



Coaches Playbook

Dear Bayside Groups Coach,

Are you ready for a great adventure? As the Director of Groups at Bayside Lakewood Ranch, I want to personally welcome you to the team!

Thank you for stepping up to the plate to help us care for and assist group leaders! Being a Coach provides you with a front row seat to life change in group leaders and the people who attend groups. The time you invest as a Coach in the lives of our leaders produces eternal fruit in the Great Commission of Christ.

We hope that this Coaches Playbook will be a valuable resource as you lead, support, and develop group leaders at our church. The Bayside Groups Team is committed to praying for you and supporting you!

As you begin your ministry as a Bayside Groups Coach, I want to say how excited I am for this next step in your walk with the Lord. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to connect with me at julia.mateer@mybayside.church.

**Let the adventure begin!
Game on!!!**

**Pastor Julia
Director of Bayside Groups**

**Bayside Lakewood Ranch Groups Team
941-755-8600**

Pastor Julia Mateer

Director of Groups, Lakewood Ranch
julia.mateer@mybayside.church

Isa Skuba

Administrative Assistant
isa.skuba@mybayside.church

Pastor David Wilson

Groups Coordinator - Men, Coed, Marriage, Young Adults
david.wilson@mybayside.church

Al Paulauski

Groups Coordinator - Coed
al.paulauski@mybayside.church

Kaye Hurta

Groups Coordinator - Women
kaye.hurta@mybayside.church

Pastor Paul Cooper

Stewardship, Outreach, Missions
paul.cooper@mybayside.church

My Lead Coach is: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Bayside Coaches Purpose Statement

A coach is a leader of leaders who **intentionally** helps others grow spiritually, build community and develop leaders. They do this by listening well, loving well and leading well.

Defining the Win

The win for a Coach is to live out the purpose statement!

Top 10 List for being a Successful Groups Coach: (the nuts and bolts)

1. Pray for your leaders and with your leaders!
2. Attend your leaders group 2x per semester (beginning and end).

Visiting a Group:

- Let the leader know ahead of time that you are coming
 - Remind them you're coming for support, not to lead the group.
 - Have a follow-up conversation focused on encouragement, coaching if needed and reminding them to look for the next potential leader to raise up.
 - Remind them to take group **ATTENDANCE and/or note relational connections.** **For your leaders:** Taking attendance in your group is of vital importance. If a group member is unable to attend any group in the span of a month, we are asking the leader to make a **relational connection** with that person (phone call or visit). Once that connection is made, the leader can mark them "present" for one of their group meetings in that month.
3. Connect 1:1 at least 1x per semester with the leader to build relationships. (coffee, meal, etc)
 4. Connect regularly (establish a pattern - weekly?) through texting/emailing/calling) Remember their birthday!
 5. Be familiar with our Church database (Planning Center Online) and help leaders navigate it, take attendance and/or note relational connections.
 6. Celebrate wins and support through difficulties.
 7. If the group leader goes to the hospital or there is a death in the family, please visit them and be sure to notify your lead coach
 8. Help meet practical needs (acts of service, meal train, etc)
 9. Commit to the role of a Coach for 1 year
 10. Raise up new leaders!!!

A Coaches Relational Connections

Your Relationship with Your Savior

Your relationship with Jesus is the most important relationship ever! You may already have a good plan for staying connected and keeping your relationship with Him refreshed and growing. We pray that is so. However, sometimes we find ourselves in desert seasons, times of discouragement or feeling disconnected. You are not alone! If that happens, please let us know. We would love to pray with you and help you navigate that season.

Your Relationship with Your Lead Coach

This is your most important support relationship as it relates to your role as a coach. They genuinely care about you and pray for you regularly. Please respond in a timely way to their communication with you. When you meet with them, they will be asking you how your leaders are doing personally and how their groups are going. They will want to know who potential leaders are and if there are any concerns the leaders have.

Your Relationship with Your Groups Staff Team

Your Groups team is in your corner! You are prayed for regularly and your category Coordinator is available to you at any time for any reason. It is our heart's desire to pastor you well and provide spiritual and leadership growth opportunities for you. If you desire it, we can help provide it!

Your Relationship with Your Group Leader

This relationship is the reason you became a coach! At the start of each group or semester, please make a personal connection with your leader(s) and introduce yourself. Communicate with clarity your plan for staying connected and reminders toward having a successful group. Please pray with them before their group starts for the semester.

Coaching Tools

There are many tools available to you to help you Coach your leaders toward thriving groups!

4 Important Tools

- **groups.planningcenteronline.com**

Bayside uses a church database called Planning Center Online (PCO) to keep track of groups, take attendance, maintain group rosters, among other things.

Training will be provided as needed.

Leaders will manage their groups through the Church Center App. This is where they will add members, communicate with them and take attendance.

Reporting attendance is MANDATORY as it is the only metric we have for determining how many people are connecting relationally. When members are unable to attend their group in any given month, the leader will make a **relational connection** and mark it in the attendance feature of the Church Center App.

Good **record keeping** is an important aspect of leading well. The page that follows is an example of something you could use to keep track of your leaders and their groups. Use it or come up with your own system! (if it's awesome, share it with us!!)

- **Your Lead Coach**

Your Lead Coach is in your corner! He/she is called and responsible for YOUR care! They are an invaluable resource to you and for you. Lean into them often. Please respond when they reach out to you and make your time with them a priority.

- **Your Groups Team**

We love you already and are committed to praying for you and to your ongoing spiritual development. Our door is always open to you!

- **Communication**

Communication is important in any family, including your groups family! Please respond to texts, email, etc as they come your way.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Who Can Lead a Group?

Any Christ-follower who **has completed the entire Growth Track including Freedom Groups and Freedom Weekend**. They must also complete **MyLeadership** (online training) along with a **New Leader Training** video and accompanying questions.

How Does a Leader Form a Group?

The best groups are born out of someone's personal passion whether it is volleyball, movies or in-depth bible study! Identify what you love to do, invite others to do it with you and you have a group!

Once they have completed the training requirements (above) and know what kind of group they want to lead they simply go to www.baysidegroups.com/lead-a-group and fill out the form! Once that is completed, you will receive follow-up, next step emails from your Groups Coordinator.

Support for Group Leaders

Leading a group is a wonderful adventure! However, we all know that not everything always goes as planned. The following information will help you help your group leader navigate the nuances of leading a group.

Leading a Successful Group

8 ingredients for a great group:

1. **Have fun!** Laugh, use ice-breakers, play music, have food, plan fun outings.
2. **Be Relational!** Your group should engage in authentic conversations before and after discussion time to build friendships.
3. **Grow Spiritually!** Great groups encourage spiritual growth for heart and life transformation.

4. **Multiply leaders!** Group leaders, keep your eyes sharpened for those in your group who could/should be leading a Bayside group of their own.
5. **Serve!** Great groups serve one another and the community at church outreach events and into our city.
6. **Communicate!** Clear and consistent communication to your group members is honoring to their calendars and lives.
7. **Safety!** Follow the guidelines located here:
<https://trainedup.church/baysidecommunitychurch/#/course/69/module/1259>
8. **Utilize resources!** Those can be found on our Leaders Resource page at www.Baysidegroups.com/leader-resources

FAQ's from Group Leaders

Can someone be a member of more than one group?

Of course!

As a leader, am I able to delete the group if we no longer meet?

No, you are not able to delete your group. Contact the Groups Department for assistance.

What if my group gets too big and we can't accept new members?

What a great problem!! Consider multiplying and dividing with another person willing to lead. If that's not possible, please notify the Groups Department for assistance.

How do I make changes to my group's title, time, etc?

We are here to help you with that. Please notify the Groups Department for assistance.

How can someone search for my group?

Someone looking for a group would first determine Campus (EBC, WSC, NRC, etc), then select Category (e.g. Men, Women, Co-ed, Marriage, Young Adults, Freedom, Spanish, Outreach, Care, Service Teams, Next Gen) from the church website.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Always contact your coach first and if they cannot answer your question, they will point you in the right direction.

How long is a semester?

Spring - 12 weeks | Summer - 10 weeks | Fall - 12 weeks

Why do I need a coach?

We are not meant to lead or do life alone! Your coach will be someone who will encourage you, answer your questions, bounce ideas off of and help you develop potential leaders.

What are some ways to promote my group?

Recruiting for your group happens before your group starts. Building relationships and influence is one of the most effective factors when it pertains to promoting for your group. The majority of your influence is with people you already know! Invite your friends and neighbors. You can also utilize communication e.g., email, calls, texts, social media, etc. Be creative! Get excited about your group and when people ask about it, share your vision and passion to get them excited too.

How do I incorporate childcare?

- 1) Use a sitter in another space in your home. Pool your resources.
- 2) Incorporate them into the group.
- 3) Have group members rotate attending to children.
- 4) Check with the Groups Department to see if there is space on Monday nights where childcare is available.

Why is it important to build relationships?

Pastor Randy often says, “Life change happens in the context of relationships”. The more you can build a relationship with the members in your group, the more personal growth they will experience. When a friendship is established, this will allow you the opportunity to speak into their life. “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” ~ Theodore Roosevelt

How do I build relationships within my group?

Icebreakers are always good. Share your story. Include food; it keeps things comfortable and casual. Give people a role or responsibility; from choosing a song for worship, bringing refreshments or leading the icebreaker. This will help them feel involved and more emotionally attached.

How do I build relationships outside of group time?

Attend church together, serve together, go out for a meal or coffee, take a day trip, a retreat, go on a mission trip together, etc. Find ways to build memories.

How do I establish trust and confidentiality within my group?

This is key!!! Model it. Remind people that confidentiality is a core value of your group.

How should I conduct my first group meeting?

Prepare by praying.

Get the house or location ready - make it comfortable and clean. If your group is not in your home, be sure to arrive at your destination early so that no members are waiting for you. About 5-10 minutes into the group, start the icebreaker or introductions. Have light discussion and get to know each other. Be mindful and respect people’s time - start on time and end on time. Communicate those times clearly. Set “ground rules” such as confidentiality, respect and kindness. After the first meeting, send an email to thank them for coming and reminding them of the details of the next group.

How should I incorporate prayer?

Prayer should be a part of every group. If your group is relational or activities-based, pray at the beginning or end (or both!). You can ask for specific prayer requests for all to write down or have one person pray for the entire group. You can break up into smaller groups of 2-3 for prayer.

How do I lead an effective discussion?

Know the point of the discussion.

Encourage people to share their thoughts and their heart behind it.

Stay on course yet be flexible if needed.

Ask good questions by being familiar with your material.

Do not fish for a “right” answer - all answers should be welcome.

Practice “active listening”: look at the person who is speaking, do not interrupt, suspend judgement, don’t counsel, fix or solve problems. Seek to understand, not to judge. Ask follow-up questions.

How do I handle challenging people?

Here are some personalities you may run into:

- The dominator - always has something to say, interrupts and controls the group.
- The story topper - feels the need to “one-up” everyone.
- The comedian - constantly makes jokes and derails the group topic or dynamics.
- The emotionally needy person - wants the group to be his/her therapy session.

Solutions:

- Pray for wisdom, for a pure heart and for the Lord to prepare their hearts as well.
- Enlist support from your coach.
- Carefully talk to the person alone after the group or invite them to coffee.
- Never have the conversation via email, text or in front of the other group members. Communicate in a manner that you would want to receive.
- State your observation and ask them what they think about it, so you are not mistaken.
- Ask, “What can I do to help with a solution?”. Follow through with your part.
- Acknowledge and celebrate progress even if it’s minimal.

How do I engage less vocal people in the group?

Give people space and time to respond. There is sacredness in the silence. Ask, “Maybe someone who hasn’t responded yet would like to share?”. Or simply ask directly, “Chris, what do you think about _____?”. Do your best to know your people and their personalities and encourage them accordingly.

What do I do if my group numbers decrease?

This is fairly normal within a semester. Over time, people will naturally drift or have other events conflict. The ones that stay with the group are your committed core (you may have a leader in that core!). Make calls to people who have not showed up - this will make them feel valued - just don’t stalk them! **If someone leaves your group - that is OK! Be gracious and kind and do NOT take it personally.**

How do I use good discretion?

Avoid gossip with other people about your group members. If there is an issue in your group, discuss these with your coach, pray about them and always practice Matthew 18 by going to the person first.

What are some group killers?

Lack of communication.

Lack of authenticity.

Disorganization.

Holidays and vacations. Instead of dropping the group, invite a potential leader to lead in your absence.

Being “cliquey”.

What do I look for in potential leaders?

Look for someone who has a growing relationship with Christ and is life-giving. They should be FAT - faithful, available and teachable. We believe most everyone can lead or facilitate a group, so encourage people to lead.

How do I develop leaders?

Identify, invest and involve them!

Give them opportunities to lead or do a project. Challenge them. Pray for them.

Encourage them.

Here’s a good rule of thumb:

Intentional: I do, you watch, we talk

Guided: I do, you help, we talk

Collaborative: You do, I help, we talk

Equipped: You do, I watch, we talk

Notify your coach of your potential leaders.

How do I end my group?

Communicate with your members the exact date the group is ending. Go out with a BANG!! Have a PARTY!! Some ideas include a pot-luck meal or something fun.

Continue your connections after the group has finished - you’ve probably made some really good friends!

How do I stay healthy Spiritually?

Maintain a growing relationship with Christ. Start your day with prayer, be in the Word, participate in church services. Make the most of your time in the car - listen to praise and worship or a sermon or podcast. Get involved with other programs Bayside is

offering to help you grow. Allow leaders/mentors to pour into your life. Your coach is a great resource here!

How do I stay healthy Spiritually?

Maintain a growing relationship with Christ.

Start your day with prayer, be in the Word, participate in church services.

Make the most of your time in your car by listening to praise and worship, a sermon or a podcast. Take advantage of other opportunities Bayside offers for spiritual formation.

Allow other leaders/mentors to pour into your life and remember, your COACH is a great resource!!