

A2 TRAINING

OCTOBER 2026 VERSION

Training at The Heart of A2: Multiplying Disciples and Leaders In and Of Churches

When the Lord gave me the vision of A2 "building for Him a city," like Dubai rising from the desert, I understood this to be a picture of a movement of churches across the nations carrying and releasing the **Acts 2 genetic.** In the same way that Dubai needed an underpinning vision and strategy before any ground was broken, so A2 needs a considered approach and a clear set of architectural plans.

As I prayed about this, I sensed that:

"Training must be at the heart of A2."

If we are going to see a movement of vibrant A2-inpired churches planted across the nations, we need to be intentional about how we take people and churches from **new birth to maturity to multiplication**.

Of course, not every new believer will become a church planter, but new believers today will be the pool out of which tomorrow's church planters will emerge, especially if we have created training toward such an outcome. In addition, those within our movement not called to church planting will only benefit from this same intentional, thoughtful growth track.

This training – a collaboration of local churches and the A2 Translocal Team – has three levels:

1. multiplying disciples,
2. multiplying leaders *in* churches,
3. multiplying leaders *of* churches (so we can plant new churches).

No doubt, as we collectively work on this, we will refine, strengthen and improve our plans and approach.

But as a first stab, I offer this rough outline of what our **A2 training architecture** could look like.

A. Training that Multiplies Disciples

1. It starts with what we do with new believers.

At the local church level, everything begins when people respond to the gospel and become followers of Jesus.

The moment someone responds to the gospel, we need to ask:

What happens next?

In a biological family, the most vulnerable people are the newborns. The same is true in a spiritual family. New believers need more than a decision. They need care and **integration into a family**.

They need people who know their names, notice when they are struggling, answer their questions, pray with them, teach them how to follow Jesus and help them find their place in the community.

So every local church needs a clear plan for **new-believer integration**.

2. Ask: What kind of people are we making?

Once people are integrated into the family, the question becomes:

What kind of people are we seeking to make?

Jesus didn't simply call people to believe something. He called them to **follow him**.

So the goal of every local church is to make disciples: people who increasingly look like Jesus, live like Jesus and participate in the mission of Jesus.

We don't all have to use the same language or follow the same program. In fact, one of the strengths of A2 could be that churches learn from one another about the different ways they intentionally form disciples.

But we should be relentlessly clear about our common destination.

We are not simply trying to make better church attenders. We are making disciples of Jesus.

As churches create resources or pathways that work well, they are free to share these with other churches across A2 through a shared portal called **V45**, drawing from Acts 2:45, where the early believers shared what they had with one another.

3. Discipleship is both organic and intentional.

At Nova, for example, we see discipleship happening in two complementary ways.

Organic discipleship

Discipleship happens through the culture of the family.

A healthy church becomes a community where people care for one another, where mature followers of Jesus naturally take newer believers under their wings and where people learn to follow Jesus in the context of real relationships.

This is apprenticeship through proximity.

People watch how others pray. They learn how others handle suffering. They see how marriages work. They learn generosity. They serve alongside one another. They ask questions. They confess struggles. They receive encouragement and correction.

Organized discipleship

Organic discipleship is not enough. We also need to deliberately create pathways that help people become increasingly mature and increasingly fruitful followers of Jesus.

At Nova, for example, we are developing an 18-month journey that we are centring around Jesus and framing around three goals: **Higher. Deeper. Wider.**

JESUS – Discipleship has to do with following Jesus.

So we will create resources and pathways that:

- **Locate yourself within the story of God –** with Jesus as its centre and hero.
- **Anchor your identity in Christ.**
- **Discover a compelling vision of the real Jesus.**

Flowing out of this central revelation of Jesus, each disciple is equipped to go higher, deeper and wider:

HIGHER – Higher is about what we bring – our priestly offering.

- **Bring your praise –** We become people who bring our worship to God. Not merely consumers of a Sunday experience, but people who bring our praise, prayer, devotion and whole lives to Jesus.
- **Bring your contribution –** We become people who contribute. We serve the local church. We discover our gifts. We give financially. We take responsibility. We don't simply ask, *"What can the church do for me?"* We begin asking, *"What can I bring?"*
- **Bring your people –** We become people who bring others. We learn to reach people who are far from God. We learn how to share our stories and invite our friends and family. We learn how to partner with the church in creating environments where people can encounter Jesus.

This especially answers the question:

What do we each bring to our faith community, especially when we gather on Sundays?

DEEPER – Deeper is about becoming rooted.

- **Deeper into God's Word –** We become people who know Scripture, love Scripture and know how to live in and from Scripture.
- **Deeper into God's Spirit –** We learn to live in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit: prayer, listening to God, spiritual gifts, holiness, discernment and dependence on him.
- **Deeper into God's people –** We learn to belong deeply to the family of God. We move beyond superficial relationships into genuine community, vulnerability, encouragement, correction, forgiveness and mutual care.

This especially answers the question:

What tributaries or spiritual practices do we carve into our lives, through which the life of God may flow both into and from our lives?

WIDER – Wider is about integrating our faith into the whole of life.

Following Jesus isn't something we compartmentalise into Sundays and small groups.

- **Wider into human need –** We learn to see and respond to the needs around us. Our discipleship becomes outward-facing, compassionate and missional.
- **Wider into marriage, parenting and family –** We learn to follow Jesus in our closest relationships: marriage, singleness, parenting, friendship and family.
- **Wider into work and financial stewardship –** We learn to integrate our faith with our vocation, money, possessions, ambition, generosity and responsibility.

This especially answers the question:

How do we practically apply our faith to our actual lives and the world we live in?

At the time of writing, we are busy creating an 18-month pathway that will take people through this journey at Nova. Our intention is for it to involve **twelve short booklets**, given one at a time across the 18 months. Each booklet will focus on a particular aspect of the journey and will be available in physical form, with the possibility of digital and even audio formats for people who prefer that.

The booklets will be held together by a series of **gatherings** for each major aspect of the journey. At these gatherings, we will cast vision for the particular movement – whether **Higher, Deeper or Wider** – and help people understand why it matters.

People will then be organised into **small groups** where they can process what they are learning together. The aim is not simply to consume content, but to create a rhythm of **learning, reflection, discussion and action**. There will therefore also be additional exercises and experiences throughout the journey designed to move discipleship beyond information and conversation into **practice**.

The destination is not twelve completed booklets.

The destination is **a life increasingly shaped by Jesus – offered higher, rooted deeper and lived wider.** This is the kind of people Nova seeks to make.

To be clear, this is just one way to make disciples, and on V45, we can all share our best ideas, resources, and pathways for discipling the people that are in our communities.

B. Training that Multiplies Leaders *in* Churches

The multiplication of leaders begins with a simple conviction: **discipleship is the basis of leadership.** Leadership is not something different from discipleship. It is an extension of it. We do not move people out of discipleship and into leadership; rather, we call disciples to take greater responsibility for others.

The multiplication of leaders in a local church will be a combination of **local-church investment and movement-wide resources**.

Here are five "steps" in the process of developing leaders within our churches:

1. Firestarters

One possible way of initiating this process would be for an existing leadership team to **identify people in the church who are not presently leaders but show potential** and invite them to a special evening or breakfast. It could have the feel of something like a *Firestarters* gathering: intentional, relational and spiritually charged.

The existing leaders, including those in the church who are prophetically gifted, could host a meal for these specially invited people. This would include a short, compelling message on the **sheer privilege of serving Jesus by serving and leading in his church**.

Then comes a crucial moment: **telling them why *they* have been invited.**

"We have invited you tonight because we see something in you. We see potential. We see gifts. We see a capacity to influence others and to make a difference in the purposes of God. We don't know yet exactly what this will look like, but we want to call it out of you."

The evening could culminate in **prayer and the laying on of hands**. Leaders would pray over each person, speak prophetically where appropriate, affirm what they see in them and call forth the things God has placed within them.

For many people, this could be a catalytic moment. They may never have thought of themselves as leaders. But then they realize: *Perhaps God really does want to use my life in this way.*

2. Basic leadership training

The next step is **practical leadership training** to lead something specifically. Motivation and vision are important, but people also need to be equipped with the skills required for the particular leadership responsibility they are taking on.

This could take many forms: **small-group leader or ministry-team leader training.** It could be a series over several weeks, a half-day workshop or even a focused one-off event, depending on the context.

The principle is simple: **we should not put people into leadership roles without giving them the basic tools they need to lead well.**

This doesn't need to become unnecessarily sophisticated. **Basic training is better than no training.** The goal is not to turn every small-group leader into a professional leader, but to give ordinary disciples the confidence and competence to serve others well.

This is also an area where the movement can add significant value. **A2 churches via the V45 Portal could share their best training resources with one another**, allowing churches to adapt and contextualise what others have already developed rather than continually reinventing the wheel.

How A2 can help churches multiply leaders

From this point, A2 can play a particularly important role in helping churches **cultivate a culture of leadership**.

There are at least four ways A2 can do this.

3. Inviting Church Strengtheners to minister

There is something particularly powerful about having people from outside the local church speak into its life. Because they are not immersed in the church's normal patterns and relationships, they can sometimes spot gifts, potential and possibilities that the existing leaders have not yet seen.

A church could therefore invite a church strengthener for a special gathering focused specifically on emerging and existing leaders. It could even include a meal where the strengthener spends intentional time with these leaders, gets to know them, asks questions and speaks into their lives. The combination of **relationship, observation, prophetic insight and ministry** can often stir something that would otherwise have remained dormant.

The aim is not simply to bring in an impressive speaker. It is to bring in someone with a grace to **strengthen the church and call leadership out of people**.

4. The annual A2 gathering

The second way is through the annual A2 conference or gathering. These three-day gatherings have immense potential to accelerate people's leadership development.

We can invite both **existing leaders and people who are right on the edge of leadership**. The environment then becomes a concentrated opportunity for them to be exposed to a combination of catalytic gifts, strong teaching, relationships with leaders from other churches and, above all, the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

There is a powerful principle here: **much is taught, but much is caught.** People don't only learn leadership principles in these environments. They watch leaders lead, experience different expressions of church, encounter the Holy Spirit, build friendships with other leaders and begin to imagine what might be possible in their own lives and churches.

In NCMI, we used to use the language of **"bringing people through"** to describe the process of developing people into greater levels of leadership. The annual conference would function as a powerful accelerator in that process. What might take a local church many months of gradual exposure and investment can sometimes be significantly accelerated through an intensive, Spirit-filled three-day experience.

5. An intensive seven-week experience for 18–25 year olds

A2 will develop an annual seven-week intensive where young adults cluster and are immersed in a church and movement environment and trained in **head, heart and hands**.

Head: Spirit-filled teaching in areas such as the Bible, the Holy Spirit, identity in Christ, discipleship, leadership and mission.

Heart: Daily rhythms of worship and prayer, an introduction to spiritual practices, opportunities to be filled with the Holy Spirit and learning to minister to others in the Spirit.

Hands: Practical ministry, serving in the local church, taking responsibility for projects and being exposed to real needs in the host city. The goal is not

simply to teach young people about ministry but to **put them into situations where they actually have to minister**.

The first of these will potentially launch at **Nova Church in 2027**, with the possibility of young adults coming from churches in the United States and elsewhere. As A2 develops, we could imagine similar seven-week experiences being hosted by different A2 churches.

The full seven weeks would ideally provide the deepest formation, but the training could also accommodate people who cannot stay for the entire period. For example, South African university students only have a three-week holiday window. They could join for those three weeks and still receive a meaningful portion of the experience.

Ultimately, the vision is to create environments where **young disciples encounter God, discover their gifts, develop leadership capacity and begin to see themselves as people who can carry responsibility for the mission of Jesus**. Like Jesus, we like to identify and train them while they are young.

6. Advanced leadership training

The next level is **advanced leadership training**. This should be a combination of the investment of the local church and the resources of A2.

A2's polity is that churches are led by **teams of leaders, themselves led by a leader or leadership couple**. This means that we need to continually develop and enlarge the pool from which future leadership teams can be drawn. We cannot wait until a leadership vacancy arises and then look for someone to fill it. We need to be intentionally developing people in advance – especially if we are wanting to grow our church and start new ones.

This is different from specialist ministry training. Someone may be an excellent worship leader, small-group leader, youth leader or ministry leader, but that does not necessarily mean they are ready to serve on the senior leadership team of a local church, whether as a staff member or in a marketplace capacity. Advanced leadership development therefore needs to be **more in-depth and more fully orbed**, developing the character, theological depth, spiritual maturity, relational capacity, leadership ability and missional imagination required to carry broader responsibility.

One practical way to do this is to identify people from among existing **small-group leaders and ministry leaders** and specially invite them into an advanced leadership development experience. The invitation itself should communicate something significant: "We are inviting you because we see something in you, and we want to invest in the calling and contribution God has placed on your life."

For some, this process may ultimately lead to serving on the future leadership team of the local church. But that should **not be presented as the sole outcome**. We are not simply training people to fill positions. The larger goal is to multiply their contribution.

"Our hope is that, by investing in you, we will multiply your contribution to this local church and, ultimately, to the wider calling God has placed on your life."

This distinction is important. Someone may go through advanced leadership training and never become part of the senior leadership team, yet become a significantly more fruitful small-group leader, ministry leader, or marketplace leader. **The investment is in the person, not in one outcome.**

A possible A2 model for 2027

In 2027, Terran and Julie could develop an **Advanced Leadership Training** that could be made available online to multiple A2 churches.

The basic structure could be:

- **Six months**
- **One online gathering every third Monday evening**
- Carefully developed teaching and formation around the qualities required for broader church leadership
- Reading, reflection and practical assignments between sessions
- Local-church application and contextualisation
- Intentional pastoral follow-up throughout the process

The online component would provide a **shared A2 leadership-development framework**, while each local church would add its own contextual input.

The online content itself could remain relatively generic, focusing on the kind of **character, convictions, competencies and spiritual maturity expected of someone who might eventually serve on the leadership team of a dynamic local church**. Each church could then contextualise that training.

A particularly important part of the model would be the involvement of the **lead pastor or leadership couple of each participating church**. They should not simply send people to an A2 course and outsource their development. Ideally, the lead pastor would arrange at least one or two intentional meals with each participant during the six months: to ask how they are doing, what God is saying to them, where they are growing, what challenges they are facing and what they are discerning about their future.

C. Training that Multiplies Leaders *of* Churches

From the pool of the many leaders in churches we have trained, some will be called to become leaders of churches – and start new churches. These new churches are then to become established churches, led by leaders who are growing and cared for. Perhaps they become church strengtheners to other churches, too.

A2 facilitates this progression through six levels of training.

1. A Multiplicative, Missional, Kingdom Mentality and Identity

One of A2's gifts to a church is to help bring it into a state of being in which it wants to and is able to plant new churches.

According to Stadia – a church planting organization – there are common deterrents to planting more churches that each church must overcome.

We need to overcome the fear of loss.

A church that sees church planting as losing people, leaders or money will naturally resist it. But the kingdom of God works through generosity. We need to become churches that are willing to send our best, release people we have invested in and give resources away, trusting that what we release for the sake of the kingdom is never ultimately lost.

We need to become churches that multiply.

Church planting becomes difficult when a church depends on a small number of people to carry everything. A multiplying church is continually developing people, giving them responsibility, releasing them to lead and creating space for others to do what they themselves have been doing. If we can't multiply leaders within the local church, we will struggle to multiply churches beyond it.

We need to become missional churches, not merely pastoral churches.

A pastoral church can become primarily concerned with caring for the people who are already there. Its leaders become increasingly skilled at feeding, counselling and serving an existing congregation, while the congregation itself becomes increasingly inward-facing. A missional

church certainly cares for its people, but it also continually mobilizes them outward. Everyone is sent. Everyone has a part to play. The church exists not only to disciple those who are already following Jesus, but to join Jesus in seeking and saving those who are still far from him.

We need to recover a kingdom vision.

A church can become so focused on its own health, growth and success that it forgets that it is part of something much bigger. The local church is not the end of the story. We belong to the worldwide Church and to the mission of God. A kingdom-minded church can celebrate what God is doing beyond its own walls and genuinely want other churches, other leaders and other communities to flourish, even when there is nothing in it for us.

We need to plant churches that reach people who are not already in church.

Church planting loses something essential when it simply gathers Christians who have moved from one church to another. There is a place for helping existing Christians find healthy community, but conversion-based church planting has a different ambition. We want to see churches emerge among people who are not currently following Jesus, including the de-churched and the unchurched. The measure is not simply how many people gather, but whether people who were previously far from God are coming to know Jesus and becoming his disciples.

We need to recover an expansive expectation of God.

Sometimes our prior experience of church becomes the ceiling of our theology. We begin to assume that because we have rarely seen something happen, it probably cannot happen. But Scripture gives us a much bigger vision of what God can do, and the Holy Spirit invites us to step beyond what we can naturally explain or control. Church planting requires the faith to believe that God can open doors we cannot open, reach people we cannot reach and do far more than our previous experience has taught us to expect.

We need to be exposed to those who are doing it.

Faith grows when we hear the stories of people who have stepped out and discovered that God was faithful. The testimony of others gives us courage for our own adventure. We need to deliberately expose ourselves to churches and leaders who are planting, multiplying and seeing people come to Jesus, because their stories can awaken something in us that information alone cannot. Sometimes we need to see it before we can imagine it.

We need to believe that ordinary people can carry the mission.

Church planting can feel like something reserved for exceptional leaders with exceptional gifts. But the New Testament vision is much more participatory. The work of mission belongs to the whole people of God. We need to release ordinary men and women to pray, share their faith, lead communities, disciple others and discover what God has placed in them. Multiplication begins when we stop asking, "Who is gifted enough to do this?" and start asking, "Who can we empower, trust and send?"

We need to overcome our dependence on existing structures.

Sometimes the very structures that have helped a church become healthy can make it difficult to reproduce. We become attached to buildings, programmes, budgets, staff positions, established patterns and the way things have always been done. But church planting often requires a willingness to start with less, experiment, adapt and put relationships and mission ahead of infrastructure.

We need to reproduce *and/or* multiply.

We need to recover a vision for both reproduction and multiplication. **Reproduction** is when an existing church reproduces itself through new sites or congregations that remain part of the same church, creating a multi-site or multi-congregational church. **Multiplication** is when a church plants an autonomous church with its own leadership, identity and governance. Both are valuable forms of church planting, and each has its own strengths and challenges.

In North America, Todd Wilson in Multipliers Pathway: Creating a Church Planting Plan for Your Church (2025), analyses approximately 320,000 evangelical churches and describes 35% as subtracting, 35% as plateauing, 30% as growing, but only around 7% as **reproducing** and less than 0.5% as **multiplying** (i.e. has started a new autonomous church in the last decade). Whether or not those exact figures are applied universally, they highlight how uncommon reproduction and multiplication is.

They also highlight just how rare starting a completely new church with a new genetic brings particular challenges, but it also creates opportunities to establish new DNA, reach new people and develop new leaders from the beginning.

We need to have mission and multiplication as a reinforced identity.

Mission and multiplication are not something extra we do, trying to squeeze those activities into an already full agenda. Rather they redefine every activity. For they are who we are not just what we do.

According to Stadia, there are seven components to a church that deepen a missional and multiplicative identity.

1. Mission – Who are we?

Our mission answers the fundamental question of why we exist. A church shaped by multiplication understands that making disciples and extending the kingdom includes sending, planting and multiplying churches.

2. Vision – Where are we headed?

Vision gives us a picture of the future we are pursuing. A multiplying church imagines not only a healthy local congregation, but a growing movement of disciples, leaders and churches reaching people who are far from God.

3. Core Values – What matters to us?

Values shape the way we behave when no one is telling us what to do. If multiplication is genuinely part of our identity, generosity, faith, mission, empowerment and reproduction will become normal ways of life rather than occasional initiatives.

4. Core Beliefs – What do we believe?

Our theology shapes what we think is possible and what we think God has called us to do. A multiplication-shaped church believes that God is active, that the Holy Spirit empowers his people, that every disciple can participate in mission and that the Church is called to extend the kingdom far beyond itself.

5. Ministry Model – How will we make disciples?

Our ministry model needs to create pathways for people to move from being reached, to becoming disciples, to making disciples themselves. It should mobilize people outward rather than simply provide increasingly sophisticated care for those already inside the church.

6. Leadership Model – How will we lead?

Multiplication requires a different approach to leadership. Leaders do not simply gather followers around themselves. They equip, empower and release others to lead. The goal is not to become indispensable, but to develop people who can carry responsibility and eventually reproduce what they have received.

7. Planning Process – How will we get there?

What we plan for reveals what we actually believe. If multiplication is part of our identity, it needs to appear in our calendars, budgets, leadership development, prayer, goals and decision-making. We don't simply add church planting to an existing church strategy. We build the possibility of multiplication into the way we think about church from the beginning.

All of this is reinforced when the church partners with other churches and the A2 Translocal Team to see more, diverse Acts 2–inspired churches planted and strengthened.

2. Church Planters Training

This is where A2 comes alongside local churches in a particular way. **Church planters training** is designed to equip people to actually start a new church from scratch.

The first step is **assessment**. We need to work closely with local churches in assessing whether someone is suited and ready for church planting. Church planting is demanding, and a person's gifting, character, calling, family circumstances, experience and readiness all matter.

Once someone is identified as a potential church planter, they enter **church planters training**. In a previous movement I was part of, I wrote the content and created a two-year journey called the Advanced Church Planters Course. In hindsight, I think some of that content was too generic. Much of it should already be assumed if someone has served effectively on the leadership team of a local church. Church planters training should be much more focused on the particular challenges of starting a community from scratch.

Having just planted another congregation, Julie and I are acutely aware of the challenges, opportunities and priorities involved in getting a new church going.

Church planters will also be **allocated a coach within the movement – someone who has planted a work that survived, and is hopefully now thriving**. Training cannot simply be the transfer of information. A church planter needs someone who has experience, who can ask the right questions, pray with them, help them process challenges and walk with them through the realities of planting.

3. Basic Church Leader Training

Once someone plants a church, they very quickly discover that the skill set required to start a church is not identical to the skill set required to lead one over the long term.

So the next stage is **basic church leader training**. Here we help church planters develop the skills and knowledge required to grow an initial group into something more solid, substantial and developed. They need to learn how to build leadership teams, disciple people at scale, develop healthy church structures, handle finances and administration, navigate conflict, care for people, preach and teach consistently, develop ministry leaders and establish a culture that can sustain growth.

4.Content Equivalent to a Seminary Education

We do not envision the A2 pathway requiring someone to spend three years in seminary before they can plant a church. Nor would we discourage someone from pursuing formal theological education if that is appropriate for them.

But some people will reach church-leader level and eventually become aware of areas where they lack the theological depth that someone who has completed a traditional seminary education might possess.

At that point, A2 should make available **the best content equivalent to a seminary education**.

We can look at what a good three-year Bible college or seminary considers essential for preparing someone for church leadership and identify the strongest resources available in each of those major areas: biblical studies, theology, church history, biblical languages where appropriate, hermeneutics, apologetics, ethics, pastoral theology and other classical disciplines.

This would involve both **self-feeding and cohort learning**. People should be able to work through substantial books, courses and other resources independently, while also having the opportunity to process this material with other church leaders in a cohort. The goal is not to reproduce a seminary institution but to ensure that people who did not take that route are not permanently limited by the absence of that formation.

5.Caring for Church Leaders

But multiplication is not only about training. People who have been leading churches for several years will inevitably encounter new challenges. There may be seasons of extraordinary fruitfulness, but there may also be disappointment, conflict, betrayal, exhaustion, loneliness and the possibility of burnout.

This is one of the reasons A2 exists: **church leaders need one another**. A2 is intended to provide a relational context in which church leaders form friendships that make it possible for them to care for one another, pray for one another and walk together through the difficult seasons of leadership.

We will also call church leaders into regular **retreats** where they can step away from the demands of ministry, receive from God and reconnect with one another.

A2 could develop a trusted "pit crew" of specialists. When a particular leader, leadership couple or church enters a particularly difficult season, perhaps we can mobilize a small group of trusted people with the experience, gifting and relational maturity needed for that particular situation. At times it may mean a counsellor, marriage specialist, leadership coach, mediator, financial adviser, lawyer, safeguarding specialist, HR professional, etc.

6.Church Strengtheners Training

Then there is one final stage.

A person may eventually lead a church that has become fruitful and healthy, and over time their particular experience and gifting may become something that other churches begin to draw from. They are invited to preach, advise, train leaders, help churches through particular challenges or strengthen other communities.

At this point, A2 could provide **church strengthers training**.

This equips experienced church leaders to move onto the **Translocal Team**: not simply as people who have led their own church, but as people who can now strengthen churches beyond their own.

And this brings us back to the larger vision of A2. The movement is not simply multiplying churches. It is multiplying **disciples, leaders, church leaders and leaders who can strengthen other churches**.

That creates a perpetual multiplication cycle: **disciples are formed, leaders are raised, churches are planted, churches are strengthened, and the leaders of those churches become part of the next generation of people who strengthen and multiply the movement.**

Finally, A Training Template: Knowledge, Character, Skill, Passion/Vision and Power

One useful template – created by Fellowship Church in Arkansas, USA – for helping people become more than they already are, whether we're making disciples, raising leaders in churches or raising leaders of churches, is to consider four aspects of the training they need:

Knowledge: what they *confidently know*
Character: what they *authentically become*
Skill: what they *competently do*
Passion/Vision: what they *passionately see*

To this, I suggest a fifth category:

Power: what they *supernaturally carry*

This document does not attempt to unpack these categories, but there will be value for a church and for A2 to unpack them with some detail.

There is also an important distinction in how these five areas are developed.

- Knowledge can largely be taught.
- The other four aspects, however, are not just taught but also need to be caught. They are formed through relationship, experience and exposure: watching people live what they teach, serving alongside them, being given opportunities to lead, seeing churches planted and strengthened, encountering God's Spirit together and discovering what is possible. This means that training cannot happen only in classrooms or through resources.

THE TASK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH ASSISTED BY A2:

- What is the knowledge, character, skills, vision and power we must train into our people as we make disciples of them?
- What is the knowledge, character, skills, vision and power we must train into those who lead ministries or groups in our church?
- What is the knowledge, character, skills, vision and power we must train into those who serve on the leadership team of our church?

THE TASK OF A2 (ASSISTED BY THE LOCAL CHURCH):

- What is the knowledge, character, skills, vision and power we must train into those who are planting churches?

- What is the knowledge, character, skills, vision and power we must train into those who are leading churches?
- What is the knowledge, character, skills, vision and power we must train into church leaders who are strengthening churches beyond their own?

Perhaps this is the last thing to say: the kind of disciples we make becomes the foundation for everything that follows. The people we form in our local churches become the leaders of our ministries, the leaders of our churches and, in time, the leaders who plant and strengthen churches beyond our own. If we want healthy leaders and healthy churches, we must begin by making healthy disciples. What we reproduce at every subsequent level will ultimately reflect what we have formed at the first.

Training a Small Group Leader

Here is an example for applying this training to a **church small group leader**:

1. Knowledge: what they confidently know

- **Know the story of Scripture** and how the gospel shapes everyday life
- **Know the people they lead** – their stories, struggles, gifts and spiritual journeys
- **Know the purpose of the group** – belonging, discipleship, care, mission and multiplication

2. Character: what they authentically become

- **Become spiritually mature** – increasingly like Jesus in character and conduct
- **Become trustworthy and safe** – humble, dependable, confidential and emotionally healthy
- **Become others-centred** – more interested in developing people than controlling the group

3. Skill: what they competently do

- **Facilitate meaningful conversations** where people participate rather than simply listen
- **Disciple and care for people** through encouragement, challenge, prayer and practical care
- **Develop others** by identifying emerging leaders and giving them opportunities to contribute

4. Passion/Vision: what they passionately see

- **See people becoming like Jesus**, not merely attending a group
- **See ordinary people become active participants** in God's mission
- **See the group multiply**, releasing new leaders and creating new communities

5. Power: what they supernaturally carry

- **Carry an awareness of God's presence** and cultivate an atmosphere of faith
- **Carry spiritual gifts** that strengthen, encourage and equip others
- **Carry faith for God to transform lives**, expecting him to answer prayer, speak and act

Training for Serving on a Church's Leadership Team

And here is an example for applying this training to become a **member of the leadership team**:

1. Knowledge: what they confidently know

- **Know the church's story, theology and culture** – where it has come from and what it is becoming
- **Know the church's mission, vision and values** – and how their ministry contributes to them
- **Know the people and ministry environment** – its strengths, challenges, structures and opportunities

2. Character: what they authentically become

- **Become deeply trustworthy** – faithful with people, responsibility, information and influence
- **Become team-oriented** – able to submit, collaborate, disagree well and celebrate others
- **Become spiritually and emotionally mature** – leading from a healthy inner life rather than insecurity, ego or ambition

3. Skill: what they competently do

- **Lead people well** – communicate clearly, develop others, give feedback and handle difficult conversations
- **Lead their ministry area effectively** – set priorities, make decisions, organise resources and follow through

- **Contribute to the wider leadership team** – think beyond their department and help solve church-wide challenges

4. Passion/Vision: what they passionately see

- **See the church becoming increasingly like Jesus** – not simply becoming bigger or more efficient
- **See their particular ministry flourishing as part of the bigger mission** – resisting siloed leadership
- **See people being equipped and released** – continually developing leaders who can carry the ministry forward

5. Power: what they supernaturally carry

- **Carry the presence of God into their leadership** – leading from prayer, dependence and attentiveness to the Spirit
- **Carry spiritual gifts that strengthen the church** – bringing what God has entrusted to them for the benefit of others
- **Carry faith for transformation** – expecting God to work through ordinary leadership, prayer, ministry and relationships

Training a Church Planter

Here is an example for applying this training to a **church planter**:

1. Knowledge: what they confidently know

- **Know their mission field** – its people, culture, stories, needs, networks and opportunities
- **Know how to start from nothing** – how to gather people, form community and move toward a first public expression
- **Know what makes a healthy church** – gospel, discipleship, community, mission, leadership and culture

2. Character: what they authentically become

- **Become pioneering and resilient** – able to live with uncertainty, rejection, ambiguity and setbacks
- **Become relationally courageous** – willing to initiate conversations, build friendships and invite people into something new
- **Become culture-carriers** – embodying the kind of church they are trying to establish

3. Skill: what they competently do

- **Gather people** – build relationships, create momentum and turn interested people into a genuine community
- **Build a launch team** – identify, inspire, equip and release people who will carry the church together
- **Create simple multiplying rhythms** – evangelism, discipleship, prayer, gatherings and leadership development that can reproduce

4. Passion/Vision: what they passionately see

- **See people far from God becoming followers of Jesus**
- **See a new church taking shape** – a distinctive community with its own culture, identity and mission
- **See multiplication from the beginning** – new leaders, new groups and eventually new churches emerging

5. Power: what they supernaturally carry

- **Carry faith for what does not yet exist** – believing God for people, provision, open doors and breakthrough
- **Carry an awareness of the Spirit's activity** – discerning where God is already at work and joining him there
- **Carry spiritual authority to gather and strengthen people** – praying, proclaiming, ministering and releasing others in the power of the Spirit

Training a Church Strengthener

Here is an example for applying this training to a **church strengthener: someone who leads (or helps to lead) a local church and also starts to strengthen leaders and churches beyond their own**.

1. Knowledge: what they confidently know

- **Know Scripture and theology deeply**, with the ability to teach with both conviction and generosity
- **Know how healthy churches are formed and strengthened** – culture, leadership, discipleship, mission, structures and multiplication
- **Know how to read churches and leaders** – discerning strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and the next faithful step

2. Character: what they authentically become

- **Become deeply rooted in Christ** – leading from intimacy with God rather than platform, pressure or performance

- **Become secure and generous leaders** – able to empower others without needing to be needed
- **Become trustworthy stewards of influence** – carrying authority with humility, integrity and a genuine commitment to the flourishing of others

3. Skill: what they competently do

- **Lead and shepherd a local church** – setting direction, building culture, developing leaders and caring for people
- **Strengthen churches and leaders** – asking good questions, discerning what is needed and bringing timely encouragement, challenge and practical wisdom
- **Build leaders who build leaders** – creating multiplying leadership cultures rather than becoming the indispensable leader

4. Passion/Vision: what they passionately see

- **See the local church flourishing in its unique calling**, rather than becoming a copy of their own church
- **See leaders becoming stronger, healthier and more fruitful**, especially those who may not yet recognise their potential
- **See a multiplying movement of healthy churches** – churches strengthening churches and leaders releasing leaders across cities and nations

5. Power: what they supernaturally carry

- **Carry the presence of God** – cultivating a life and ministry that flows from prayer, worship and dependence on the Spirit
- **Carry spiritual gifts for strengthening** – prophetic insight, encouragement, wisdom, discernment, healing and other gifts that build up leaders and churches
- **Carry faith for breakthrough and multiplication** – believing God for transformation beyond what strategy, gifting or leadership capacity alone could produce