friendships

Beyond that, though, there is an incredible relational value to planting churches with a triad model. We consistently hear that the most impactful part of forming a triad is the depth of relationships that develop while pastors are seeking to achieve big goals together. These deeper relationships then form the basis for a strong support network for your church and yourself. A triad spreads out the responsibility and pressure of church planting so that we are freer to celebrate the mission that Jesus has put before us and enjoy the abundant life he gives us in the process.

This document is an overview of the values of triads as well as best practices that help keep them healthy and accomplish their vision.

We will outline:

1. Sharing Vision and Goals
2. Structuring Triads for Success
3. The Catalyst of Coaching Relationships
4. Resource Sharing



1. Sharing Vision and Goals

Identify Potential Partners Based on Shared Vision

The key to success in any triad is having the *right* three people involved. First, you'll want to find people in the same general area as you. Part of the benefit of a triad is that you are all close enough to the churches you are planting to really support them. Second, all three of you will need to share the same vision and passion for church planting. If you don't have those things in common, the odds are against you being able to work together effectively. Once you think you've located a couple potential partners, contact them and pitch your vision for forming a triad.

Flesh Out Your Vision Together

Before you can start actually working together, the three of you will need to flesh out where you are hoping to go and what you are hoping to accomplish. Make sure you all agree on a clear vision and set some specific goals. Having these hammered out will help keep you all on track and provide a reminder from time to time for why you are really getting together. (We have a separate sheet regarding goal setting and visioning.)

As we say in the Vineyard, we want to "do what the Father is doing." When you are working on vision and goals, keep prayer a central part of your process. The joy of three people praying together is that you all gain greater perspective of what the Father is doing in your area.

Get Specific and Set Goals

One of the first steps, if you haven't done it already, is identifying towns or neighborhoods where you could potentially send church plants. See where the Father is working in your area and begin to pray over those communities. Keep your list broad and don't eliminate any community based on its size. Identify areas which could use a church. Remember, we just want to go where the humans are.

Set some specific goals as you begin to identify where to go first. A good goal is one where you know what it will look like to reach it. Set "S.M.A.R.T." goals—goals that are *Specific* (What, exactly, is it that I want to achieve?), *Measurable* (How will I know I've achieved it?), *Attainable* (What is realistic for me to accomplish?), *Relevant* (Why am I doing this?), and *Time Bound* (By what time/date will I accomplish this?).

Identify Shared Resources

As part of goal setting, begin to look at what resources each church brings to the table. Resources such as potential leaders, finances, and outreach volunteers will make your goals much closer to becoming a reality. The great advantage to a triad great is that three smaller churches can together provide resources, that one church could not do alone. See more about shared resources below.

2. Structuring Triads for Success

Select a Point Person

You'll need to decide on a point person for the group who will run meetings and help keep things moving in the group. Although all three triad members are equal partners in terms of opinions, value, and decisions, a person who can help guide the meetings and keep track of the details is key to success. Select a person who will help the group stay organized and focused.

Create a Meeting Schedule

After you have formed a triad, you'll need to set up regular meetings with the group. Consistent meeting dates and times are important to the success of the group and help keep everyone accountable and moving forward in your vision and goals. We recommend meeting at a set date, place, and time on a monthly basis. You can all decide whether it works for you to meet face to face or over various types of technology.

A Typical Meeting

Meetings should have a set agenda that is finalized and sent to the group ahead of time by your point person. A typical agenda will include a check-in time for each person, time to discuss goals and progress made, coaching time, assigned tasks and resource discussion, and prayer time.

We recommend allowing about 1 1/2 hours for a typical meeting.

Goals

One the biggest strengths of a triad is the accountability built into the meeting time. Taking time each meeting to check in on how members are progressing on their goals allows the triad to see how things are going, and what changes, if any, need to be made. Set aside time for this each meeting.

Coaching

Coaching should be done in each meeting as well. Each person in the triad should have an opportunity to coach and be coached by the other triad members. Coaching helps each member get clarity and come up with solutions for work on in the process where they are stuck. See more on coaching below.

3. The Catalyst of Coaching Relationships

Coaching is a tested method of coming alongside people to encourage them, help them process ideas by asking them powerful questions, and help them identify where God is at work in their lives. Coaching is a very important tool among Vineyard leaders.

Importance of Coaching in the Triad

In triads, coaching is the method to the model; the language between the pastors who are seeking to challenge and support each other. In a triad, coaching helps create and maintain healthy, encouraging relationships within the group; leads to deeper growth; and makes the group more effective at strategic planning toward the goal of planting a new church.

How it Works

In a triad, each member participates as both the coach and the coachee. You all take turns asking questions and answering questions that are specifically created to help gain clarity and come up with creative solutions for the challenges that arise. In a given moment, the person who is not asking or answering observes and provides extra input where needed. Six powerful questions you could ask:

1. How are you? (We're looking for the real answer here, not pleasantries)
2. What are you celebrating/what's working?
3. What challenges are you experiencing?
4. What do you plan to do about/what are some ways you could address these challenges? (This is often the beginning of a longer conversation in which the coaching partners help draw out possible solutions from the partner being coached.)
5. How can I help you?
6. How can I pray for you?

The coaching partners job is to listen carefully to both the triad member they are coaching and the Holy Spirit in order to guide the conversation well.

Learn How to Coach Each Other

Multiply Vineyard offers coaching and coach training for those interested, as well as many other coaching resources on their website, <http://multiplyvineyard.org/coaching/> . Getting some coaching training is highly recommended for the success of your triad—it has been proven to greatly increase the effectiveness of people who use it time and time again.

4. Resource Sharing

Resources Between Triad Members

A triad framework allows churches to share resources to help make their church plants successful. Resource sharing makes it possible for churches of every size to participate in church planting.

The three perspectives of the established churches also help the church plant identify potential needs and to help fill those needs and leave fewer needs forgotten or overlooked.

How Triads Share Resources

Triads share resources in many different ways to plant churches together. They can share finances, outreach volunteers, worship material, children's resources, and even preaching resources. They can share resources on a permanent or temporary basis, knowing they will not have to do it on their own.

Affinity Groups

Another way triads can work together is to form "affinity groups" among the various ministries in each of the local churches. An affinity group is made up of leaders with a shared passion or expertise from each of the triad member churches. Once those leaders are identified, the pastors invite those group members to begin to meet occasionally to share ideas, resources, and relationship.

For example, if a triad is working toward launching a new church plant, they could develop an affinity group with key leaders from the kids ministries of each church. These three kids ministry leaders would then meet together to discuss ways to provide support for the new church plant.

Resources For Triads - Connecting with Small Town Partnership

Help and Support Creating Triads

The Small Town Partnership is here to help and support pastors create triads. Contact us with question or comments about triads and how to develop them: SmallTown@multiplyvineyard.org.

Small Town Webinars

We offer webinars throughout the year on real and practical issues facing church planters in small towns. All Multiply Vineyard webinars are listed at multiplyvineyard.org/events.

Quarterly Coaching

This coming year, for those who will be starting a new triad and those who are currently in a triad, we will be offering quarterly coaching with a trained coach specifically for triads. For more information, contact us at SmallTown@multiplyvineyard.org.