

Regarding your overall Men's Ministry plan, some valuable lessons I have learned:

***Always start with prayer.** This is God's ministry, not yours. Pray for guidance, strength, protection, and for the right brothers to come alongside of you. (The Lord's Prayer is good here as well because you will be tempted as well as spiritually attacked.)

***Your first year will be filled with bumps in the road.** Plan on it, don't get discouraged. A lot of testing is done the first year.

***Don't do it on your own.** Ask a small group (3-4 guys) to help you as you formulate your vision, mission, and calendar. Later you will find whether you need more guys to help as your plan is streamlined throughout the first year.

***Get input.** I spend a lot of time doing lunches and coffee, asking guys exactly what they thought we needed in the church.

***Be humble.** Pride simply promotes yourself. A one-man show is NOT a healthy Men's Ministry. The goal is to bring glory to God and to be servant-leaders to men, not self-elevation. Humbleness also will allow men going through challenges to see you as approachable and more willing to open up to you. This will lead to getting "down and dirty" in ministry to affect positive changes in the lives of men which is the major goal.

***Get guys alone.** Men are different by themselves as opposed to being in a group. Lunches and coffee are great ways to get to know guys. These are the opportunities where you will gain credibility and also be able to really give guys a chance to open up. And..., you may make one of those friends who are "closer than a brother."

***Make it a ministry of excellence.** Quality is important. If you are going to have a BBQ, make sure all the fixings are there. If you are setting up websites, make sure they are relevant. If you are doing brochures, make sure they are clear and look up to date. This is not to say that you are running a *production*. What you are saying is that every man your church encounters is important and you want your work to reflect your attitude in your service to them--in whatever manner that produces. If men have families, their time is valuable. If men are to sacrifice their family time, they want to look forward to it as a beneficial ministry that they can get behind.

***Don't try to have a Men's Ministry that "does it all."** The Men's Ministry of your church needs to do what **God** wants, not what you or even different congregations suggest. Although you do need input for direction ([Proverbs 15:22](#) Plans fail for lack of **counsel**, but with **many** advisers they succeed.), there is much to say about knowing the difference between doing what is good (which are MANY things), and doing what is best (which may be FEWER things). You may have a church of several hundred members, yet you may find that the Men's Ministry of your church needs to be relatively small. You may be more satisfied with a single monthly event and 1-3 weekly men's groups. Perhaps you have a church with less than 100 but you notice a larger percentage of the men of the church would like a dynamic men's ministry. They would like a monthly event, several mens groups, a quarterly outreach, a yearly retreat and weekly curriculum. I have seen both. I've seen small churches with small Men's Ministries with high impact and large churches with large men's ministries with low impact. So, you need to know what is having great impact and have the wisdom to know if parts of your ministry need to be cut loose! One thing is for sure though, I

believe EVERY church should have a Men's Ministry. But, it could be as simple as making sure that there are 1-2 weekly men's groups available. We aren't meant to be alone. God designed us to uphold each other, be able to lend an ear, and that we all need counsel from time to time. (I can vouch for that!) So, you can tell that the most important thing is to get GOD'S pulse on what is needed at YOUR CHURCH. It may be more, it may be less. Remember, one of Satan's best tactics is to keep Christians busy (2 Thessalonians 3:11) doing tons of things without really doing anything. Love you guys, and please give me a holler if you want to bounce thoughts off me! - Jim

Suggestions for activities: Golf,
card game nights,
movies,
pizza or BBQ,
football parties,
day hikes with kids,
"Right of Passage" ceremony, and many, many more!

Suggestions for outreach: Love I.N.C. (non-profit to help the needy)
Community cleanup
Help with a Women's Ministry event
Conference-wide project