



## Starting a Motel Ministry

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### Saddleback Principles Used in Creating a Motel Ministry

1. **Involve everyone.** Laypeople lead the motel ministry, and small groups provide manpower to provide sustainability and prevent burnout of the core volunteer leaders.
2. **Follow the heart of the people.** The motel ministry was the result of the church responding to the vision of its members, empowering them to carry them out.
3. **Help build teams of people with similar vision.** Help those with vision develop a system so others can join them, creating a team of people with various gifts to complete the task. In this case the church encouraged the “idea person” by providing a well-rounded team of people with the gifts needed for successful ministry.
4. **Remember the 21-minute principle.** If people have to drive more than 21 minutes to minister at a motel, they will likely not remain committed over time.
5. **Emphasize mission, not social work.** The goal is not to feed people and provide their physical needs but to introduce them to Jesus.
6. **Plan to provide on-the-job training by core leaders.** People are eager to “do something”, but they generally do not want to attend a day of training, presuming that they already know how to do a motel ministry. Allow them to learn on site.
7. **Take advantage of the people resources that you have.** The motel ministry operates without any paid staff, and there is no operating budget.
8. **Be vigilant to teach about dependency issues.** Teach the church participants how to use resources responsibly. Most are eager to give and do not understand the problems that can be created by giving unwisely.
9. **Use resources strategically.** Do not provide resources over extended time. They should be used only for opening a new motel ministry. For example, Saddleback:
  - does not drop off food at a motel and then immediately leave. They want to use these resources to make personal connections with the people who are hungry.
  - does not give Thanksgiving baskets in the same motel the following year.
  - does not buy the food (but they did purchase the cooking grill).
  - does not provide buildings or pay for facilities for a new ministry. (The motel provides the room.)

10. **Help needy people find resources to help themselves.** Point people in the right direction so they can meet their own needs. Teach life skills. Have referral lists for jobs, food, and other needs.
11. **Be sure the ministry is reproducible.** Never provide resources that will force a ministry to stop when you leave.
12. **Provide follow-up.** Follow up the team members, and follow up the contacts they are reaching. Both need to grow.
13. **Always work with a church.** As much as possible work with a church in the neighborhood where you are ministering so that local people can assist in follow-up and continue to minister to the contacts you are making.