

A person is working on a laptop. The laptop screen displays code in a dark-themed IDE. To the left of the laptop, a hand is holding a smartphone. In the background, a coffee cup is visible. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

# USING TECH TO CONNECT

A GUIDE FOR DIGITAL  
DISCIPLESHIP AT WORK

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## INTRODUCTION

Efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 created historic and unprecedented circumstances. Almost overnight, digital communication became a major part of our daily life. Everyone around the world is now working, learning, and connecting with colleagues, friends, and family through the power of technology.

The transition out of social distancing requirements will take time. Until certain conditions are met such as therapeutic treatments and effective vaccines, there will be limited access to certain individuals and more vulnerable populations.

More than merely adapting to digital tools in order to survive, there are techniques and approaches you can take to thrive.

This guide draws upon nationwide research of Spiritual e-Mentorship among marketplace influencers to present key techniques and pro-tips to help you do just that while highlighting certain pitfalls to avoid.

# MENTORSHIP THAT TRANSFORMS

Think back on the significant moments in your life and career. Behind each promotion, opportunity, and accomplishment you often find another person who helped you get there. They saw your potential and helped you see it too.

They sit at the *board table* of your life as trusted guides, teachers, and colleagues whose influence made you who you are today. Now think of the ways these individuals changed your life.

## Benefits of mentorship include:

- Enhanced promotion rates
- Higher salaries
- Accelerated career mobility
- Improved professional identity
- Greater professional competence
- Increased career satisfaction
- Lower stress
- Healthier organizational culture
- Mentored individuals are also more likely to mentor someone else.

*You can now sit at the board table of someone else's life, but things get in the way and diminish your impact on another person's life.*

## Barriers to mentorship include:

- Logistical constraints
- Busy schedules
- Geographic boundaries
- Lack of confidence in ability to be a mentor

## DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH THE MENTORING MODEL

In what is popularly called the Great Commission, Jesus instructs his followers to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt. 28:18-20)

In the first decades of a new millennia, the age that Jesus described has not yet ended, the task is not yet finished, and the final instruction Jesus gave to the disciples remains an ever-present command for every Christian.

In Christian discipleship there exists a God-ordained method of disciple-making through mentoring. Michael Wilkins defines discipleship as “living the fully human life in this world in union with Jesus Christ and growing in conformity to his image... [where] each disciple also has the responsibility to be involved in helping other disciples grow.”

The lives of Paul and Timothy, Moses and Joshua, and many more give compelling testimony to the role discipleship through mentoring played in history and in the early days Christianity.

## DISCIPLESHIP IN THE DIGITAL AGE (E-MENTORING)

There is a newer alternative thanks to technological innovation transforming the way the world lives, works, and communicates: e-mentoring.

Computer-mediated mentoring introduces new opportunities for personal and professional growth while maintaining all the proven benefits of traditional mentoring relationships.

Skeptics may think electronic communication is not as meaningful or less effective than the experiences found in traditional, face-to-face interaction. Research disagrees.

Because mentoring interactions take place through the communication platforms we are using multiple times every day, studies find e-mentoring just as effective.

Current research defines e-mentoring as “a computer mediated, mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor and a protégé which provides learning, advising, encouraging, promoting and modeling.”

Spiritual e-Mentoring makes intentional use of the multiple ways electronic communication transforms our lives and work; such as email, texting, video-conferencing, message boards, social media and more.

Technology is often criticized for being impersonal, however, research suggests that a virtual environment offers a safe context for establishing mentoring relationships while promoting easier access and the potential for more candid communication than would occur in face-to-face mentoring.

## DISCIPLESHIP IN THE DIGITAL AGE (E-MENTORING)

Electronic communication is the way we are all interacting. On average, you will look at your phone 96 times each day. The most common reason people believe e-mentoring isn't effective is due to how commonplace electronic communication has become.

The reality is the virtual environment is becoming a shared culture. Whether you are from small town America, the inner-city, or Central Asia, we interact online in similar ways.

E-mentoring makes intentional use of the multiple ways people connect through electronic communication, such as email, texting, video-conferencing, message boards, social media and more.

This is not to suggest an either-or approach that relegates mentorship to digital communication.

Rather, utilize Spiritual e-Mentoring to create a safe context to establish a purposeful mentorship relationship that can naturally grow to include traditional, face-to-face interaction.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, “Christianity without the living Christ is Christianity without discipleship.” Discipleship through Spiritual e-Mentoring reminds us that in this information and technology age, Jesus Christ is Lord. The key is knowing what works and what to avoid.

## FOOTNOTES

The Cost of Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Touchstone, 2012).

Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship by Michael Wilkins (Zondervan Pub. House, 1992).

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## TECHNIQUE ONE: SET OBJECTIVES AND MAKE A MENTORING PLAN

Get the most out of the mentoring process by making a plan and setting clear objectives. Whether starting a new mentoring experience or in the midst of a current one, write out a simple statement of what you hope to accomplish. Then make a plan with a defined start and ending and a list of things to talk about along the way.

When making a plan and setting objectives, keep them:

- **Simple** – Pick two or three objectives, not ten. Examples of objectives include topics (work/life balance, confidence, family life issues), spiritual practices (prayer, scripture reading/memorization, serving others), or personal struggles (anger, anxiety, discouragement).
- **Flexible** – Life happens along the way. It's okay to change the topics you focus on when you need to.
- **Scheduled** – Plan to have regular mentoring meetings based on what is reasonable (once per week, every other week, or once a month). Using tech to connect means that mentoring meetings can be in person or through video conferencing.
- **Doable** – Set a timeline for how long you will focus on the selected objectives and how frequently you will schedule meeting together. The timeline can be shorter (2-4 months) or longer (6-9 months) depending on what you choose to focus on.
- **Versatile** – Use different digital tools to accomplish your spiritual e-mentoring goals. Between scheduled mentoring meetings, send an email or a quick text.

**Now stick to your plan.** When you get to the end of your timeline, make a new plan with new objectives and timeline. It's okay to repeat some objectives, but including them as part of a new plan keeps the mentoring experience focused on accomplishing goals and making progress.

**High Versatility:**  
In a nationwide study of e-mentoring in discipleship, 71 percent agreed that electronic communication helped them to meet in a variety of settings and methods

## REFLECTIONS FROM RESEARCH

Effective mentoring involves a process where clear goals exist. Mentors and protégés can be confident throughout the process, maintain focus, and evaluate their progress based on goals and not subjective judgements.

### **PITFALL: FAILURE TO FORMALIZE**

Not everything we call mentoring actually is. It can be good and even helpful, but effective mentoring is intentional. Failure to formalize the mentoring experience can result in a lot of your time but little life change. Avoid the failure to formalize by making a Spiritual e-mentoring plan and set objectives or topics to focus on.

## **Pro Tip: Use the Tools You Know**

There are many digital tools and apps out there to discover and you will the more you use tech to connect. Being unfamiliar with a new app can be frustrating and cause the mentoring experience to stall. So start with the tools you know.

If you are more comfortable with your iPhone's built in FaceTime to video conference instead of Zoom or Skype, do that. Instead of Signal or Facebook Messenger, just use your cell phone text messaging. Use what you know and learn new tools along the way.

## TECHNIQUE TWO: CALENDAR TO COMMUNICATE

WE VALUE WHAT WE MAKE TIME FOR... BUT THINGS COME UP.

Use a calendar app to make time for spiritual e-mentoring and send calendar invites to put the meeting on each of your calendars. When you plan to video conference, include the link for the video conference meeting in the calendar invite. It is just a few extra steps when adding the mentoring meeting to your calendar, but it saves you as much or more when the time comes to meet.

Also add calendar reminders for yourself to check in. For example, set a repeating calendar reminder for 8:45 AM every Wednesday that says "Text Jeff!" When that reminder pops up, take a minute to pray for Jeff and send him a quick text.

### Did You Know?

According to research something as simple as a text message, when used intentionally, is an effective way to cultivate trust in mentoring.

### EXPERT HACK

Some email hosts (such as Gmail) build in an option to automatically add a video conference option when sending a calendar invite. Include a video conference option even when you intend to meet in person. Not all schedule conflicts are the same. When the issue isn't the time you planned to meet but the travel time before or after, including a video conference option to your calendar allows you to easily shift to a video conference and still connect.

### Overcoming Schedule Conflicts:

In a nationwide study of e-mentoring in discipleship, 73 percent agreed that electronic communication helped them resolve conflicts arising from work schedules.

## **PITFALL: DISCIPLESHIP FIZZLE**

Mentoring experiences don't always end as much as they can fizzle out. Sometimes mentors and protégés just don't click. More often, discipleship fizzle is the result of busy schedules and too many missed meetings. Eventually, it's easier to call it quits than send one more text saying you can't make it.

### **Pro Tip: Two Can Be Better Than One**

Just like two work-out buddies, it can be a little easy at times for two people to skip a mentoring meeting. But mentoring doesn't have to be one-on-one. It can also be one-on-some. Meeting as a group of three adds a layer of accountability. Or when one person has to cancel, the others can still meet and that keeps the whole group going.

# REFLECTIONS FROM RESEARCH: KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF BIBLICAL MENTORING

Chuck Lawless defines mentoring as “a God-given relationship in which one growing Christian encourages and equips another believer to reach his or her potential as a disciple of Christ.” Biblical Characters throughout scripture model the mentoring method of discipleship. “Mentoring took place among Hebrew priests (Eli and Samuel), prophets (Elijah and Elisha) and leaders (Moses and Joshua)” (Tim Elmore, 2008).

Jesus invested personally in the lives of his disciples. In the New Testament, the lives of Paul and Timothy give particularly insightful testimony to the role mentoring played in expanding the kingdom of God in the early days of the church. Consider eight key characteristics of Biblical mentoring seen in Moses and Joshua, Paul and Timothy.

**1. Formally Establish Relationship:** Mentoring is not incidental, it is intentional. “God selected Joshua to replace Moses because Joshua was ready. God chose him, Moses trained him and then God anointed him” (Bill Hull).

*“Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua, had him stand before the purest Eleazar and the entire community, laid his hands on him, and commissioned him, as the Lord had spoken through Moses.” Numbers 27:22-33*

**2. Bring Protégé Along to Observe Mentor at Work:** The best mentors don’t just talk but also expose their protégés to opportunities to learn and grow. Personal experience: Few things intimidated me like making hospital visits – something all of us will do at some point. Hearing my mentor’s thoughts about doing it well was nice, but when he invited me to watch him make hospital visits is when I began to grow.

**3. Provide Time for Private Consultation:** Make time to discuss things along the way. Spiritual e-mentoring is not giving someone a trial by fire, but guiding them toward success and developing spiritual strength.

## Did You Know?

In a nationwide study of e-mentoring in discipleship, 84 percent agreed or strongly agreed that in addition to the established meeting times, the mentor made time to meet if the protégé expresses it was needed and digital communication helped make that possible.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF BIBLICAL MENTORING

**4. Correct Protégé in Appropriate and Direct Way:** We all make mistakes. It is a mentor's duty to identify and correct their protégé when the need arises. Keep it constructive and positive. This is one of the greatest benefits of spiritual e-mentoring.

**5. Cultivate Relational Closeness:** Mentoring delves deeply beneath casual knowledge of another person to reveal a fuller understanding of another person's life experience in order to better understand their needs as well as abilities and future potential.

**6. Formally Introduce, Affirm, and Legitimize Protégé:** Mentors provide invaluable knowledge, experience, and the ability to develop skills and self-confidence. Just as important, mentors become advocates who create new opportunities that propel their protégé forward.

**7. Promote Reproducibility:** Perhaps the greatest indicator of success in mentoring is when the protégé becomes a mentor to someone else. One goal of spiritual e-mentoring should always be to learn methods and develop the ability of both the mentor and protégé to become a mentor of someone else in the future.

### Pro Tip:

#### Life-Story Exercise

Think about a specific issue, characteristic, or personal struggle in your life (managing or leading difficult people, insecurity, anger, difficulty trusting, having to forgive someone.)

Based upon your age, divide your life into thirds and write a brief summary (4-5 sentences) of an experience from each time in your life about that same issue, characteristic, or personal struggle.

Not only will you get to know each other's stories, you can also reflect on how you have grown over time in a specific area of your life.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>T</sup>Footnote: Mentor: How Along-the-Way Discipleship Will Change Your Life by Chuck Lawless (LifeWay Press, 2011)

Mentoring: How To Invest Your Life in Others by Tim Elmore (Growing Leaders, 2008)

## TECHNIQUE THREE: TEXT WHAT YOU TEACH

IT'S MORE THAN JUST A TEXT.

Spiritual e-mentoring is more than periodic meetings. It makes all forms of digital communication intentional opportunities that create life change. Meaningful ideas and insights that will make a difference can occur at any moment, but remembering to share them at your next planned meeting can be difficult. So don't.

Text what you teach whenever inspiration strikes. The same is true for protégés. Everyday experiences are opportunities to discover questions and issues where the perspective of a mentor can be invaluable.

### Three advantages to texting what you teach:

1. **The insight is fresh in your mind.** There is a reason why you were inspired to share with your protégé or mentor and you can seize upon that moment.
2. **It creates a record** that you can refer back to and discuss in further detail later.
3. **It deepens trust** between a mentor and protégé when everyday experiences become opportunities to demonstrate you are considering how to help your protégé.

### Pitfall: Thinking Texts Are Trivial

Isn't texting just how we interact now? We can forget how significant something can be when it becomes commonplace. While it is true that texting has become a major way we communicate, spiritual e-mentoring recognizes there is a difference between the routine and the refining. There is a world of difference between: "I'm running a few minutes behind" and "I'm discovering how important it is to have patience with difficult people today. It really is Fruit of the Spirit. Let's talk about this next week."

## REFLECTIONS FROM RESEARCH

Just because you send or receive a text doesn't mean you have to respond. A characteristic of spiritual e-mentoring is that communication can be "asynchronous." That means a conversation can take place over the course of multiple hours, days, and even weeks.

"Another advantage of e-mentoring is that the mentor and protégé can interact more frequently and at more convenient times online instead of trying to fit meetings into busy work schedules.

Also, the asynchronous nature of e-mentoring allows for more thoughtful, task-oriented interaction than face-to-face dialogue."

### Pro-Tip: Text Etiquette

Discuss texting etiquette and set expectations about responding to texts. This will keep you from worrying about over-texting or feeling pressure to respond every time.

## FOOTNOTES

Mullen, S. (2012). An integrative model for e-mentoring Christian education students. *Christian Education Journal*, 9(2), 386-395

## TECHNIQUE FOUR: SHARE LINKS THAT LAST

THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT IS THE CONTEXT FOR LEARNING AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

There's a lot of content on the web and it can be overwhelming to know what's out there and where to begin. Because of the level of trust between mentors and protégés, sharing a link to information on the web carries additional weight and credibility.

Think about it this way: The resources, podcasts, videos, and writings of various leadership experts, faith & work ministries, or Christian apologists can be vast and cover a wide range of topics and issues.

When sharing a link to a specific article or video that is helpful and relevant to a specific issue or topic being discussed with their protégé, mentors can introduce their protégés to a valuable resource in a way that is immediately meaningful because it is within the context of spiritual e-mentoring.

The intention may only be to share a link to a specific resource, but you've now opened up a whole world of content and resources where a protégé can go to learn and grow. When this happens, the protégé is gaining "self-sufficiency" in the virtual environment.

### Did You Know?

The unique nature of the virtual environment has the potential to become the context in which the protégé grows, gains self-sufficiency, and becomes a mentor to others. As the virtual environment becomes more expansive and sophisticated, so does the context in which a protégé develops.

## **EXPERT HACK:**

Companies and organizations invest in various subscription services to content libraries that can often be underutilized. Sharing links to specific resources is a way mentors can model how to make better use of those resources and increase the return on investment.

## **Pro-Tip:**

Share a link to an online resource, such as an article or video series, and agree to discuss that content in future spiritual e-mentoring meetings.

# **RESOURCES**

## **Faith & Work**

CBMC Advancement System: Operation Timothy Curriculum

FaithandWork.com: The Center for Faith & Work, NYC

## **Christian Apologetics**

ReasonableFaith.org: Articles and videos from Dr. William Lane

Craig)RZIM.org: Ravi Zacharias International Ministries

## **Biblical World View**

SoWeSpeak.com: So We Speak publishes blogs, articles, and a weekly podcast that help you “think Christianly” about current events in the world.

## TECHNIQUE FIVE: SAY WHAT YOU SEE

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A DISCIPLE-MAKER CAN DO.

Every Christian is in a process of change where they are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:29 tells us, “For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,” and Philippians 1:6 encourages us, “I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion...”

Mentors are in a unique position to see the growth and development of their protégé. One of the most important ways mentors help their protégé is by telling them what they see. It can be as simple as, “It’s great to see how much more patient you’ve become over the last few months.”

### Three Qualifications for a Spiritual e-Mentor:

Many people find the idea of becoming a mentor intimidating. Effective spiritual e-mentoring requires three main qualifications.

1. **Know Jesus.** Mentors have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through time spent in prayer and the Bible.
2. **Trust Jesus.** Mentors don’t have all the answers, but they know where to go. Spiritual e-mentors faithfully point their protégés back to Jesus through prayer and the wisdom found in the Bible.
3. **See Jesus.** Mentors pay attention to the Christ-like characteristics God is developing in their protégé and say what they see God is doing in their life.

### Pro-tip: Smile for the Camera

Turn a five minute phone call into a video conference where you can look another person in the eye as well as talk to them makes a stronger connection.

Advancements in mobile technology means that video conferencing is an almost standard capability across multiple digital communications platforms such as iPhone FaceTime, Google Hangouts, Facebook Messenger, Skype, or Zoom.

Mobile apps continue to make this easy to do and if you both have an iPhone, you can switch to a video even in the middle of a phone call.

## TECHNIQUE SIX: CHOOSE METHODS THAT MULTIPLY THE TRUE MEASURE OF SUCCESS.

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” More than merely making discipleship, spiritual e-mentoring presents the opportunity to utilize methods that make disciple makers.

### Reflections from Research: The Road to Reproducibility

Findings from new research indicate e-mentoring methods show great promise for reproducibility in discipleship. In a nationwide study, mentors and protégés report they were learning methods and digital tools they plan to use in future discipleship relationships. Mentors also reported they were actively training their protégé to mentor someone else in the future.

### Apps You May Not Know About:

Spiritual e-mentoring should start with the tools you know, while exploring the ever growing marketplace of digital tools and apps available. Here are a few apps you may not know about and what they can do:

- **Connection Groups:** Organize groups of all sizes through discussion boards, shared calendars, polls, to-do lists, private chats and more. (i.e. GroupMe or Band)
- **Collaboration Platforms:** Multi-application software suites are available from software developers such as Microsoft Teams and Google G-Suite. These software suites include options for file sharing and collaboration, instant messaging, video conferencing, email, voice calls and more.
- **Video Conferencing:** The use of video conferencing advanced in the consumer market at an incredible rate in 2020. The key to effective video conferencing is knowing which platform to choose. Pick a platform that you both know, whether it is iPhone's FaceTime, Facebook Messenger, Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Zoom, Skype, or another.
- **Spiritual Formation Resources:** Apps and online resources dedicated to promoting spiritual formation. These platforms include:
  - **The Marketplace Ambassador Advancement System from CBMC:** Interactive electronic platform that takes tools and resources from CBMC to a new level of functionality and accessibility. Small group evangelism training such as LivingProof Adventure or the proven discipleship tool, Operation Timothy, are available on smartphones, tablets, or laptops.
  - **Echo Prayer:** Create prayer groups, share prayer requests, and keep track of answered prayer.
  - **Bible Apps:** YouVersion, CSB App, ESV App, and more.

## Reflections from Research

Research of mentoring in business, education, and spiritual growth identify six essential characteristics to effective mentoring:

- Belief in others
- Trust
- Training
- A process
- High levels of communication
- Time

Multiple studies found all six essential characteristics are present in e-mentoring.

## Added Benefits of e-Mentoring

There are added benefits to e-mentoring identified in research. Mentoring in the virtual environment through digital communication creates a **conduit for information sharing**, a **context for self-sufficiency**, and can **build confidence while enhancing self-esteem**.

E-mentoring methods also **overcome scheduling conflicts** as well as **geographic boundaries**.

Finally, because it is not dependent on a particular meeting time or place, e-mentoring is **highly adaptable** to a variety of settings and communication tools or platforms.

# THREE MOMENTS IN SPIRITUAL FORMATION:

In his book, *The Great Omission*, Dallas Willard describes three moments in spiritual formation.

**1. Training in spiritual activities:** Spiritual formation includes active practical training for ministry and this first moment in spiritual formation focuses on certain activities are spiritual exercises or work.

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12

Consider the activities and work of Christ’s disciples. God is certainly the source of the training and capability for successful work of ministry, but this passage in Ephesians clearly encourages disciple makers to take seriously the task of equipping each other for the work of formation.

**2. Shaping of the inner life:** The second moment in Spiritual formation is the shaping of the inner life, the formation of the heart and will. Spiritual e-mentoring develops the spirit of a person as much as intellect, emotions, and behavior. What is formed is explicitly the spiritual dimension of a persons life, the spiritual aspect of one’s personality.

## Pro-Tip

Mentors can help protégés identify a ministry activity as one objective of the mentoring plan. Ministry activities include serving in a church ministry program, going on a mission trip, teaching a Bible study, or volunteering in a community social service organization.

## Pro-Tip

Ask questions that get the inside out. When discussing various issues or topics, ask questions such as:

- What do you think after praying about this?
- What are you finding in the Scripture?
- What do you believe God is doing in this situation?

## THREE MOMENTS IN SPIRITUAL FORMATION:

**3. Shaping by Spiritual Forces:** It is imperative to understand that spiritual formation is not only a positive experience for a Christian. Spiritually is all around us and not all of it is good. “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12

Proactive Christian spiritual formation must focus on the spiritual things that God has given us; his Word, the Holy Spirit, and fellowship with other believers (including spiritual e-mentoring).

## FOOTNOTES

The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus’ Essential Teachings on Discipleship by Dallas Willard (Harper Collins, 2006)

# GETTING STARTED:

## YOUR TIME IS VALUABLE. BE SELECTIVE

Here are a few things to consider before you start meeting with someone:

- What makes a good mentor
- The qualities of a good mentee
- How long the mentorship relationship should last

### 1. What makes a good mentor

The role of a mentor is not to teach or to lecture. You're not going to give a monologue each meeting, nor will you only be asking questions. You are just going to be there and be yourself. To be there, you have to do a few things and not do a few things.

#### Do these things:

**Listen.** The mentor who spends the whole time talking is not a great disciple-maker; the one who spends time listening is...especially at the beginning of the relationship. You set the stage that this is going to be interactive, a conversation led by you that includes your Mentee. The longer your Mentee talks, the more you will learn about him and as a result, the more you'll invest in the details of his life. Then when you do speak, they'll be more apt to listen to you, if you've listened to them first.

**Facilitate.** It's crucial that you ask open-ended questions and encourage dialogue. You need to be able to ask your Mentee "what do you think?" To draw him in. Don't hesitate to make a note when he says something that gives you a little insight into who he is. Otherwise you might not remember it later.

**Advocate** on their behalf. As you get to know your Mentee, there will be things you can help him with. It's natural for you as a Mentor to want to help him. Make available your resources, your bookshelf, your network of contacts, whatever God has given you, use it to help him.

## Do these things:

**Coach them.** Train him with the diligence and perseverance of a coach expecting changes and results. As time goes on, and even beyond the 9 or 12 months, your Mentee will ask your advice about things. Be careful about dispensing advice.

Try to ask questions that will help him think through the issue and lead him to his own decision. Coach him on how to get to the answer rather than giving him the answer yourself. Be very careful about sharing your opinions. Everyone has one of those. Only share from your experience—what you’ve observed others do firsthand—or from Scripture. You’ll never go wrong if you stay within those guardrails.

No one can ever question your experience and (hopefully) the wisdom you gained from whatever you did... good or bad. And you’ll never regret sharing Biblical truth with a Mentee. Show them what Jesus said about it or point them to a character in the Bible who faced a similar issue and how they dealt with it.

**Love them.** Even when they disappoint you and especially when they fail, show patience and encouragement as you help them identify what went wrong and establish a different path forward. When you listen, forgive and encourage, you are demonstrating that they have value in God’s eyes and in yours, and that you still believe in them. This speaks volumes. Just be real, be, there, be honest, listen, coach, and love them. God will use you beyond your wildest expectations.

## Don’t do these things:

You are **not** going to become their business consultant. There is a certain amount of professional advice and encouragement that just happens when a Mentor and a Mentee get into a safe environment and talk about their work. Be careful you don’t find yourself drawn too far into the details of your Mentee’s job, company, organization, or partnership. You’re there to help him become a sold-out follower of Jesus Christ and a future disciple-maker. Don’t drift too far from that purpose.

You are **not** going to be a counselor. If the issues are deep and old, and if it’s clear that the Mentee needs help beyond common sense, then help him connect to a counselor and hold him accountable for following through. Pull back and defer to a professional before you get in over your head.

In summary, your role is to do life with your Mentee for a season of time. Be who you are, share what you know, let them see how you think, act, live, pray, and serve. Don’t take too much responsibility for changing them. Leave that to God. Just show up and be you.

## 2. The Qualities of a Good Mentee

Here are four qualities to look for in someone you are considering discipling. Keep these in mind as you pray about who to invest your time into.

- **Spiritual.** Jesus was not interested in helping leaders lead better. He was looking for those who would follow Him and follow His example of leadership. The most important quality of a disciple is their willingness to follow Jesus and make their relationship and pursuit of Him their highest priority.
- **Faithful.** They come prepared each week, having done whatever reading or homework you agreed to in the prior meeting. They arrive on time and give you their full attention during your meeting.
- **Teachable.** They are willing to take direct feedback without being defensive. They are willing to look at themselves in the mirror and make changes to improve. They are humble and have an expressed hunger for personal growth.
- **Missional.** The person worthy of your time is one who recognizes their responsibility to then pay it forward and do the same with someone else. Though they might not initially see themselves as qualified, they should understand that God has called all of His children to The Great Commission, making disciples and passing on what they've learned.

### 3. How Long the Mentoring Relationship Should Last

How long the mentorship relationship should last How often you meet will be up to you, but it will be tough to maintain momentum if you aren't meeting at least every other week. Ideally, you will meet weekly for an hour in a location that is free from distraction and affords for very personal conversations and prayer time.

It is recommended that you continue meeting consistently until you have at least completed the discipleship curriculum that you are working through. (Highly recommended: CBMC's Operation Timothy)

#### The reasons are:

- You want to make sure they have a firm foundation in their own spiritual walk
- You want them to have firsthand experience with a discipleship tool that they can use with someone else. ("You can't teach what you don't know, and you can't lead where you don't go.")

Typically, you should have already established a trust bond and seen evidence of spiritual discovery and life change within the first six months. At that point, you should be encouraging them to pray about whom they might start working with, even as you continue your meetings with them.

It is important that they understand that a critical part of their spiritual maturity is them discipling someone else. Just as there's a difference between a 30-year-old man and a 30-year-old father, there's a difference between a disciple and a disciple-maker. Jesus has called all believers to be disciple-makers, so your mentee's commitment to disciple others is ultimately a matter of obedience.

Once firmly established, a discipleship relationship never really ends. It will, however, reach a point where you meet less often because they have matured to the point where they need to be discipling others. At that point, you may agree to meet less frequently to allow time in their schedule to mentor someone else.

# MAKING THE TIME COUNT: YOUR FIRST MEETINGS

When you have someone interested in a mentoring/discipleship relationship, the temptation is to jump in right away and start working through some material. This often results in ‘discipleship fizzle’ caused by mismatched expectations, a lack of established trust, poor commitment on their part, or simply being unfamiliar with them. To prevent this, consider a slower start that looks something like this:

## Meeting ONE: Get to Know Them

The role of a mentor is not to teach or to lecture. You’re not going to give a monologue each meeting, nor will you only be asking questions. You are just going to be there and be yourself. To be there, you have to do a few things and not do a few things.

- **Their story.** Learn about their career, their family, hobbies, etc. Be sure to share your story as well to model the kind of transparency and honesty that will be important as you continue forward. Look for common interests and experiences.
- **Their goals.** Find out what drives them, where their passions are, where they see themselves in 10 years and what’s on their ‘bucket list’.
- **Their expectations.** Ask what they’re looking for in a mentoring relationship. Many will come thinking they want a business mentor or a marriage mentor, so be prepared to explain that your interest is to help them grow in their relationship with Christ, not to advise on business matters or provide focused marriage counsel.
- **Their experience.** Ask whether they’ve ever had someone work with them personally to help them grow in their faith and as a leader at home and at work. Explain that you’ve been through this process with someone else and would be willing to do the same with them if they are interested.

Even if they respond favorably and express a desire to start meeting regularly, ask them to read a short book like *My Heart Christ’s Home* before your next meeting and be prepared to talk about it when you come back together.

Suggest that you both pray between now and then before you decide whether to move forward. This establishes early on that your time is important and you’re entering into this commitment prayerfully and seriously. Establish a time and place for the next meeting. If meeting in person, choose a place with few distractions and enough privacy to discuss sensitive topics.

## Meeting TWO: Observe their follow-through and agree on a path forward

- **Discuss.** Talk through the assignment from your first meeting, and let them explain what stood out to them and why. Pay attention to the clues they give regarding their challenges, what inspires them, and most importantly, their understanding of God.
- **Observe.** Did they do the assignment and came ready to discuss? If they don't do it at the start, they won't be doing it three months later. Are they thinking critically about the application to their lives? Ask, "What do you think would best help you get where you want to be in your Christian life?"

At this point, people will generally fall into one of two buckets:

- A: a small group where they can find encouragement and fellowship
  - B: someone to lead and challenge them personally and intentionally
- **Direct.** If they don't seem interested or committed in working one-on-one (bucket A), refer them to a small group (like CBMC's Connect3 Teams) and offer to meet occasionally. If, however, they show themselves committed and hungry, offer to meet regularly for a few months and then re-evaluate.
  - **Agree.** Explain that they'll have some light homework to do between meetings, like reading, answering questions, listening to a podcast or sermon, and even some scripture memory. Their faithfulness to be on time and prepared is important for them and a sign of respect to you, so make it clear that you're in this only as long as they are fully committed. Agree on a checkpoint after six to eight weeks to review your progress and decide whether to continue.
  - **Share.** Give them access to the discipleship material you will use to guide your meetings going forward. CBMC's Operation Timothy is a fantastic resource to start with, and will take 6-12 months to get through from start to finish. Not only is it practical and biblically sound, it provides a path that the mentee can use when they become the mentor. It can be purchased in book form on Amazon or can be accessed free online at [advance.cbmc.com](http://advance.cbmc.com).

## Going Forward: Future Meetings

Pick a comfortable meeting location that is free from distractions and affords the privacy you will need. After opening in prayer, consider using the Three Thirds Model for structuring your time.

### Part 1: Look back

Get an update on what's happened since you last met. Use discernment about how much time or detail to go into, knowing that this can easily take up a full meeting. You'll want to be sure to ask:

- how their time with the Lord has been
- what they feel God has been showing them
- how did they do with their action-items from the prior meeting
- joys or victories
- setbacks or failures

### Part 2: Look up

Discuss your lesson or homework that they've completed for this session. Take time sharing your answers with each other, but keep the pace moving forward so they feel a sense of accomplishment with each meeting.

Remember that the goal here is to help them establish a firm grasp on knowing and applying God's Word to their lives.

### Part 3: Look forward

Encourage them to identify at least one action item based on your discussion and set a measurable goal for the upcoming week. Encourage them to set goals not only for their personal walk, but for investing in others to help them know and follow Christ as well.

Constantly re-cast the vision for them bringing someone else along the same path that you are leading them on. This is how we fulfill The Great Commission. Never close your meeting without praying for each person.

# Appendix

## WE LEARNED THROUGH COVID THAT SOCIAL DISTANCING DOESN'T MEAN DISCONNECTING

New data on remote work across multiple sectors in Oklahoma offer timely insights into the impact of digital communication on human interaction, connectedness, and collaboration. This impact will ultimately affect social behavior, work productivity, and organizational culture.

A statewide case study surveying remote workers from the private sector, public and state agencies, non-profits, and faith communities found social distancing doesn't mean disconnecting.

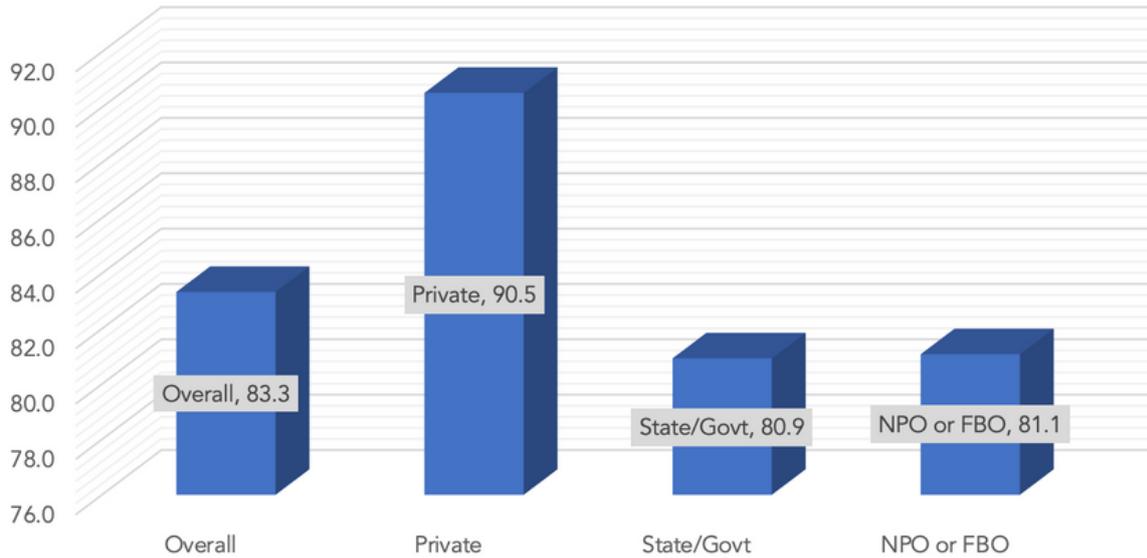
Three key findings from the study are included on the following pages and the full report can be found at [digitally-connected.com](https://digitally-connected.com).

Across all sectors, researchers found strong levels of connectedness despite social distancing requirements. When people were required to socially distance and switch to digital platforms, they found their contributions were valued as much as in person, were able to give and receive feedback to accomplish objectives, and reported they felt supported by colleagues.

The use of virtual meetings in effectively facilitating collaboration cannot be ignored and will continue to be a part of how work and business is done.

## Felt Supported by Colleagues

Agree and Strongly Agree



*"I am very grateful for the various programs and technology that my organization had available to us as things unfolded. We had the resources available to us to quickly pivot, do internal training and continue to support our students, clients and staff. I actually think our **employee engagement will go up this year** because we have been **more intentional in connecting and communicating**, even if it was virtually."*

*"We were not adept at digital communication (Zoom, TEAMS, etc.) prior to COVID-19. Our staff has **become very proficient** and it has encouraged many who would have been averse to adoption to utilize these tools."*

## My Contributions Were Valued as Much as In Person

Agree and Strongly Agree

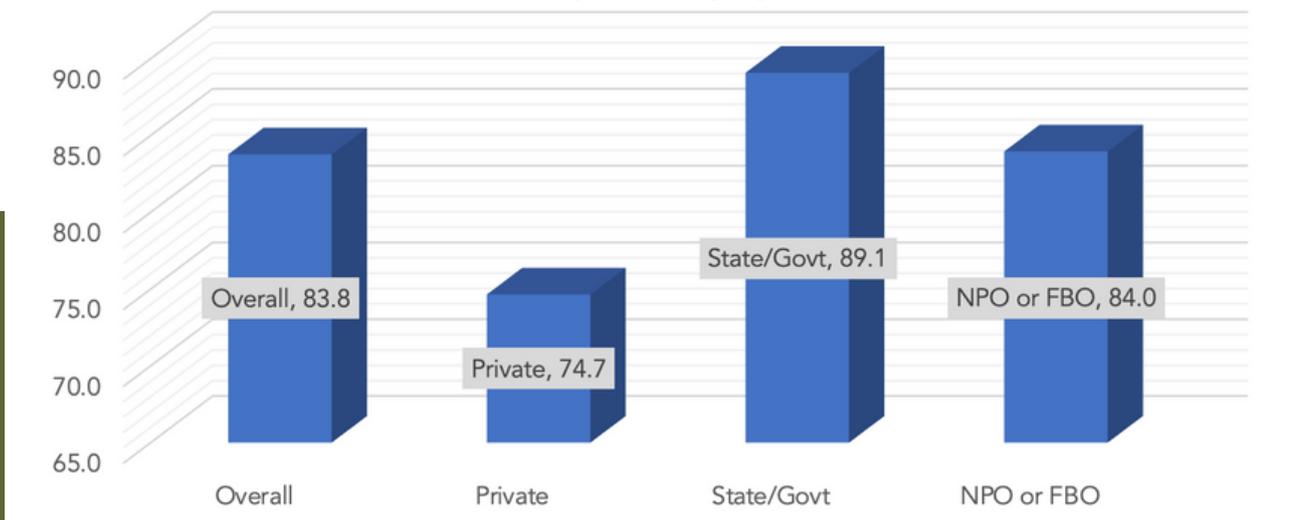


*“We traveled significantly throughout the US previously but now that has been completely eliminated in favor of online forums. The **online efforts allow a much more collaborative impact.**”*

*“We have become regular users of Zoom. Daily Zoom team meetings helped our organization work together and communicate but took up too much time during the shutdown. **Since returning our communication and collaboration has gone way down** which is unfortunate.”*

## Able to Give and Receive Feedback to Accomplish Objectives

Agree and Strongly Agree



*“Before the COVID-19 pandemic, our organization was stuck in the 20th century as far as communication. We primarily used email and in-person meetings. Most of the time these methods were unproductive and ineffective. Once the pandemic hit, we were forced to make a huge change in our communication methods and began to rely heavily on Zoom and social media.”*

*“This forced reliance is exactly the kick starter we needed in order to bring us into the 21st century.”*

*“In these past few months, we have used Zoom for a number of things such as staff meetings, district updates, community updates with legislative leaders, PD training, online learning, exercise classes, performance art events, and an awards show. All of this without affecting business or interrupting normal operations in any significant way. And from what I can tell, everyone has enjoyed this new way of communicating. We have been engaged and enlightened like never before.”*

## WE LEARNED THROUGH COVID THAT PEOPLE WERE LESS CONNECTED TO SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, FRIENDS, AND FAITH COMMUNITY

Exploring the variation in connectedness to different groups of people, the study asked:

To what extent was your connection to other people hindered by the use of digital communication, on a scale from 1 (Completely Blocked) to 7 (Not Hindered at All)?

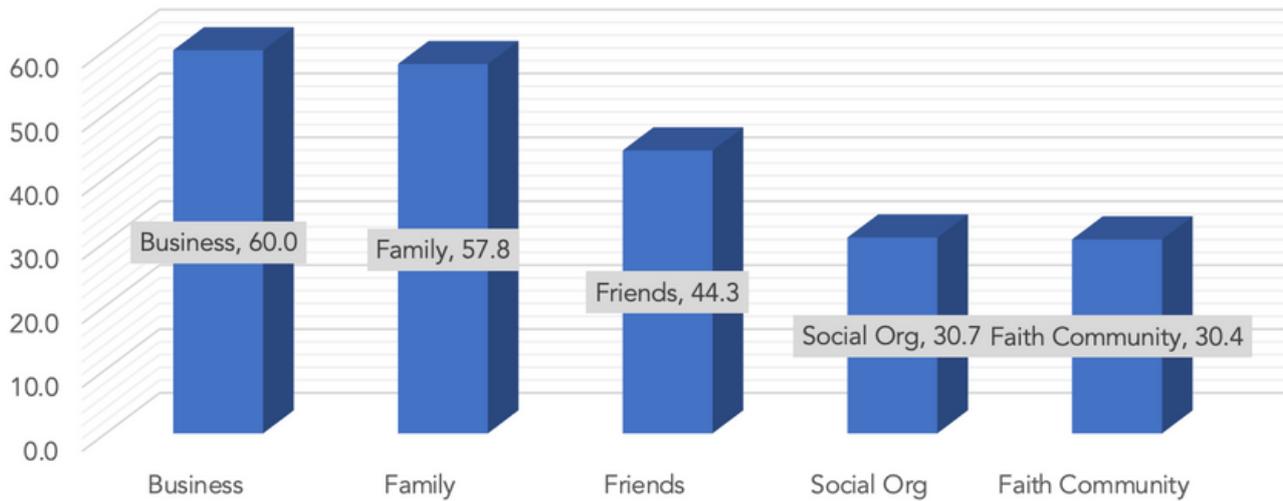
Respondents rated their connection to other people for the following groups: Business/Work Connections, Family Connections, Friends, Social/Community Organizations, Religious/Faith Community.

When it comes to business connections or family, we found people's sense of connectedness was less hindered. Conversely, connection to social groups, friends, and faith communities were more hindered or completely blocked.

One factor contributing to the decrease of connection to friends, social groups, and faith communities may be that people grow weary of virtual meetings after the workday. It's also possible that connecting to personal friends, social organizations, or one's faith community is simply more challenging when done through digital platforms. More research is needed to understand the reasons for the variation range in connectedness with the different groups found in this study.

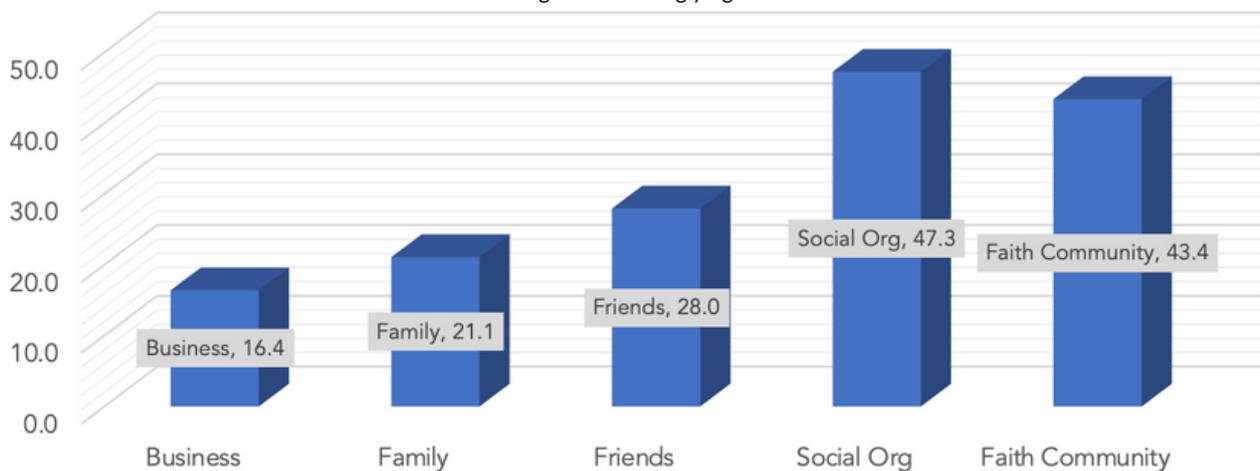
## Connection to Others Not Hindered

Agree and Strongly Agree



## Connection to Others Hindered or Completely Blocked

Agree and Strongly Agree



*“Before we started moving people home, only a few people were using TEAMS for their meetings with our current at-home staff. Now, everyone uses it routinely and we have allowed employees to use our TEAMS platform for personal get-together's after work hours.”*

## WE LEARNED

### PEOPLE CONNECTED BETTER THROUGH REAL-TIME INTERACTION

An important characteristic of digital communication is that it can be either asynchronous or synchronous (in real time).

Examples of asynchronous communication include text messaging, email, or message boards. The advantage to asynchronous communication is the ability to respond at more convenient times. Sufficient time can be taken to gather additional information and provide a more thoughtful or accurate response – such as when responding to a work colleague.

Real-Time Interaction, or synchronous communication, whether through a voice call or videoconference, allows participants to speak more candidly at times, have conversations of a more personal nature, and to pick up on verbal or non-verbal cues in the moment.

The use of both synchronous and asynchronous digital communication was the normal practice for nearly all respondents. Where one-third of respondents reported the use of RTI for 1 to 30 percent of their digital communication, more than half reported the use of RTI from 31 to 90 percent of their digital communication.

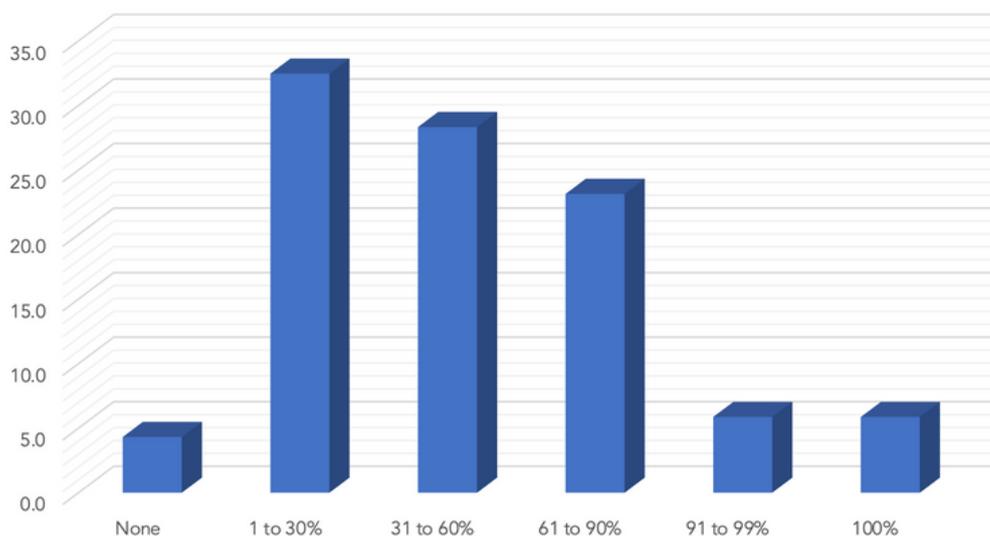
## STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN REAL TIME INTERACTION

We found the use of Real-Time Interaction (RTI) is helpful in promoting a greater sense of connection when using digital communication platforms. An additional level of data analysis of found multiple positive correlations at statistically significant levels ( $p < .05$ ). Using the percent of RTI as an independent variable, linear regression analysis was performed on a series of dependent variables related to connectedness.

As the rate of RTI increased from zero to one hundred percent, respondents found a positive increase in the following areas:

- *Connection with business and work contacts became less hindered.*
- *Connection with religious and faith community contacts became less hindered.*
- *When working with a remote team, their contributions were valued as much as in person.*
- *They were able to give and/or receive needed feedback to accomplish goals or objectives.*
- *Team leaders regularly communicated expectations.*
- *Employees felt supported by co-workers and colleagues.*

Interaction in Real-Time



## WE LEARNED ORGANIZATIONS

### ADOPTED EXISTING PLATFORMS AND PROCESSES MORE THAN INVENTING NEW ONES

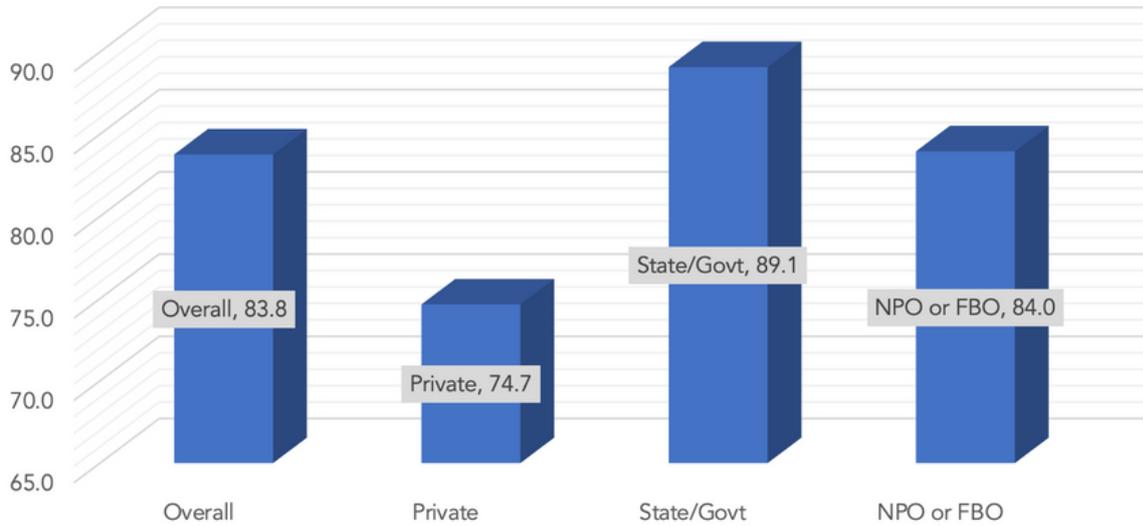
While many businesses developed new products to contain the spread of COVID, data in this study offers insights into how organizations adopted existing digital platforms more than invented new practices, products, or technologies.

We found that there was a significant increase in the use of digital communications and that it was most pronounced in the state/government and non-profit and faith-based sectors.

This may indicate that these sectors were less prepared for a WFH event and were forced to more significantly increase their reliance on digital tools.

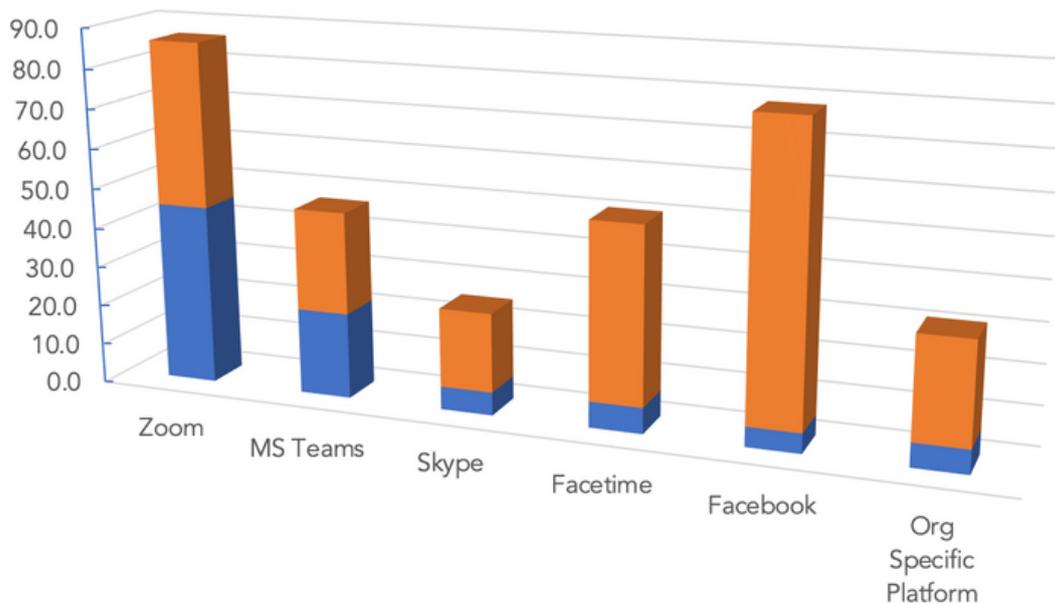
It could also indicate that the shift to using digital tools was greater in these sectors. As an example, religious houses of worship were forced to pivot their entire congregations and services to digital technology.

## Significantly Increased Use of Digital Communications Tools



We also found that organizations implemented digital communication and collaboration tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, in many instances for the first time.

## Adoption of Digital Platforms



	Zoom	MS Teams	Skype	Facetime	Facebook	Org Specific Platform
Have and Currently Use	41.3	25.5	19.7	44.2	73.4	25.5
Haven't But Do Now	45.1	21.5	5.8	6.5	5.0	6.0

*“Prior to the shut down my organization was reluctant to use digital platforms for communication. We were thrown in the deep end and had to move quickly, fortunately **we had the platforms in place and the communication channels we already had proved very useful and now we will continue to use them with greater frequency. It will change our travel schedules as well as how we handle meetings, actually expanding our capability.**”*

*“Prior to the shutdown we used WebEx often and exclusively. Since the shutdown we now use Microsoft Teams as well as WebEx, and together **we have doubled our usage.**”*

## INNOVATION IN FAITH BASED ARENA

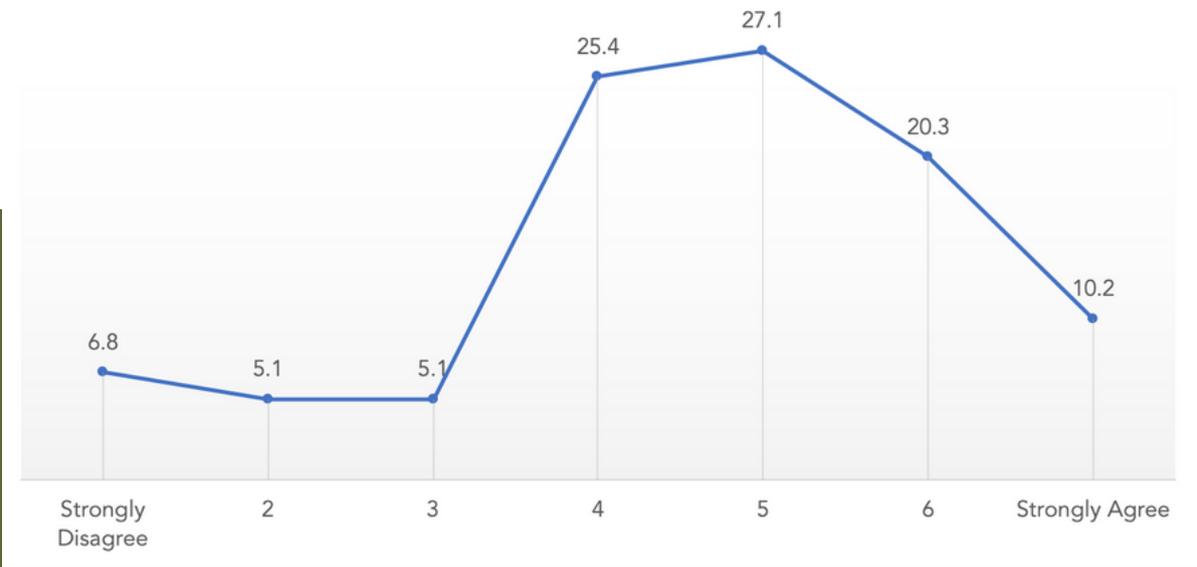
Faith-based organizations and houses of worship in particular innovated dramatically during social distancing requirements due to COVID. Individuals surveyed in the faith-based arena were asked additional questions about the impact of digital communications in their particular context.

*“Before the shutdown we used email, Facebook, and our webpage, to communicate with church members. We had been thinking about Facebook live before the shutdown but didn’t know how to implement it. When the shutdown came, we had no choice but to jump in and try. We now use Zoom, email, Facebook page, Facebook live, webpage, and radio, and intend to continue to use all of these even later after this is all over.”*

*“We will be Live Streaming more of our events in the future and had a greater level of engagement using our digital platforms than we do with in-person meetings.”*

Our research found that most members found transitioning to online participation easier than it was difficult.

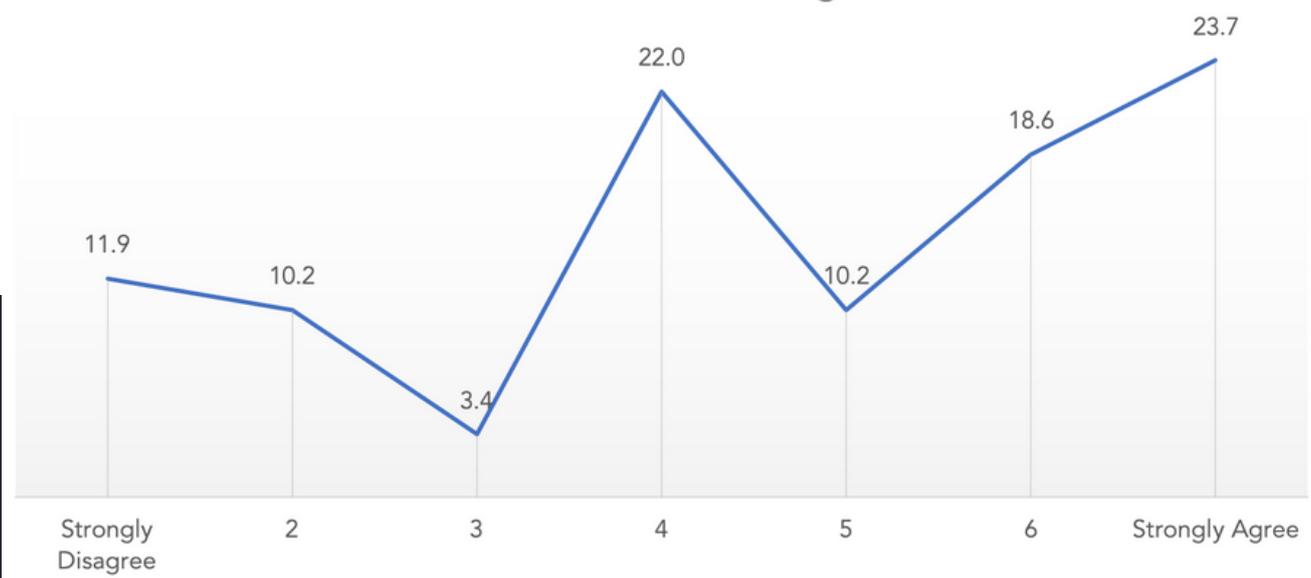
Members Easily Able to Transition to Online Participation



We found that a majority of those polled plan to purchase equipment to help them improve their digital communication efforts moving forward.

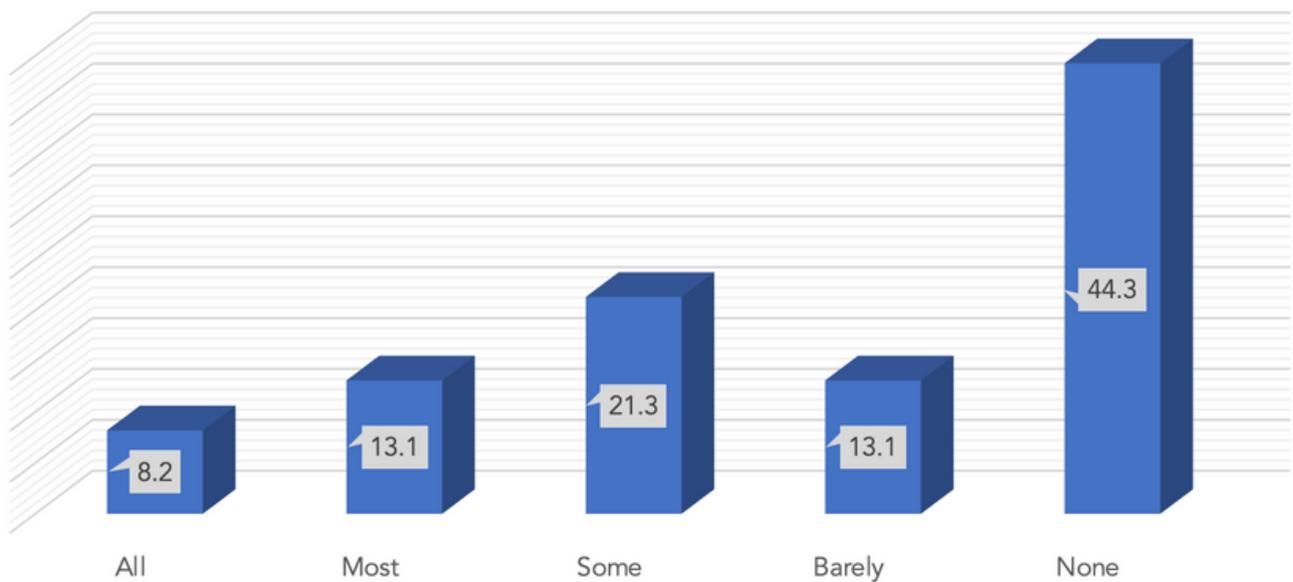
Whether to strengthen digital offerings to broadcast services or to find new ways to reach members such as podcasts or video conferencing tools to reach existing and new members, the drive to obtain tools to improve digital offerings definitely increased.

Plan to Purchase Equipment to Improve Digital Communication Efforts Going Forward



Social distancing requirements certainly impacted small group meetings. Our research found that nearly half of all small group meetings halted meeting altogether when in-person gatherings were not possible.

### Small Groups Continued Meeting Using Digital Platforms



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### Dr. Joel W. Harder

Joel Harder is the founder and president of Oklahoma Capitol Culture. He has several years of experience working in leadership development through nationwide nonprofits and political arenas. Harder is a Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW) and serves on the Oklahoma State Board of Licensed Social Workers.

In 2018, Harder earned a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) after conducting a nationwide study of e-mentoring and digital learning among marketplace influencers, publishing the results in his doctoral dissertation.

Harder is published in a peer reviewed journal and is a regular contributor to The Oklahoman and Tulsa World. As a consultant with Pliris Strategies and adjunct lecturer through Rose State College, Harder teaches seminars on digital transformation and communication techniques.

In September of 2020, Harder released the findings of a new statewide case study of work, digital communications and connectedness during COVID, *Work and Digital Communications During COVID: What Will Come Back and What Will Never Be the Same.* The full report can be found at [www.digitally-connected.com](http://www.digitally-connected.com).

He is the author of *When Leaders Matter: How Civility, Integrity, and the Leaders We Need Are Possible.*



# MAKING DISCIPLES

## GETTING STARTED

Your time is valuable. Be selective. Here are a few things to consider before you start meeting with someone to disciple them:

1. What makes a good mentor
2. The qualities of a good mentee
3. How long the mentorship relationship should last

### 1. What makes a good mentor

The role of a mentor is not to teach or to lecture. You're not going to give a monologue each meeting, nor will you only be asking questions. You are just going to be there and be yourself. To be there, you have to do a few things and not do a few things.

#### *DO THESE THINGS:*

**Listen.** The mentor who spends the whole time talking is not a great disciple-maker; the one who spends time listening is ... especially at the beginning of the relationship. You set the stage that this is going to be interactive, a conversation led by you that includes your Mentee. The longer your Mentee talks, the more you will learn about him and as a result, the more you'll invest in the details of his life. Then when you do speak, they'll be more apt to listen to you, if you've listened to them first.

**Facilitate.** It's crucial that you ask open-ended questions and encourage dialogue. You need to be able to ask your Mentee "what do you think?" To draw him in. Don't hesitate to make a note when he says something that gives you a little insight into who he is. Otherwise you might not remember it later.

**Advocate** on their behalf. As you get to know your Mentee, there will be things you can help him with. It's natural for you as a Mentor to want to help him. Make available your resources, your bookshelf, your network of contacts, whatever God has given you, use it to help him.

**Coach** them. Train him with the diligence and perseverance of a coach expecting changes and results. As time goes on, and even beyond the 9 or 12 months, your Mentee will ask your advice about things. Be careful about dispensing advice. Try to ask questions that will help him think through the issue and lead him to his own decision. Coach him on how to get to the answer rather than giving him the answer yourself.



Be very careful about sharing your opinions. Everyone has one of those. Only share from your experience – what you've observed others do firsthand – or from Scripture. You'll never go wrong if you stay within those guardrails. No one can ever question your experience and (hopefully) the wisdom you gained from whatever you did ... good or bad. And you'll never regret sharing Biblical

truth with a Mentee. Show them what Jesus said about it or point them to a character in the Bible who faced a similar issue and how they dealt with it.

**Love** them. Even when they disappoint you and especially when they fail, show patience and encouragement as you help them identify what went wrong and establish a different path forward. When you listen, forgive and encourage, you are demonstrating that they have value in God's eyes and in yours, and that you still believe in them. This speaks volumes. Just be real, be there, be honest, listen, coach, and love them. God will use you beyond your wildest expectations.

### *DON'T DO THESE THINGS:*

You are not going to become their business consultant. There is a certain amount of professional advice and encouragement that just happens when a Mentor and a Mentee get into a safe environment and talk about their work. Be careful you don't find yourself drawn too far into the details of your Mentee's job, company, organization, or partnership. You're there to help him become a sold-out follower of Jesus Christ and a future disciple-maker. Don't drift too far from that purpose.

You are not going to be a counselor. If the issues are deep and old, and if it's clear that the Mentee needs help beyond common sense, then help him connect to a counselor and hold him accountable for following through. Pull back and defer to a professional before you get in over your head.

In summary, your role is to do life with your Mentee for a season of time. Be who you are, share what you know, let them see how you think, act, live, pray, and serve. Don't take too much responsibility for changing them. Leave that to God. Just show up and be you.

## **2. The qualities of a good mentee**

Here are 4 qualities to look for in someone you are considering discipling. Keep these in mind as you pray about who to invest your time into.

- 1. Spiritual.** Jesus was not interested in helping leaders lead better. He was looking for those who would follow Him and follow His example of leadership. The most important quality of a disciple is their willingness to follow Jesus and make their relationship and pursuit of Him their highest priority.
- 2. Faithful.** They come prepared each week, having done whatever reading or homework you agreed to in the prior meeting. They arrive on time and give you their full attention during your meeting.

3. **Teachable.** They are willing to take direct feedback without being defensive. They are willing to look at themselves in the mirror and make changes to improve. They are humble and have an expressed hunger for personal growth.
4. **Missional.** The person worthy of your time is one who recognizes their responsibility to then pay it forward and do the same with someone else. Though they might not initially see themselves as qualified, they should understand that God has called all of His children to The Great Commission, making disciples and passing on what they've learned.

### 3. How long the mentorship should last

How often you meet will be up to you, but it will be tough to maintain momentum if you aren't meeting at least every other week. Ideally, you will meet weekly for an hour in a location that is free from distraction and affords for very personal conversations and prayer time.

It is recommended that you continue meeting consistently until you have at least completed the discipleship curriculum that you are working through. (Highly recommended: CBMC's Operation Timothy) The reasons are:

1. You want to make sure they have a firm foundation in their own spiritual walk
2. You want them to have firsthand experience with a discipleship tool that they can use with someone else. ("You can't teach what you don't know, and you can't lead where you don't go.")

Typically, you should have already established a trust bond and seen evidence of spiritual discovery and life change within the first six months. At that point, you should be encouraging them to pray about whom they might start working with, even as you continue your meetings with them. It is important that they understand that a critical part of their spiritual maturity is them discipling someone else. Just as there's a difference

between a 30-year-old man and a 30-year-old father, there's a difference between a disciple and a disciple-maker. Jesus has called all believers to be disciple-makers, so your mentee's commitment to disciple others is ultimately a matter of obedience.

*Once firmly established, a discipleship relationship never really ends. It will, however, reach a point where you meet less often because they have matured to the point where they need to be discipling others. At that point, you may agree to meet less frequently to allow time in their schedule to mentor someone else.*



# Making the time count

When you have someone interested in a mentoring / discipleship relationship, the temptation is to jump in right away and start working through some material. This often results in 'discipleship fizzle' caused by mismatched expectations, a lack of established trust, poor commitment on their part, or simply being unfamiliar with them. To prevent this, consider a slower start that looks something like this:

## MEETING 1: GET TO KNOW THEM

**THEIR STORY.** Learn about their career, their family, hobbies, etc. Be sure to share your story as well to model the kind of transparency and honesty that will be important as you continue forward. Look for common interests and experiences.

**THEIR GOALS.** Find out what drives them, where their passions are, where they see themselves in 10 years and what's on their 'bucket list'.

**THEIR EXPECTATIONS.** Their expectations. Ask what they're looking for in a mentoring relationship. Many will come thinking they want a business mentor or a marriage mentor, so be prepared to explain that your interest is to help them grow in their relationship with Christ, not to advise on business matters or provide focused marriage counsel.

**THEIR EXPERIENCE.** Their experience. Ask whether they've ever had someone work with them personally to help them grow in their faith and as a leader at home and at work. Explain that you've been through this process with someone else and would be willing to do the same with them if they are interested.

Even if they respond favorably and express a desire to start meeting regularly, ask them to read a short book like *My Heart Christ's Home* before your next meeting and be prepared to talk about it when you come back together. Suggest that you both pray between now and then before you decide whether to move forward. This establishes early on that your time is important and you're entering into this commitment prayerfully and seriously.

Establish a time and place for the next meeting. If meeting in person, choose a place with few distractions and enough privacy to discuss sensitive topics.

## **MEETING 2: OBSERVE THEIR FOLLOW-THROUGH AND AGREE ON A PATH FORWARD.**

**DISCUSS.** Talk through the assignment from your first meeting, and let them explain what stood out to them and why. Pay attention to the clues they give regarding their challenges, what inspires them, and most importantly, their understanding of God.

**OBSERVE.** Did they do the assignment and come ready to discuss? If they don't do it at the start, they won't be doing it three months later. Are they thinking critically about the application to their lives? Ask, "What do you think would best help you get where you want to be in your Christian life?"

At this point, people will generally fall into one of two buckets: A) a small group where they can find encouragement and fellowship, or B) someone to lead and challenge them personally and intentionally.

**DIRECT.** If they don't seem interested or committed in working one-on-one (bucket A), refer them to a small group (like CBMC's Connect3 Teams) and offer to meet occasionally. If, however, they show themselves committed and hungry, offer to meet regularly for a few months and then re-evaluate.

**AGREE.** Explain that they'll have some light homework to do between meetings, like reading, answering questions, listening to a podcast or sermon, and even some scripture memory. Their faithfulness to be on time and prepared is important for them and a sign of respect to you, so make it clear that you're in this only as long as they are fully committed. Agree on a checkpoint after six to eight weeks to review your progress and decide whether to continue.

**SHARE.** Give them access to the discipleship material you will use to guide your meetings going forward. CBMC's Operation Timothy is a fantastic resource to start with, and will take 6-12 months to get through from start to finish. Not only is it practical and biblically sound, it provides a path that the mentee can use when they become the mentor. It can be purchased in book form on Amazon or can be accessed free online at [advance.cbmc.com](http://advance.cbmc.com).

## GOING FORWARD: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME

Pick a comfortable meeting location that is free from distractions and affords the privacy you will need. After opening in prayer, consider using the Three Thirds Model for structuring your time.

**PART 1: LOOK BACK.** Get an update on what's happened since you last met. Use discernment about how much time or detail to go into, knowing that this can easily take up a full meeting. You'll want to be sure to ask:

- how their time with the Lord has been
- what God has been showing them recently
- how they did with their action-items from the prior meeting
- joys/victories
- setbacks/failures

**PART 2: LOOK UP.** Discuss your lesson or homework that they've completed for this session. Take time sharing your answers with each other, but keep the pace moving forward so they feel a sense of accomplishment with each meeting. Remember that the goal here is to help them establish a firm grasp on knowing and applying God's Word to their lives.

**PART 3: LOOK FORWARD.** Encourage them to identify at least one action item based on your discussion and set a measurable goal for the upcoming week. Encourage them to set goals not only for their personal walk, but for investing in others to help them know and follow Christ as well. Constantly re-cast the vision for them bringing someone else along the same path that you are leading them on. This is how we fulfill The Great Commission. Never close your meeting without praying for each person.