



## Best Practices

### **PHASE ONE: LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

Everything rises and falls on leadership. This is especially true for churches that have a desire to make neighboring a part of their DNA. It would be hard to over-state the importance of the lead pastor and the staff making a commitment to engage their own neighborhoods. The only leadership that is sustainable is leadership by example.

Step One = From the Top Down

The lead pastor and a few key leaders should start by doing the Block Map exercise and making a commitment to learn, retain, and use the names of their immediate neighbors. Ideally, this would be done among a group of 3-5 people at least 3 months before rolling it out with your entire staff. Check in regularly and process how well you are doing in learning names and taking the next step.

Use 30 minutes in a staff meeting to cast the vision for literal neighboring. The Lead Pastor and key staff members should share some of what they have learned since doing the block map exercise. This 10 minute video is a tool designed to introduce ministry leaders to literal neighboring:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gz4Bagg-vw>

Give each staff member a block map fridge magnet and ask them to make a commitment to learn, retain, and use their neighbors names. Take a few minutes in your staff meetings over the next few months to do the block map exercise and share about successes and failures.

\*\*\* Phase one is critical. Pastors and staffs who engage their literal neighbors almost always see long-term results in their church. Senior leadership teams that fail to learn their neighbors' names seldom see long-term results.

## **PHASE TWO: LAUNCHING A NEIGHBORING INITIATIVE IN YOUR CHURCH**

Share the block map with everyone in your congregation and take the time to work through them together. Free Sermon Outlines, Sample Sermons, Powerpoint Graphics, & other resources can be found on the resource page of [artofneighboring.com](http://artofneighboring.com). Feel free to download these and adapt them to fit your context.

### **Block Map Pop Quizzes**

A couple of months after the introduction, take 2 minutes of the announcement time in your gathering to do a “block map pop quiz.” Include the block map image in the bulletin and simply ask everyone to fill it in with the names of their neighbors. Then ask them to raise their hands if they have learned a name since you last talked about literal neighboring. You will be shocked at how many people have made progress. Doing a pop quiz every three months during the first year and twice a year during the second year will go a long way in communicating that this is a priority for you and your church.

### **Stories**

Capture the neighboring stories that emerge and share them in your services. It’s best if these stories are from lay people, and are about doing little things that end up making a big difference – these are often the types of stories that make others think to themselves, “Hey, even I could do that.” Also, the primary teachers should sprinkle their own neighboring stories throughout their sermons in order to keep this value in front of the church.

### **“This Counts”**

It is important for the primary teacher(s) to be intentional and relentless in communicating that, “What we do in our front yards counts! It’s real ministry...just like serving as an elder, in the children's ministry, or in the food bank.” When you verbalized this you are affirming and validating the neighboring efforts that your people have made and are going to make in the future.

\*\*\* All of resources mentioned in Phase Two are available for free at: [artofneighboring.com](http://artofneighboring.com)

\*\*\***For a discounted rate on book and block map fridge magnet orders, email us at [info@artofneighboring.com](mailto:info@artofneighboring.com)**