

OVERLAKE
GROUPS

— GUIDE FOR —
NEW LEADERS

WELCOME!

We are sincerely stoked about the opportunity to do life together and serve alongside you in the year to come. It is an incredible privilege to think of working together towards connecting more people to one another and in a deeper relationship with Jesus. We're humbled and honored to stand shoulder to shoulder with you as we **LOVE God, LOVE People** and **SERVE the World**.

We couldn't be more sure about this fact... **NO ONE** was meant to live alone. And because of that, our role as GROUP leaders is absolutely critical for getting Overlakers connected, growing and serving in the Kingdom!

The backbone of our GROUPS is **CONNECTION**. Our hope is that in a GROUP people will experience a new connection to others and a deeper connection with Jesus.

Depending on one's current season of life they may be looking for a place to belong, or a path to becoming more like Jesus or maybe they are ready to bless others. Each of our groups is designed to help these things happen.

The Leader Guide you're holding right now is just one of the tools we want to offer you. We are always adding more resources at occ.org/groupleaderresources

We're genuinely excited about having you on the team.

We are in this together!
The Community Ministries Team

OUR PURPOSE

At Overlake, GROUPS exists to help people...

- LOVE GOD** Matthew 22:36 - The Great Commandment
- LOVE PEOPLE** Matthew 22:37 - The Great Commandment
- SERVE THE WORLD** Matthew 28:19 - The Great Commission

OUR PROCESS

Overlake Christian Church is a community being transformed into Jesus followers who **Love God, Love People and Serve the World**. This Spiritual Growth Pathway helps us all live out these purposes.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH PATHWAY



OVERLAKE GROUPS

Each of our groups are designed to move people through the OVERLAKE PROCESS.



VALUES THAT CREATE CONNECTION

1. BE PRESENT

Engage in conversation. Be consistent to show up.

2. EXERCISE CURIOSITY

Ask questions. Listen intently. Avoid making assumptions.

3. AIM FOR AUTHENTICITY

Share your story. Be real and honest. Speak using "I" statements.

4. INVITE DIVERSITY

Embrace differences. Respect other perspectives. Every voice is welcomed and valued.

5. PROCEED WITH GRACE

Patiently expect and accept discomfort. Hold space for dialogue instead of debate.

GROUP SIGNUPS

LENGTH

Each trimester has the first **three weeks** dedicated solely to getting as many Overlakers as possible signed up and plugged into a group. This part of the trimester you will not be leading a group (unless your group is closed and not open for new people to join), but you will still be neck deep in relational ministry. Our goal as a team is to make things extremely **simple** for each person who signs up.

ON-RAMPS

Just like on-ramps on a freeway, there are **on-ramps** we use to help people get signed up and connected to a group: OCC website, connection cards, Sunday signup teams, social media and personal invitation. Each on-ramp leads to connection to you...the group leaders!

GROUP CATEGORIES

There are **ten** different group categories which help people quickly identify which groups they are most likely interested in:

- 1) Men
- 2) Women
- 3) Young Adults
- 4) Singles
- 5) Couples
- 6) Families
- 7) Parents of Teens
- 8) Empty Nesters
- 9) International
- 10) For Everyone

It makes most sense for people to get involved with **a group near where they live**, but it isn't required.

SIGNUP SUNDAYS

You are the most visual, helpful and relational on-ramp there is. For three straight weeks each trimester there will be Signup Sundays. We encourage you to stand at the Connection Counter after each service - To help people connect to a GROUP.

24 HOUR RULE

When someone is interested in the group you lead, you will receive an email with that person's name and contact information. The goal is to follow up with them within 24 hours by either phone, text or email! Relational ministry starts right away. You don't have to personally meet each person, but at the least extend a warm welcome along with any details they need to know for the first gathering: time, location, where to park, etc.

GROUPS IN SESSION (9-11 weeks)

For 9-11 weeks each trimester Groups are in session – regular gatherings are taking place.

BE PREPARED

As the leader you should be prepared for each gathering. If there is a specific chapter in a book that will be discussed, or a passage of scripture or a topic you have agreed, then make sure you are ready too. Your entire group will enjoy gatherings a lot more when things are prepared.

SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM

The trimester system allows for the natural life cycle of a group. Some groups will only last one trimester whereas others will continue year after year (we have some that are in their 10th year together). We have both short term and long-term groups, each broken up into trimester long commitments.

OPEN GROUPS vs CLOSED GROUPS

During the signup period groups are "open", so new people can join. If needed you can "close" your group. It takes time to build environments where trust is formed among group members. However, most groups have a culture of remaining open at all times.

SPLITTING GROUPS vs MULTIPLYING LEADERS

We don't split groups, we **multiply leaders**. Conventional wisdom says the best way to increase the number of groups is to split existing groups. With the trimester-based system and the practice of leaders reproducing themselves, groups multiply naturally by multiplying leaders who in turn launch new groups.

TAKING ATTENDANCE

After each gathering enter your group's attendance in the Groups database, the process takes <1 minute! Attendance gives insight to Overlake's pastoral team as to the amount of care each individual Overlaker is receiving.

COMMUNICATE OFF-RAMPS

Just like on-ramps get people into groups, we need people to know there are off-ramps too. As the leader please communicate to your group members they do not have to sign up for the same group in the following trimester. Not every group is for every person and as leaders we need to be okay when someone decides to join another group (trust us, it will happen). Our trimester based model hinges upon leaders communicating off-ramps to their group members!

TAKE A SHORT SURVEY

To be prepared for the next trimester's sign ups, we need to know which group leaders will continue leading and what you plan to do with your group. With a few weeks left in the trimester you will be given a **short survey** to complete. Answering a few questions helps us improve ministry, and get prepared for the next group signup season.

SHARE A STORY

We measure the success of groups not by numbers, but by stories! At the trimester's end survey you will be asked to share a little story of something that happened in your group during the trimester. It doesn't need to be long, simply needs to be true – maybe someone received Christ, your group had a great time running a 5K together, or your group visited a fellow member in the hospital. Feel free to have your group members do this too. These stories can be used to encourage the entire body of Overlake.

LEADERSHIP VALUES

These are the four values that every leader should strive to **CONSISTENTLY** embody:

1: SHOW UP

People make spiritual decisions in the context of relationship. We only have a small window of time together to develop those... so your presence matters!

2: SHOW INTEREST

Take an honest interest in others: Learn names, ask good questions, get to know someone's likes/dislikes and most importantly learn their story.

3: SHOW LOVE

If you have been around Overlake for a while you know we love the idea of **OUTLANDISH LOVE**. Our hope is that as you get to know the people in your group you will sense the Holy Spirit prompting you in ways to best care for and love those in your group.

4: SHOW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Encourage people to take the next step in their faith journey. As a leader be thinking about where you can encourage people in your group to grow spiritually and become a fully devoted follower of Jesus.

Point out opportunities at Overlake for this to happen, such as:

- Rooted
- Transformed
- Called
- S.H.A.P.E.
- F.P.U.
- Biblical Counseling
- SoZo
- Baptism
- Short-Term Mission Trip

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing as a leader never stops, and the investment you'll receive from us reflects this reality.

LEADER GATHERINGS

During each trimester there are in-person training opportunities to help you grow as a leader. Not only is this a time to learn new information and be reminded of principles you already know, it allows our entire team to build camaraderie.

COMMUNICATION

You'll receive a leader email with encouragement, updated serve opportunities and reminders on important upcoming dates. You are expected to read each email. Again, it's important the entire team is on the same page.

REPRODUCE YOURSELF

You are the church's growth engine for new leaders, and leadership is the huge limiting factor in any ministry. Begin reproducing yourself using these four easy steps:

- 1) I do and you watch.
- 2) I do and you help.
- 3) You do and I help.
- 4) You do and I applaud.

BECOMING A LEADER

Overlake GROUPS have big goals, the bar is high and we need people who are willing to step up to the plate so our vision can become reality. We encourage people who have the slightest interest in leading a group to go ahead and apply. Some of the best leaders on our team were actually unsure if they should lead a group. But they did... and it's had an incredible Kingdom impact!

Below is the process of moving from the sideline to on the field.

STEP 1: ROOTED

Become a dynamic member of Overlake

STEP 2: APPLY

Complete the online application: occ.org/groups

STEP 3: INTERVIEW

Have an interview with an Overlake Pastor.

STEP 4: TRAIN

Attend the Training prior to the start of the trimester.

Thank you for taking this step of faith to serve the Body of Christ here at Overlake. We are excited about how God may want to use you as GROUP leader!

GROUP LEADER COMMITMENT

You are asked to enter into a commitment with the GROUPS leadership team to make this ministry a priority. By signing below you are stating you have **read this entire guide** and are **committing to the following**:

1: I will embody the values of a dynamic member of Overlake and will follow the leadership of the GROUPS leadership team, including:

- Continued growth in my relationship with Jesus
- Striving to live a godly life
- Faithful attendance of Sunday services
- Faithful giving and stewarding of my resources

2: I understand I am responsible for the care of the group members who signup for my group, as a result I will:

- Be a "Relational Minister"
- Honor the "24 Hour Rule"
- Pray for my group & encourage them to take the next step in their faith

- I will assist with Signup Sundays
- I will take group attendance
- I will communicate "off ramps" to my entire group
- I will complete the end of trimester survey and share a story
- I will read and respond to all GROUPS leadership team emails

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Winter Spring Summer Year: _____

