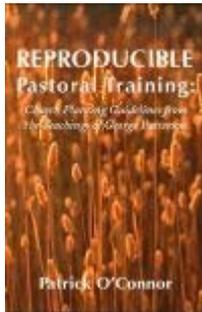


Reproducible Pastoral Training: Church Planting Guidelines from the Teachings of George Patterson



Patrick O'Connor.

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In an era when church-planting movements have become common talk in Christian mission and a reality for some, everyone wants to know how to make such movements happen. Arguably, George Patterson is one the dozen or so most influential CP specialists of his generation, maybe the most. Patrick O'Connor, a protégé of Patterson, has performed a great service by compiling in a single volume many of Patterson's best insights drawn from decades of CP work and training in more than sixty countries.

Patterson, who coined the phrase “obedience-oriented education,” contributed the chapter on saturation church planting in *Perspectives on the World Christian Mission* and authored *Church Multiplication Guide* (Pasadena, William Carey Library). His menu-driven pastoral training materials, written in rural Honduran Spanish, became the widely translated *Train and Multiply* programme now produced by Project WorldReach (www.TrainAndMultiply.com).

Reproducible Pastoral Training is offered as a kind of checklist of 68 guidelines that have wide applicability wherever churches reproduce rapidly and require far more pastors than those that Bible schools can prepare. The keys lie in having current pastors and missionaries empower and personally train, mentor and supervise novice, mostly-unpaid leaders, on the job, as these launch and grow new congregations and cells and train even newer leaders, in turn.

The book's title would perhaps reflect more the genius of the guidelines were it called “Reproductive Pastoral Training,” for the guidelines purposefully and intentionally foster methods that allow leaders to reproduce, whereas any stagnant, unproductive practice can easily prove “reproducible”.

The Guidelines:

1. Permit the setting to shape your methods.
2. Let the right people do the work.
3. Follow proven guidelines to gather flocks.
4. Spy out the land.
5. Bond with the people and their culture.

6. Form and train the right kind of task group.
7. Find the receptive vein within a society.
8. Find a hospitable “person of peace”.
9. Proclaim the good news with a power that keeps it flowing.
10. Pray for healing of body, heart and soul.
11. Let seekers and new believers host harvesting meetings.
12. Use stories and the arts to teach with greater effect.
13. Find pointers to Christ in pagan lore.
14. Reach entire families for Christ.
15. Baptize without delaying for legalistic reasons.
16. Make disciples in a New Testament way.
17. Worship and break bread in a way that fits small flocks.
18. Train shepherding elders.
19. Teach the Bible biblically.
20. Promote dynamic interaction in small groups.
21. Develop all activities that God requires a flock to do.
22. Oversee work in a region in a liberating, reproductive way.
23. Evaluate results with ruthless honesty.
24. Let everyone in their flock serve in a vital ministry.
25. Lead with the Spirit’s power; do not simply enforce rules.
26. Cultivate the fruit of the Spirit.
27. Listen as the Lord speaks through His Word.
28. Watch out! Here come wolves!
29. Resist demons in a biblical way.
30. Let the poor give sacrificially.
31. Equip lay workers.
32. Let children do serious ministry.
33. Organize women for significant ministry.
34. Dramatize biblical events.
35. Build mutually edifying relationships.
36. Boldly affirm the Almighty’s forgiveness.
37. Connect Jesus’ commission with His command.
38. Keep church body balanced; avoid stressing pet ministries.
39. Let God’s Spirit play the midwife as flocks reproduce.
40. Envision what God will enable his people to do in pioneer fields.
41. Mentor in the background in order to sustain genuine apostolic succession.
42. Encourage flocks to follow God’s rules rather than man’s.
43. Make sure mission funds meet real needs.
44. Lead humbly and firmly.
45. Let a big church form tiny ones within it.
46. Let house churches and cells reproduce normally.
47. Organize for dynamic body life in the way that Scripture prescribes.
48. Create interchurch cooperation and friendship.
49. When storms rage, stay focused on crucial objectives.
50. Send the right harvesters to the right fields.
51. Apply God’s oil to rusty organization.
52. Tap others’ experience to solve snags with a trouble shooting chart.
53. Train new shepherds to obey Jesus first.
54. Learn and do God’s Word; teach integrated units.
55. Listen to flocks and shepherds before instructing them.

56. Keep a useful balance between the classroom and mentoring.
57. Give unbiased career guidance.
58. List optional studies in a training menu.
59. Deal prudently with movements to Christ within other religions.
60. Follow up mission courses with useful action.
61. Mentor workers with proper authority.
62. Write training materials that fit specific fields.
63. Identify servants with a shepherd's heart.
64. Discern how and how long to mentor.
65. Equip sending churches like the one in Antioch.
66. Decide wisely who should mentor new leaders.
67. Commission and send out workers.
68. Uphold a high view of the flocks.

The biblical character of the guidelines appears clear enough and most are illustrated or supported from the experiences of Patterson, O'Connor and others. This book is not, however, a scientific study of how current church planting movements grow, nor does it propose an ideal curriculum in one size that fits all. David Garrison, in *Church Planting Movements*, demoted mentored training programmes to "a common factor" rather than a universal. But, then, if mentored training facilitates CPMs far more commonly than does traditional, classroom-confined education, then let us do both!

George Patterson continues to consult internationally and invites correspondence at MentorAndMultiply@gmail.com while Patrick O'Connor (poconnor@optima.hn) helps Hondurans extend Christ's kingdom in Latin America.