



RESIDENCY

QUICK START GUIDE



WHAT IS A RESIDENCY?

A residency is an intentional process for training qualified leaders to be church planters.

WHY ARE RESIDENCIES IMPORTANT?

Residencies help pastors live out one of their primary functions: to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (cf. Eph 4:11-12). Residencies also help the church discover, develop, and deploy leaders. Residencies help aspiring leaders receive the training needed to have a faithful and effective ministry.

“Everyone knows church planting is hard. A good residency is often the difference between a planter who merely survives and a planter who thrives.”

MIKE McDANIEL

Co-founder of the Summit Collaborative

5 KEY STEPS FOR STARTING A RESIDENCY:

■ Clarify the Vision

■ ■ Choose a Leader

■ ■ ■ Build the Plan

■ ■ ■ ■ Develop the Content

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Recruit Residents



WHY START A RESIDENCY?

GOD'S HEART IS TO MULTIPLY HIS PEOPLE

God's heart for multiplication is first shared with Adam and Eve in Genesis and is reaffirmed throughout the Old Testament (Gn. 9, Gn. 35, Lev. 26, Dt. 8-9, Jr. 33). The theme of multiplication doesn't stop there. From the Great Commission in the Gospel of Matthew to the Apostle Paul's letters, God's heart for multiplication also fills the pages of the New Testament and ultimately culminates in the great multitude of believers in Revelation 7. God's desire and plan is for His people to multiply.

GOD'S HEART IS TO MULTIPLY LEADERS

Throughout Scripture, we also see God's heart for multiplying leaders. In Exodus, God uses Jethro to encourage Moses to multiply leaders to help him accomplish the task that God had given him. In Psalm 32:8, God Himself shows how He develops people: "I will instruct you and show you the way to go; with my eye on you, I will give counsel." Developing leaders should matter to us because it matters to God.

The New Testament continues the emphasis on multiplying leaders. Ephesians 4:11-12 describes a pattern: "And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ."

RESIDENCIES HELP PASTORS FOLLOW GOD'S HEART

A residency is an intentional process for training qualified leaders to be church planters. Residencies help pastors and churches intentionally and systematically follow God's heart for multiplication. Most pastors want to see their ministries and kingdom efforts extend beyond themselves and continue for generations. Developing leaders is essential for generational kingdom impact!

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul shows us how he personally developed and modeled multiplication for Timothy, his spiritual son in the faith, when he said, "What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

As pastors, you have learned how to shepherd God's people faithfully, and you have learned how to engage your community with the gospel. Through residencies, you can pass along that knowledge that was entrusted to you! Residencies help you reproduce your ministry by developing faithful leaders.



HOW TO START A RESIDENCY

■ CLARIFY THE VISION

A compelling vision leads to commitment. Let's face it: raising up leaders is hard work! When things get tough, your core convictions and vision will help you persevere and stick to the plan. Before you start a residency, the first step is to clarify your vision for multiplication and church planting. As you develop and clarify your vision, start by identifying the "why." Why is God calling your church to develop and multiply leaders? Try to identify key words, phrases, or sentences you could use to share this vision with your church.

Once you have clarified your vision for developing new leaders, begin sharing that vision with your staff and key ministry leaders. Be sure to include leaders whose ministries will be directly impacted by your vision. A helpful tip is to consider using the X to Y by when formula for setting a goal around your vision. Here is an example: We want to join in God's Kingdom activity by launching a residency to develop 5 leaders to plant 5 churches by 2030.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: What is God leading us to do? Why do we feel like God is leading us to start a residency? How can I succinctly communicate this vision to the people around me?

■ ■ CHOOSE A LEADER

We've heard it said that everything rises and falls on leadership. Choosing who will lead the residency is an essential step in the process. The person who leads your residency will have a significant impact in your residency's effectiveness. Some lead pastors may be heavily involved in leading the residency while others may choose to delegate the residency leadership role. Based on the skill set or availability of the lead pastor, it may be best to have another leader in the church run point on facilitating the residency. The residency director should be someone who can lead the program and is committed to investing in the residents. Think through the church staff or people in your church who are passionate about developing leaders. Whoever the church selects to lead the residency, make sure it's clear! Everyone should know who the point of contact is for the residency.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: Who is going to lead the residency? What skills are needed for leading the residency? Who on your staff and in your church is passionate about developing leaders?



BUILD THE PLAN

It's one thing to have an idea, and it's another thing to have a plan! After you clarify your vision and choose a leader, the next important step is for your church to build the plan for the residency. The plan provides clarity for the structure, schedule, and resources needed to run the residency (see the Send Network Essentials for a Healthy Planter for ideas on core competencies and training topics).

- **STRUCTURE:** You need to decide how you will organize your residency. Identify the relational environments and training environments you want the resident to participate in throughout the residency (i.e. residency training meetings, staff meetings, elder meetings, sermon preparation meetings, one-on-one coaching, mentoring meetings, pastoral care opportunities, etc.).
- **SCHEDULE:** Another step for building the plan is determining the schedule for the residency. How long will the residency last? How often do you want your residents to meet in the various relational environments and training environments (weekly, biweekly, monthly, etc.)? A recommended timeframe for a church planting residency is to meet with residents either weekly or biweekly for around 12–18 months. The most effective residencies set a consistent meeting rhythm and clarify the expectations for attendance with their residents.
- **RESOURCES:** Building the plan requires a budget to address the resources the church will allocate for the residency. Think through resources in terms of both people and finances. As you think about the resources it's going to take to run the residency, consider the bandwidth of your staff team and the margin of your church budget. As you work through the administrative logistics for your residency, determine what resources the church will set aside for launching and leading the residency. Will residents be paid to participate, or will residents need to raise funds to participate in the residency? It would also be wise to decide on a support structure for the future churches planted through the residency.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: How will we run the residency? How will we fund our residency? What resources do we need for our plan? Who will manage those resources? Will residents pay to participate, be paid to participate, or raise funds for participation? What will be our financial support structure for the churches we plant through our residency?



DEVELOP THE CONTENT

Next, you want to determine what you will teach the residents. As you develop your content, start by identifying the core competencies and desired outcomes for your residency. After you decide on the core competencies, compile a list of resources to use as you train your residents. These resources can include books, articles, podcasts, blogs, videos, and teaching slides. Whatever content you choose for the residency, make sure to carve out time for the residents to think critically and discuss freely what they're learning. Remember to focus on application. You want to help your residents apply the content to their future ministry context.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: What will we teach the resident? What are the relational environments and training environments you want the resident to participate in? When and how often will the resident participate in these environments? What are the essential principles to know before planting a church? How can we build in time for residents to read great content and respond with great care?



RECRUIT RESIDENTS

A residency is only as good as the people in it. Recruiting residents may be one of the most challenging aspects of starting and continuing a residency. Creating a list of characteristics that you want residents to embody is a good starting point. Thankfully, the Lord has given you a place to begin in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. If the men in your residency are to be future pastors, the qualifications for an elder is the perfect place to start. From there, consider personality traits or background experiences that may be needed for a guy who needs to be entrepreneurial as he follows God's calling on his life. Some of these characteristics and experiences should be flexible depending on where you feel the Lord is guiding your team and the residency candidate to plant.

No matter where you land, it's helpful to remember that you aren't looking for the finished product. Rather, you are looking for potential. Even the most ideal potential church planters and leaders will be participating in your residency to learn and grow. So, remove the pressure to find the perfect guy. Pray and ask the Lord to help you see the leadership and ministry potential in those you will encounter. Here are three avenues to begin your search for residents:

- **PRAYERFULLY:** As you read about God working in the lives of leaders throughout the Bible, spend time asking God for direction, that the Holy Spirit may reveal people you need to invite to grow as leaders through a residency.
- **INTERNALLY:** Look at the leadership within your church. Consider your staff, deacons, group leaders, faithful volunteers, etc. As you trust God's provision in launching a residency, trust Him to also be raising future leaders from within your church.
- **RELATIONALLY:** Often a future planter can be found serving in other churches or ministries that don't have a residency. One of the values of being part of a network or family of churches is the ability to share resources, including development opportunities such as a residency.



Once you find good candidates, use an application and interview process to evaluate and select the residents. Your application and interview process will serve as a filter to make sure that your residents match the type of candidate that you are looking to develop. The application process can be informal or structured, whichever best meets the church's needs. Here are some key components of a thoughtful process:

- **APPLICATION:** This doesn't need to be exhaustive, but it's good to know an applicant's background, education, work experience, and testimony.
- **CHARACTER ASSESSMENT:** Ideally, your residency is developing future elders and ministry leaders in the church. Remember, character and teachability are more important than gifting and talents.
- **PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT:** It's helpful to gain a broad understanding of how your potential residents are wired. Assessments such as StrengthsFinder, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, DISC, Predictive Index, and APEST can help give you a glimpse into your applicant's personality.
- **INTERVIEW:** An in-person interview should be conducted between the resident and church's residency director. If possible, the ministry leader or staff member the resident will be working directly under (if not the residency director) should also be present. Interviews are key in helping gauge personality fit and missional alignment, as well as in building a relationship.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: What are we looking for in a potential planter? What does Scripture say about qualifications for being an elder? Which character traits and/or skills would be preferable and which ones are nonnegotiable? Who do I already know within the church that would be a good fit for our residency? Where can I find potential church planters?



BEST PRACTICES FOR LEADING A RESIDENCY

While there is no one-size-fits-all approach for church planting residencies, we believe there are evergreen principles and best practices that can help your church launch and lead an effective residency. Send Network hosted a Residency Think Tank with several leading practitioners in church planting residencies from across North America to learn from one another and identify best practices for leading a residency. Though different residency models and strategies were represented in the Residency Think Tank, we were able to identify evergreen principles that were reflected in the participating residencies. Listed below are the best practices for leading an effective church planting residency.

1. CLEAR VISION AND PURPOSE

When building out a residency, it is always helpful to begin with the end in mind. Why is God calling your church to develop and multiply leaders? Why is God leading you to plant churches? The leading residency practitioners knew why their residencies existed, and they knew what they were trying to produce through their residencies. You need to know why you want to have a residency, and you need to determine what you want your residents to become.

2. EFFECTIVE EVALUATION PROCESS

Another helpful practice is developing an application and interview process for evaluating potential residents. Well-structured residencies utilize various evaluation tools along with an interview process to effectively evaluate a potential resident.

3. INTENTIONAL PLAN FOR TRAINING

You've probably heard the phrase that failing to plan is essentially planning to fail. Leading an effective residency requires developing an intentional plan for teaching and equipping residents to become church planters. Developing a plan provides clarity on the leaders, structure, content, and meeting schedule needed to run the residency.

4. CONSISTENT MEETING RHYTHMS

You make time for the things that matter. The best residencies have established meeting rhythms and locations. They were not trying to figure out when and where to meet on a weekly basis. Instead, they had clearly communicated the residency meeting expectations. Communication about the residency schedule at the beginning of the program is key.

5. HANDS-ON MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Research shows that adults learn best by doing. If the desired outcome for your church planting residency is to produce elder-qualified men that will lead churches, then it is imperative to provide them with ministry experience to lead and shepherd others while under your care and coaching.



One practical ministry assignment to consider: challenge your resident to launch and lead a new small group at your church with the expectation that he will develop someone within the group to take his place when he leaves to go plant a church. If a resident can't launch and lead a small group of people, he will probably have a difficult time planting a church.

6. CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK AND COACHING

Making mistakes is not the problem; not learning from our mistakes is the problem. The most effective residencies build coaching and feedback into their plans and meeting rhythms. Whether the resident is leading a small group, writing curriculum, developing strategy, or preaching a sermon, every opportunity during the residency is a crucial chance to help them sharpen their gifts in ministry. Leverage your influence in their lives by consistently meeting with them to provide on-going coaching and feedback. Remember, feedback is meant to be helpful not hurtful.

7. ACCESS TO LEAD PASTOR AND PASTORAL TEAM

Proximity breeds meaningful relationships, and meaningful relationships set the stage for transformational learning. One of the most mentioned qualities of an effective residency was the time the residents spent with the pastoral staff. Encourage your residents to shadow the pastoral team as much as possible. Let residents observe and participate in elder meetings and staff meetings. Consider inviting the residents to join the lead pastor and pastoral team for weekly sermon preparation meetings. Invite the residents to join your pastoral team during certain pastoral care opportunities (i.e. hospital visits, home visits, etc.). Great residencies had a structure for intentional, life-on-life discipleship of the residents by pastors at their church, allowing residents to grow as disciples and disciple makers.

8. EXPOSURE TO OTHER CHURCH PLANTERS

You don't have to know everything about church planting to lead a residency. One of the best ways to develop your church planting residents is to expose them to other church planters who are a few years ahead of them on the journey of planting. This can be as easy as scheduling a video conference call or an in-person meeting with an existing church planter. Or it can be an immersive experience by taking your resident(s) on field trips to different cities to connect with other church planters. By doing this, you are providing residents with opportunities to ask questions and to learn from other experienced planters who are currently engaged in the day-to-day church planting world. This often expedites the learning experience of your residents.

9. MILESTONES AND MARKERS FOR GROWTH

Effective residencies create a development plan to help track a resident's growth and desired outcomes. They identified key church planting milestones for their residents to start pursuing while in the residency. They also determined specific growth markers for their residents based on the results of the assessments and evaluation tools leveraged in the application process.



YOU CAN DO IT – WE CAN HELP!

We are confident every church can build a healthy, multiplying residency. Whether you need development resources, coaching, or networking assistance, Send Network is here to help. When you're ready to take a next step, email us at residencies@namb.net! For more information and additional resources about launching and leading a church planting residency, visit our Residency page on our website: namb.net/residencies ▶