

Endorsements from the Field

“Sean Reynolds has created a practical guide for introducing, developing, and polishing ministry coordination skills. Grounded in theological reflection, organizational development, adult learning principles, and an understanding of the challenges of contemporary church ministry, *Multiply the Ministry* is indeed a ‘new wineskins’ approach to ministry formation. Parishes, campus ministry departments, outreach project centers, and ministry formation programs will all find this to be a fresh and invaluable resource.” **Ellen Doyle, OSU, executive director, National Association of Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA)**

“Sean Reynolds promises, and he produces. He has delivered a work that is eminently practical and clear. The constructs on which he bases his hands-on tips are solid and easily applicable. *Multiply the Ministry* will be immensely helpful to anyone responsible for overseeing and developing effective parish ministry.” **George Wilson, SJ, Management Design Institute, Cincinnati, Ohio**

“Finally, a resource to support the changing image of ministry coordinators! Sean Reynolds provides a valuable resource for all those who are ‘enablers’ of ministry on a parish or diocesan level. *Multiply the Ministry* includes the processes and handouts for implementing a leadership development system and for creating the structures that sustain ministry. Additionally, this is a useful resource for mentoring individuals or groups into effective ministry roles. Ministry trainers will find this resource helpful in designing specific training sessions and more extensive ministry formation programs.” **Robert J. McCarty, executive director, National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)**

Multiply the Ministry

A Practical Guide for Grassroots Ministry Empowerment

Sean P. Reynolds

**Saint Mary's Press
Christian Brothers Publications
Winona, Minnesota**



Genuine recycled paper with 10% post-consumer waste.
Printed with soy-based ink.

The publishing team included Karen Emmerich and Marilyn Kielbasa, development editors; Laurie Berg-Shaner, copy editor; Barbara Bartelson, production editor; Hollace Storkel, typesetter; Cindi Ramm, design director; Cären Yang, art director; Kenneth Hey, cover designer; manufactured by the production services department of Saint Mary's Press.

The acknowledgments continue on page 128.

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Printed in the United States of America

Printing: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Year: 2009 08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01

ISBN 0-88489-374-X

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Reynolds, Sean P.

Multiply the ministry : a practical guide for grassroots ministry empowerment / Sean P. Reynolds.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-88489-374-X (pbk.)

1. Lay ministry—Catholic Church—Study and teaching. I. Title.

BX1920 .R46 2001

253—dc21

Dedicated to the hundreds of ministry volunteers it has been my honor and privilege to train throughout the years. Their generosity, self-sacrifice, and heart for ministry are the living wellspring of inspiration for this manual.

Contents

Personal Acknowledgments	9
Introduction	11
Chapter 1 Look to the Master	14
Exercise 1–A: Scriptural Reflection on the Four Discipleship Roles	19
Exercise 1–B: Personal Reflection on the Four Discipleship Roles	20
Chapter 2 The Dance of Discipleship	21
Exercise 2–A: Understanding the Adult Learner	32
Exercise 2–B: Reflection on the Stages of Discipleship	33
Exercise 2–C: Reflection on the Four Leader or Trainer Roles	35
Exercise 2–D: Which Trainer Hat Shall I Wear?	36
Chapter 3 The Coordinator as Instructor	39
Worksheet 3–1: Developing a Competency Model	52
Worksheet 3–2: Designing a Training Session	54
Chapter 4 The Coordinator as Coach	56
Exercise 4–A: Offering Constructive Feedback	64
Exercise 4–B: A Problem-Solving Model for Coaches	66
Exercise 4–C: Exploring the Six Coaching Responses	67
Chapter 5 The Coordinator as Learning Facilitator	70
Exercise 5–A: Getting to Yes: A Personal Reflection	79
Exercise 5–B: Developing a Personal Learning Plan	81
Exercise 5–C: Learning Methods	82
Chapter 6 The Coordinator as Helper	85
Exercise 6–A: Organizing Theological Reflection	96
Exercise 6–B: A Process of Theological Reflection	97
Worksheet 6–1: Describing Ministry Experiences: Sample Formats	99

Chapter 7	Coordinator Super Skills	103
	Exercise 7–A: Delegation: A Personal Assessment	115
	Exercise 7–B: Conceptualizing and Designing Your Ministry Structures	117
	Exercise 7–C: If You Build It, They Will Come!	119
	Worksheet 7–1: A Menu of Needs Assessment Approaches	120
	Worksheet 7–2: Designing Your Leadership Development System	122

Personal Acknowledgments

First, a note of appreciation to Marilyn Kielbasa of Saint Mary's Press; this manual was originally our mutual brainchild. Together Marilyn and I codirected the office of youth ministry of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. As we observed the most effective church ministers—whether they were religious educators, youth ministers, or pastoral associates—we noticed that they had the knack of multiplying their ministry through the heart, head, and hands of others. So together we assembled a set of training materials designed to help ministers give their knowledge and skills away. Those materials became the core of this manual. After departing for Saint Mary's Press, Marilyn continued her encouragement from afar. I thank her for all her support, and credit her as a "cocreator" of the vision contained here.

Second, I am indebted to all the ministry trainees—participants in countless workshops, retreats, and supervisory and coaching sessions over the past twenty-five years—who have placed their trust in me as a minister and a trainer. I hope that this manual will reflect faithfully many of the lessons that I have learned from them along the way.

Third, I have to express my gratitude to the many who have trained and mentored me in ministry. I have had the privilege of standing on many broad shoulders. Although there are too many to name them all, two people deserve special mention. The first is Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, who became both a friend and a spiritual father to me when I was a teenager. Richard stirred my dormant faith into a passion for God's Reign and started me on my path to ministry. The second is Kevin Jones-Prendergast. My relationship with Kevin stands as living proof of the model of ministry discipleship at the heart of this manual: initially my trainer, mentor, and supervisor, Kevin is now my dear friend, a frequent ministry collaborator, and a source of great wisdom, inspiration, and support.

Finally, and most important, I am deeply thankful for the support and encouragement that I have received from my wife, Leah, through nearly twenty years of enduring a full-time church minister's crazy schedule—and especially as this manual was being written. The hours spent compiling this manual were hours largely subtracted from my time at home with her and my sons, Patrick and Nicholas. For their patience, their love, and their support, I will be forever grateful.

Introduction

Why Multiply the Ministry?

Jesus' disciples became effective leaders, preachers, teachers, and healers in pursuit of the Reign of God. Yet they began as simple laborers, fishermen, and the like. In a remarkably short time, Jesus called, molded, and mentored his "volunteers" into a "team" whose efforts not only launched the church but quite literally transformed the face of Western civilization.

Most of us would be thrilled to work a similar small miracle of transformation in the parishes and faith communities in which we serve. Too often transformation seems elusive, or simply beyond us. We pray for it, long for it, and perhaps even flirt with burnout for the ministry's sake. Sometimes we work ourselves silly or sick. Our earnest commitment and determination are not in question; yet why the limited fruit?

Somehow we need to learn to do what Jesus did. We need to learn from the Master the art of *multiplying our ministry*. This manual is for those who by vision and intention or by sheer necessity must call, mentor, and form those who would follow us in our ministries. Some have the title ministry coordinator. Most do not—even though they must function as ministry coordinators as they go about the jobs of director of religious education, pastoral minister, youth minister, liturgical minister, evangelization coordinator, campus minister, catechetical leader, and so on. If the only way for you to effectively provide a given ministry is through the hands, head, and heart of volunteers, then you are a "coordinator of ministry" regardless of your title, and this manual is written to you and for you.

It is no secret that our church is currently suffering a crisis in ministry. However one understands the origins of this crisis, we in the trenches of Catholic ministry are faced with a troubling reality: our harvests are plentiful, but our laborers are mainly volunteers who are:

- **New to ministry**, with willingness and potential—but with widely varied knowledge, skills, and experience.
- **Busy**; they are able to devote only a limited amount of time and energy to learning and growing in ministry.

- **Often lacking in ministry competence or confidence—or both.** Even those volunteers who are accomplished, competent, and confident in their business or civic roles need help in translating their capabilities to the ministry setting.

As the economy of ministry in the Catholic church continues its swing from clerical and religious ministry to lay ministry, today's parish leaders face the task of recruiting and forming lay volunteers for diverse ministerial roles to meet a vast array of ministerial needs.

This new cadre of lay volunteers demands a “new wineskins” approach to ministry formation because the “old wineskins” approach of years of academic education and field formation simply does not fit the lives and capabilities of our current volunteers. We need fresh approaches to ministry formation that fit the busy life of laypeople who have jobs and families, school and civic responsibilities. It is this need for a new approach, a fresh vision of volunteer ministry formation, that this manual hopes to address.

Multiply the Ministry is designed to assist all those who are in the midst of making the challenging transition from the role of minister to that of ministry coordinator. Because this transition is a recent development, few current ministers have been comprehensively trained in the skills that ministry coordination requires. Most of us need to find ways to develop those skills as we fulfill our daily responsibilities in the church.

From Here to There

Multiply the Ministry began as a curriculum with accompanying materials for a weekend workshop of the same title. Workshop participants found the materials to be both practical and enormously helpful in achieving their goal to become more effective ministry coordinators. The weekend workshop has since been expanded into an eight-session, twenty-hour workshop series that is regularly offered to ministers in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

This manual makes these resources available to the broader ministry community, in the belief that others will find them to be relevant, practical, and helpful. The manual responds to these critical questions:

- How might the tools of adult education be adapted to our goal of multiplying our various ministries?
- What concepts and tools are available to us from the world of business management and organizational leadership that can be applied or adapted to discipleship?
- How can this work be fashioned to offer real help to pastors, youth ministers, directors of religious education, pastoral associates, and so forth, by offering concepts and tools that are immediately practical and applicable?
- How can all this be pulled together into a comprehensive vision of volunteer ministry development that offers practical help in dealing effectively with each of the stages of development?

The approach of this manual is simple and straightforward. It presents information from sound, reliable resources in a user-friendly way, as well as exercises that apply the information in practical ways.

There are two things this manual will not do. First, it will not explore the topics of volunteer organization, recruitment, and management in any depth (although chapter 7 addresses these in a limited way). Many resources that thoroughly explore these topics are widely available.

Rather, the primary focus of this manual is on training and developing volunteers once they are recruited. The majority of church-based volunteer efforts seem to miss this critical piece. They spend a great deal of energy on recruiting and little on volunteer development. All too often volunteering is a sink-or-swim proposition!

Second, this manual is not intended to replace diocesan training and certification programs. Rather, it is meant as a complementary piece, either to enhance these offerings or to aid parish staff in developing volunteers who are unable to avail themselves of such offerings.

I am pleased to offer a manual that takes a hands-on approach to the formation of volunteer ministers. Of course, the principles and tools included here are also relevant to the formation of professional ministers—particularly when they have to learn a new specialization “on the job.”

However, I specifically have in mind professional ministry staffs who must call, organize, develop, and support volunteer ministers in order to fulfill Jesus' great commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

In the same way that Jesus passed his ministry on to his followers, in order for our ministries to endure and flourish, we must learn to train and nurture our followers: volunteer lay ministers who also happen to be accountants, bricklayers, moms and dads, secretaries, paramedics, and merchants. For their sake, and for the sake of our church, we must make ministry formation opportunities immediately available, user friendly, time efficient, and effective. It is hoped that this manual will assist in that task.

Look to the Master

The Emerging Role of the Ministry Coordinator

When I first began in ministry over twenty years ago, the task was straightforward, if not easy: I had to learn the ministry (youth ministry in my case). Things have changed, as most current professional church staff will attest to. Not only are they called on to be experts in their own ministry specialization but also to serve as ministry coordinators. In pursuit of a variety of ministry goals, they design and convene commissions, teams, and task forces, and build leadership development systems for recruiting, training, organizing, and managing volunteers.

Many seasoned ministers look back wistfully to “the old days, when we just did the ministry and didn’t have to manage it!” Ministry was once akin to learning to play a single instrument, but now it is more like learning to conduct an orchestra, creating a symphony of ministry instead of our own isolated, individual riffs.

As a result of these changes, ministry coordinators need to develop expertise in their given ministry specialization, and they also must do the following:

- envision and build a ministry organization of teams, committees, and task forces—organizational groups that plan and deliver ministry
- write job descriptions that detail ministry roles in the organization
- recruit, orient, and train people to fill the roles
- nurture the development of the ministers as they progress in their knowledge, understanding, and skills
- as the ministry grows, reconceptualize the ministry organization and manage the transition from a simpler to a more complex structure

To meet these responsibilities, church ministers need to be competent in volunteer management, adult education, adult formation, and organizational development.

The transformation from minister to ministry coordinator seems to be happening everywhere in our church. Directors of religious education (DREs) spend the bulk of their time recruiting, organizing, training, and coordinating catechists. Aware of the limits of their individual efforts, the most effective youth ministers are fast becoming organizational specialists who respond to emerging needs with teams of volunteer ministers. Pastoral associates draw together an array of ministry teams to address particular needs. Campus ministers train and coordinate retreat teams, liturgy teams, outreach teams, peer ministry teams, and so forth.

Searching the Gospels for Jesus’ Way of Empowerment

In their landmark book *Management of Organizational Behavior*, Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard pioneered what they later termed *situational leadership theory*, which revolutionized modern thinking about leadership. The theory suggests that there are four distinct leadership styles—telling, selling, participating, and delegating—each of which is most helpful at a certain stage of a follower’s development. The *telling* style is most useful when dealing with novices—those with little competence or confidence. The *selling* style is most useful in dealing with those who have matured beyond the beginning stage; they still need significant direction but are ready for greater involvement in decisions. The *participating* style is most helpful in dealing with followers whose growing maturity, competence, and confidence have prepared them to participate in and take ownership of decisions. The *delegating* style is most helpful in dealing with those who have high competence and confidence. In this circumstance the leader can simply delegate decision making to followers.

When it occurred to me to correlate this model of leadership with Jesus’ approach to forming ministers as described in the Gospels, I grew very excited. Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership theory provided a way to think about how Jesus’ style of leadership changed and developed as his followers developed. The scriptural record suggests that Jesus knew two thousand years ago what students of leadership discovered only recently: that as his disciples matured in the ministry, they needed a particular kind and quality of leadership from him.

Jesus was a *telling* leader when he initially *instructed* his followers. Jesus was a *selling* leader when he *coached* his disciples. Jesus was a *participating* leader when he *facilitated* their ownership of the ministry. Jesus was a *delegating* leader when he *helped* them take on his great commission. The Scriptures chronicle how Jesus demonstrated each of these four leadership roles.

Jesus as Instructor

The initial role that Jesus played in the development of his followers seems to have been that of an instructor:

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit. . . .” (Matthew 5:1–3)

The scriptural record suggests that Jesus used his ability to teach and instruct followers to initiate his ministry of discipleship. Certainly people were attracted to him because of the miracles he performed, but his followers stayed to hear—and to learn to live—his words.

Jesus as Coach

It is perhaps most clearly presented in the synoptic Gospels that after their initial instruction, the followers of Jesus were sent out to practice what they had learned:

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, “Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. . . .” They departed, and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere. (Luke 9:1–6)

The synoptic Gospels suggest that Jesus did not keep his disciples at his feet. Rather, his vision was to multiply his ministry by sending out his disciples to do what he did: teach and heal. This vision evidently required Jesus to spend time exclusively with his followers, preparing them with specific directions about what they were to do—and were not to do. In this sense, Jesus acted as something of a coach: he worked directly with a smaller team of followers and offered them particular advice and suggestions, as well as feedback upon their return:

The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!” He said to them, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:17–20)

In the role of coach, Jesus worked closely with smaller groups of followers, offering them specific guidance on how to do what he did. This was different from his earlier role as instructor, which was more universal and immediately practical.

Jesus as Facilitator

As the end of his earthly life approached, Jesus’ relationship with his followers underwent another transformation:

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer,

because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.” (John 15:12–16)

His disciples, or servants, Jesus now calls his friends, “because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.” In this, the disciples have in effect become Jesus’ coworkers, or partners.

In the following poignant lines, Jesus at the Last Supper prays for his disciples, preparing them to carry on without him:

Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. . . . And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. (John 17:7–11)

Jesus identifies a profound transition in his relationship with his followers: where once they were dependent on his leadership, they now must learn to take his place and stand faithfully in the world without his immediate presence. Jesus helps his disciples understand and cope with his imminent absence, reassuring them that they will not be abandoned or left in sorrow:

Because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:6–7)

Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them:

Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me”? Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. (John 16:19–20)

Jesus has moved from his role as a coach to that of facilitator: his job is to make it easier for the disciples to stand on their own, without him. His words and actions are directed toward assisting his followers in carrying on after his departure.

Jesus as Helper

In one of the foregoing quotations, Jesus promises the coming of an advocate, which also may be translated as *helper*. And so the cycle is now complete: the Master has instructed and coached his followers. He has facilitated their ability to minister on their own. Finally, after his Resurrection, he commissions and authorizes them to go and bear fruit in the knowledge that they will not be left alone:

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18–20)

This fourth and final role Jesus fills in absentia. He has commissioned and empowered his disciples in effect to *be Jesus* to the world! This is accomplished not by their own power but by the power of the Holy Spirit, the helper promised by Jesus.

The stories described in the Acts of the Apostles stand as a powerful testament to Jesus’ way of empowerment. The disciples, formed by Jesus and fortified by the Holy Spirit, founded a faith that would span centuries, cultures, and continents:

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the good will of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2:43–47)

The Empowering Roles of Jesus

The scriptural record suggests that Jesus’ strategy was to multiply his ministry. Further, he knew how to make the strategy a reality by adopting roles appropriate to the development of his followers.

- **Instructor.** Appropriate for beginning disciples—those learning about Jesus and ministry
- **Coach.** Appropriate for apprentice disciples—those learning how to do what Jesus does
- **Facilitator.** Appropriate for partner disciples—those sharing as friends in the ministry of Jesus
- **Helper, or Advocate.** Appropriate for master disciples—those responsible for carrying on the ministry of discipleship

Jesus understood how to nurture his followers in their varying stages of readiness for ministry. He was able to move from role to role as needed, as his followers developed. Our task as ministry leaders is to develop the same capacity to understand the unique needs of those who follow us, and to choose the roles that best meet their needs.

The next chapter discusses the relationship between the ministry leader and the ministry learner. It describes the “dance” that develops as the ministry leader moves through the four roles in response to the ministry learner’s needs.

Subsequent chapters deal with the roles themselves, exploring how we might become—like Jesus—exemplary instructors, coaches, facilitators, and helpers.

The following exercises are designed to further assist in a study of the Scriptures, toward a better understanding of Jesus’ way of empowerment through the four key roles.

Exercise 1 –A

Scriptural Reflection on the Four Discipleship Roles

Slowly page through the Gospel of Matthew from beginning to end, refreshing your memory of the stories there. Pay special attention to Jesus’ interactions with his followers. Can you find more examples of the four discipleship roles described in this chapter? Jot down the citations and a few words to describe their contents.

Instructor

Coach

Facilitator

Helper

Personal Reflection on the Four Discipleship Roles

Take a few minutes of quiet time to reflect on your own strengths and limitations in relation to the four roles that Jesus assumed so masterfully. What strengths do you bring to each of the roles? In what ways could you be more like Jesus?

Instructor

My strengths:

Ways I could be more like Jesus:

Coach

My strengths:

Ways I could be more like Jesus:

Facilitator

My strengths:

Ways I could be more like Jesus:

Helper

My strengths:

Ways I could be more like Jesus: