



MentorNet #67

## THE FOURTH GENERATION

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“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” *2 Timothy 2:1-2*

You have often observed the four generations in this text: (1) Paul, (2) Timothy, (3) faithful men and (4) others, also. Let us look for a moment at that fourth generation which is often absent in multi-tiered training schemes, due to woefully ineffective mentoring.

The common wisdom of reproductive disciple-making to the fourth generation can be expressed in a handful of observations, followed by some recommended guidelines.

### Fourth-Generation Multiplication Observations

1. **No one is a “master trainer” (Paul) until his trainees (Timothies) are training faithful folk (*anthropos*=humans) who are training other (faithful folk), in turn.** Giving an individual a title of Master Trainer, and perhaps a salary to boost his prestige, will not ensure that his trainees train others also. Trained, salaried Pauls and Timothies may work amazing exploits for the Kingdom, but they seldom reproduce themselves in others.
2. **Master trainers rise through the ranks.** They start as faithful folk who accept the thankless task of starting or leading a home church, cell group or little congregation. If they are being coached, mentored or otherwise trained on the job, and they prove willing to follow instructions, applying their lessons on the job, then they prove to be “other” faithful folk. As they pray and seek to help their flock reproduce and undertake to training one or more others, then they graduate to become “faithful folk” who are able to teach others also. When their trainees are training others in turn, then they have been promoted to Timothy status by their faithful service. After another generation comes on, the first in now a Paul, a master trainer.
3. **Most explosive multiplication occurs in the fourth generation and after.** The first generation often comes from outside the local society and lacks both network relationships and deep cultural understanding, both of which are necessary to communicate clearly and effectively. Thus these must invest their vision and mentoring in a small number local folk who must learn to believe and to behave as disciples of Jesus in the face of family opposition. Eventually, these will mature, form and lead a few flocks and raise up a third generation of assistant workers. It these who invest in the 100s and 1000s of grass-root church planters, preachers, evangelists, and leaders of 10s of 1000s of self-multiplying flocks.
4. **Things break down after the third generation.** Whilst the first generation remains foreign and marginal to the society, the second generation typically consists of educated, urban and urbane individuals who respond to outsiders and learn their concepts quickly. Once these become disciples

and trainees of the outsiders, they seek to extend their training to others who normally prove to be younger individuals from their same social background without status or influence. That is where the chain normally stops, for the fourth generation does not think like or respond easily to prodding and coaching of urbane, powerful individuals even though these may have brought them the Good News.

Those who seek to extend their vision and training into the fourth generation and beyond may find it fruitful to respect and apply in an appropriate manner a few guidelines.

### **Fourth-Generation Multiplication Guidelines**

- a. **Hold occasional workshops for current and potential leaders who train others or who are about to start doing so.** Such workshop will demonstrate from Scripture and in practical ways how to pray, to envision, to plan, to initiate, to develop and to extend “training chains” that empower and enable new shepherds of new flocks. The *Train & Multiply* “Activity Guide” and menu-driven pastoral studies can facilitate just such training chains. See under Resources at the end of this document a link to three tested workshop manuals for the training of trainers.
- b. **Start your training chains in the lower classes of the local society or plan with your Timothies to do so.** The extra months or year that it may take to learn a language and make cultural adjustments may bear much fruit. This may prove better than working with urbane youth who understand quickly but have no status, opportunities or interest in lower class populations where explosive growth can happen. There is little prestige in working with low-class folk, but there is great potential for eternal glory.
- c. **Work with adult men from the start.** Herein lies a major obstacle to many outsiders who find that local men talk too fast, easily counter shallow arguments, act and sometimes drink like men, and may even threaten outsiders with violence. Nevertheless, God has prepared some of those gruff, rustic, masculine specimens for eternal life. Once they understand the Good News, they will embrace it and you. Many of them will become the first shepherds of new flocks whom they themselves will draw to Jesus Christ, looking to you for advice, training and coaching.
- d. **Resist recruiting large numbers of volunteers for your training program.** Rather choose faithful men who prove their giftedness and enjoy a good reputation with others. In your mentoring of new leaders, help them to identify others like themselves who can lead, start new cells or churches and train other in turn. It is a law of life and spirit that we will reproduce after our kind. So let us resolve to take the time, long or short, to invest in the kinds of men and women whom others will follow.

### **Recommended**

See tested workshop manuals for training trainers: <<http://www.paul-timothy.net/pages/workshop/>>.

Order P. O'Connor, *Reproducible Pastoral Training*, from a bookshop or at <[www.WCLbooks.com](http://www.WCLbooks.com)>.

Download free CP software, “*Come, Let Us Disciple the Nations*,” from <[www.Paul-Timothy.net/dn/](http://www.Paul-Timothy.net/dn/)>.

Download free mentoring tools and materials for new leaders from <[www.MentorAndMultiply.com](http://www.MentorAndMultiply.com)>.

Find the *Train & Multiply*<sup>®</sup> pastoral training course at <[www.TrainAndMultiply.com](http://www.TrainAndMultiply.com)>.

Order G. Patterson’s *Church Multiplication Guide* from a bookshop or at <[www.WCLbooks.com](http://www.WCLbooks.com)>.

Download pastoral mentoring studies and children's studies from <[www.Paul-Timothy.net](http://www.Paul-Timothy.net)>.

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