

# KEY DEFINITIONS FOR A DISCIPLE-MAKING CULTURE

A Supplement to Chapter 3 of *Disciple-Making Culture* by Brandon Guindon

Creating and maintaining a disciple-making culture requires unity around language. Below you will see the list of terms and definitions that we use at Real Life Ministries Texas. These definitions reflect how *we* define them. The goal of this resource, though, is to help *you* define terms with *your* team for *your* context.

To help you work through your own list of key terms and definitions, I have provided here five questions to guide you. These questions will help you frame the discussion at your church. The end result is to help you establish culture. Feel free to use our list as much or as little as you see fit. Answer the questions below on a separate sheet of paper.

## How to Create Your Team's Terms and Definitions

1. **List your current disciple-making terms.** What are the top ten most critical words that you use in your church or ministry that frame your discussions around disciple-making? Create that list. You may want to brainstorm this list with your team or staff. If you get input from others, distill your list down to the top ten most common and key terms your leaders use in your disciple-making conversations.
2. **Understand your team's current definitions.** You've got your list of terms, so ask your staff, elders, or ministry team leaders to write out how they would define each term you have listed. As you read over their definitions, pay attention to the differences in language. As a team, begin a discussion as you work toward unity on these terms. A word of caution: People are sometimes attached to their definition, and you will need to keep an open dialogue to help your team work toward unity. Encourage input, yes, but work toward singular definitions your church or ministry will be able to stand on when you finish this process.
3. **When finalizing terms and definitions, consider how these terms are used in the Bible.** For each word, list verses where the term or concept is used. Look at these biblical contexts to ensure your terms and definitions are consistent with the Bible.
4. **List the areas of ministry and life where you will use these terms in an intentional way.** For example, if you define the term "disciple," how would you illustrate the definition of a disciple in a sermon? How would you define it on the street? Or another possibility: How would you use your list of terms on your church or ministry's website?
5. **As a team, set goals for this list of terms.** These goals may include: Where will the terms be visible to the church or ministry? (For example, will they be used in any print publications, websites, ministry plans, membership classes, or staff job descriptions?) When will you begin using these terms as your consistent language to articulate disciple-making in your church? How will you pass these terms and definitions on to the other leaders of your church?

## Our Definitions as an Example

Again, feel free to adapt these and make them your own, or start from scratch! These just offer you one example of critical terms and definitions.

**Disciple:** One who is following Christ, is being changed by Christ, and is committed to the mission of Christ. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19 (NIV)

**The Gospel** is this:

- The Kingdom of God has come through Jesus of Nazareth to restore relationship with mankind. He is the Christ, the King, God’s one and only Son.
- He died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and was resurrected on the third day according to the scriptures.
- In *his* great love and by *his* amazing grace, God our Father saves everyone who *repents* of their sin, *believes* in him, and *follows* Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- When King Jesus returns on the last day for *his* Church, all who have been restored and followed him will enter into the eternal Kingdom of God.

**Discipleship:** The process of growing spiritually as a disciple.

**Disciple-Making:** The process that you, the disciple maker, engage in when investing in the lives of those God calls you to disciple.

**Small Group:** A consistent gathering of three to eighteen people learning and applying the Word of God for the purpose of Christian spiritual growth. The group is led by a spiritually mature, intentional leader. Small Groups consist of Men’s Groups, Women’s Groups, and Everyone Groups.

- **Women’s Group:** A Small Group that is made up of women only, married or single.
- **Men’s Group:** A Small Group that is made up of men only, married or single.
- **Everyone Group:** A Small Group that is made up of both men and women, married or single.

**Small Group Leader:** A volunteer who is currently leading a Small Group. This person is a Spiritual Parent or Young Adult.

**Apprentice:** A volunteer who is being mentored by a Small Group leader in preparation to lead his own Small Group. This person often takes on some of the duties of the leader while learning to care for his own group.

**Small Groups Pastor or Director:** Paid pastoral staff who oversee a given segment of Small Groups within the church body.

**Small Group Coach:** A person or couple who shepherds, supports, and trains those Small Group leaders assigned to them by the Small Groups Pastor or Director.

**Connected:** A person who regularly attends a Small Group and regularly attends Weekend Services.

**Unconnected:** A person who does not attend a Small Group, yet regularly attends Weekend Services.

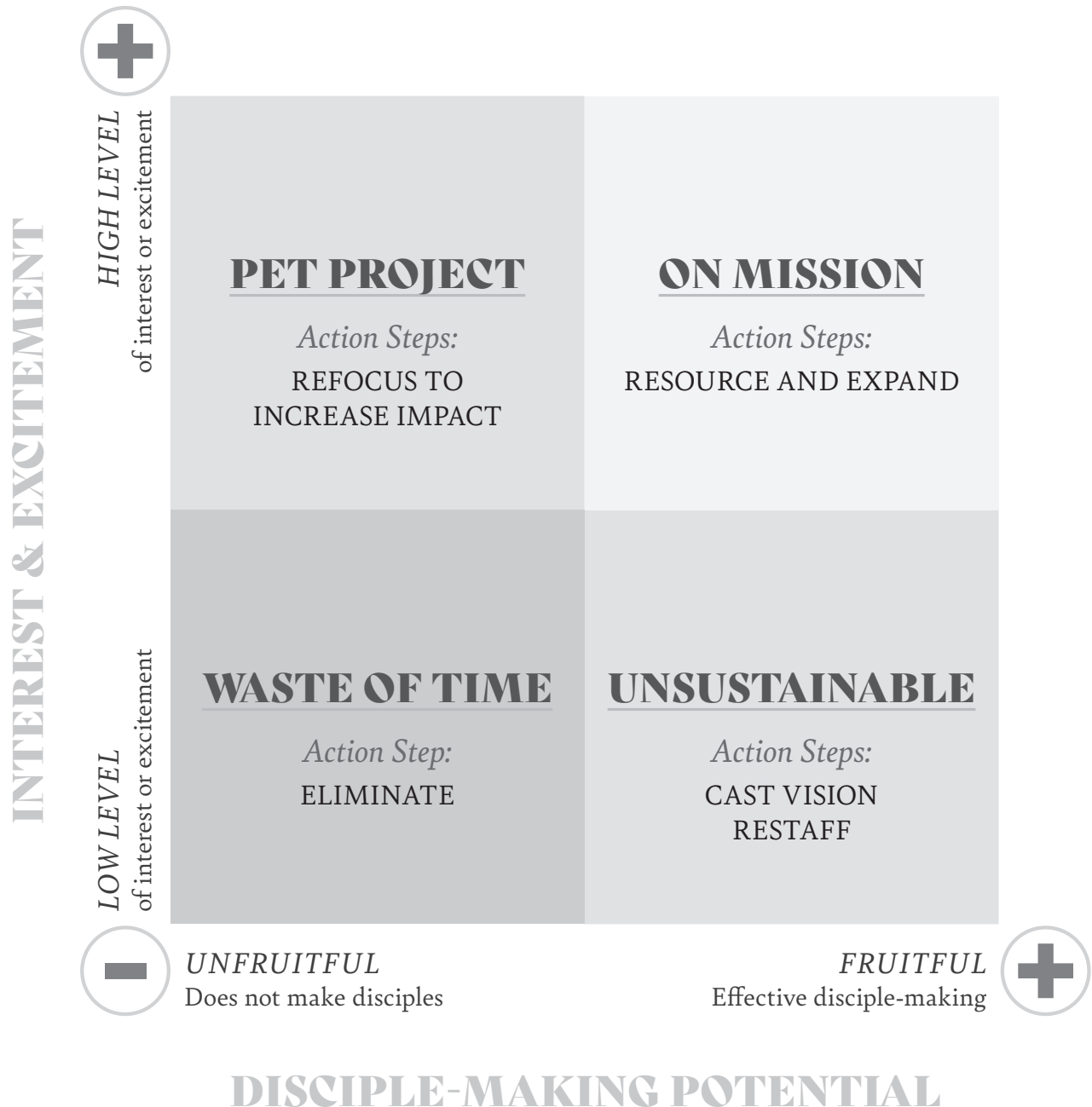
**Disconnected:** A person who formerly connected in a Small Group, but no longer attends.

# THE PRUNE IT WORKSHEET

A Supplement to Chapter 7 of *Disciple-Making Culture* by Brandon Guindon

For each ministry area in your church or organization, make a list of its major projects and events.

Use the “Prune It” chart below to plot on the following page each item you listed. Do this based on the level of interest and excitement for the item among staff, volunteers, and those who participate (or do not!) and the fruitfulness of the item (its disciple-making potential).

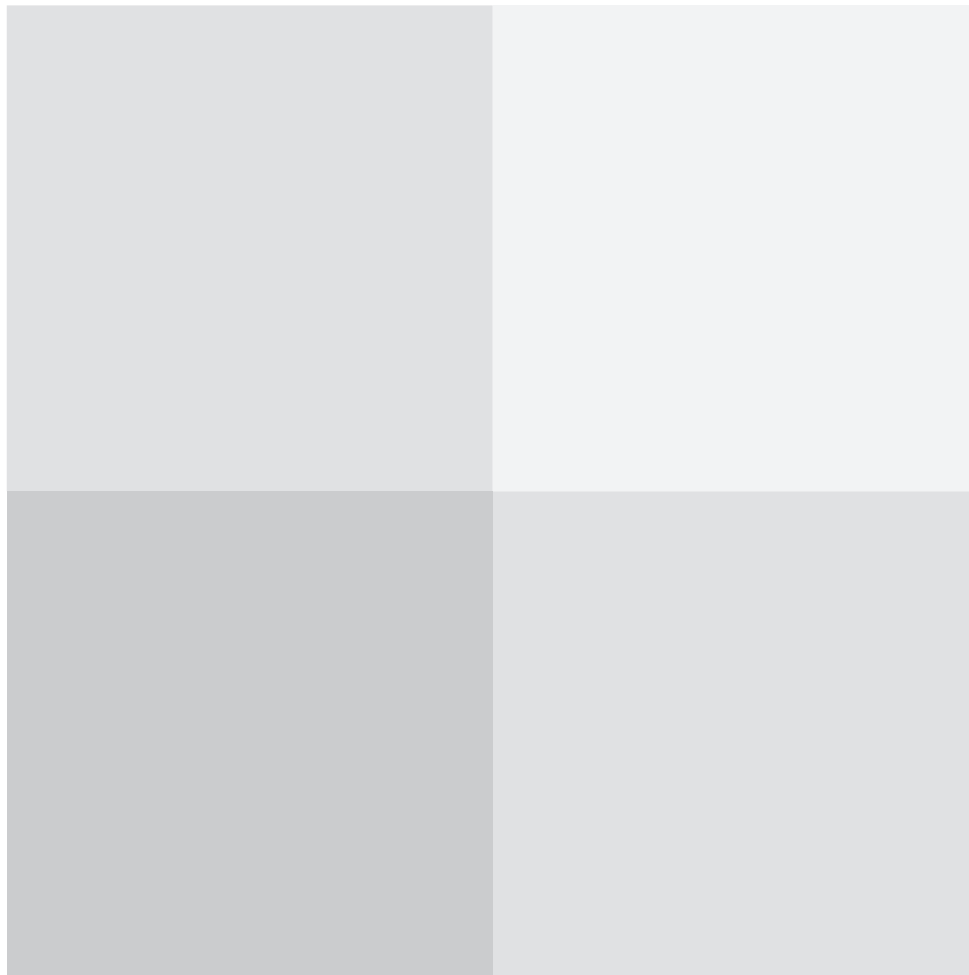


# INTEREST & EXCITEMENT



HIGH LEVEL  
of interest or excitement

LOW LEVEL  
of interest or excitement



**UNFRUITFUL**  
Does not make disciples

**FRUITFUL**  
Effective disciple-making



## DISCIPLE-MAKING POTENTIAL

**For items that fall in the “On Mission” quadrant, answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper:**

What can you do with additional budget allocation?

What would it take to increase the frequency or capacity of this? Is that feasible?

How can you involve more leaders or volunteers in this?

**For items that fall in the “Pet Project” quadrant, answer these questions:**

How can you improve follow-up and engagement?

How can you refocus for disciple-making impact?

How can you involve or collaborate with other ministry areas?

**For items in the “Unsustainable” quadrant, answer these questions:**

Who is most excited about this item and why?

Should this be reassigned to a different ministry, staff person, or leader?

Which trusted volunteer or leader has a passion or gifting in this area?

**For items in the “Waste of Time” quadrant, answer these questions:**

Who will be impacted when you eliminate this item?

How does communication of your plans need to be approached? (Who? What? When?)

How can you most effectively reallocate the resources from this item toward disciple-making projects?

# SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES FOR A HEALTHY CULTURE

A Supplement to Chapter 8 of *Disciple-Making Culture* by Brandon Guindon

## **Confidentiality**

By keeping things that are shared in the group confidential, we build trust and show value to each person. Confidentiality can prevent gossip, which values only a person's story; Jesus always valued the person above their story or their sin.

## **Don't Rescue and Don't Fix**

When someone is sharing something deeply personal or painful (or both), there can be a tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or their situation. Often this will cause people to stop sharing and result in their not going as deep as they might have otherwise gone. Resist the temptation to rescue people. Try to hear what people are sharing without trying to fix them. If they want your advice, they will ask for it. You may want to take time later to ask if you can offer some advice.

## **No Crosstalk**

Be considerate of others as they share. Don't have side conversations. Trust is built in the moments when everyone feels like they are being listened to and heard by the entire group. Treat others in the group as you would want to be treated.

## **Use Humor Responsibly**

Fun is an essential part of small groups; however, keep sarcastic comments, jokes, and laughter to a minimum to allow for an atmosphere of authenticity and vulnerability.

## **Give Everyone a Chance to Share**

Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Encourage everyone to participate in group discussions.

## **Use "I" Statements**

During small group, we want to hear your personal thoughts and perspectives. Using "I" statements to answer discussion questions allows you to speak for yourself rather than generalizing by using terms such as "them," "the church," "us," or "we."

## **Fight for Relationship**

Relationship reaches a whole new level when conflict is resolved in a healthy manner. When conflict or sin issues arise between group members, commit to fighting for the relationship and discuss the struggle with the person you are in conflict with, or you may want to seek wise counsel on how to resolve the conflict with that person.

# SAMPLE BUDGET PERCENTAGES FOR DISCIPLE-MAKING CHURCHES

A Supplement to Chapter 13 of *Disciple-Making Culture* by Brandon Guindon

The typical church budget functions with little to no focus on how to fund disciple-making. It is developed in a culture that is either show-based or event-based, and its value is rooted in the “stuff” it takes to get people in the seats. When money is spent, immediately the need arises for more to keep the “bigger and better” or the “next best” idea going.

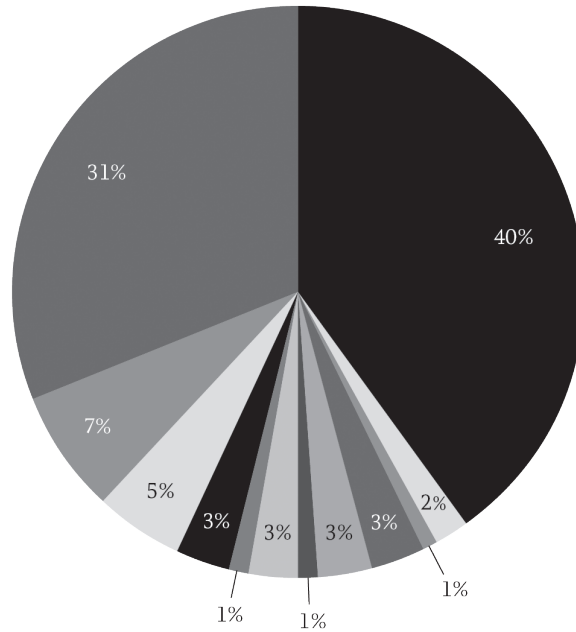
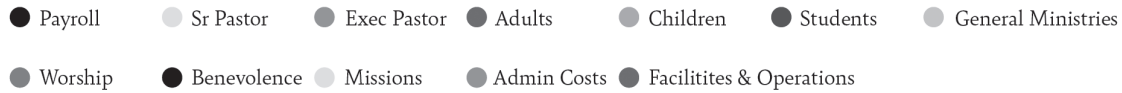
A disciple-making culture budget begins and ends with the question, “How are we going to make disciples with the money that we spend?” A disciple-making culture budget values people over things. It puts the money into hiring disciple-makers who use their ministry budgets to make more disciples. Make your budget about kingdom outcomes, which come from a disciple-making culture, which is based on Jesus’ methods for making disciples.

Similar to our personal expenditures, a look at your church budget will reveal what we value most. As Jesus teaches, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:21, ESV). For your current annual budget, calculate below the percentage spent on payroll, facilities, and operations, along with each of your major ministry areas. Then, look at the sample budget on the next page to help you answer on a separate sheet of paper the questions on the following page. This will help you evaluate the disciple-making power of your budget.

Category	Percentage	Amount
Payroll		
Senior Pastor Expenses		
Executive Pastor Expenses		
Adult Ministries		
Children’s Ministry		
Student Ministry		
General Ministries		
Worship		
Benevolence		
Missions		
Administrative Costs		
Facilities and Operations		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	



## YEARLY BUDGET PERCENTAGES



## SAMPLE \$500,000 BUDGET

Category	Percentage	Amount
Payroll	40%	\$200,000
Senior Pastor Expenses	2%	\$10,000
Executive Pastor Expenses	1%	\$5,000
Adult Ministries	3%	\$15,000
Children's Ministry	3%	\$15,000
Student Ministry	1%	\$5,000
General Ministries	3%	\$15,000
Worship	1%	\$5,000
Benevolence	3%	\$15,000
Missions	5%	\$25,000
Administrative Costs	7%	\$35,000
Facilities and Operations	31%	\$155,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

# DISCIPLE-MAKING BUDGET QUESTIONS

How do your current budget *percentages* compare with the sample budget we've provided here?

What are three areas (ministries, projects, or line items) in your current budget that do not directly fund disciple-making? (These are the areas you could cut back.)

To which areas do you need to allocate more funding to facilitate disciple-making?

What other changes need to occur when you reallocate resources in this manner?

What is the potential impact for your church? List both positives and negatives.

How can your church take the first step toward funding disciple-making culture *today*?