11 Steps for Great Follow Up

By Kelly Joiner, Campus Staff in Los Angeles

Here are 11 thorough tips for creating a robust follow-up process that will help your chapter reach out to peers who've gone through a Proxe Station, attended an evangelistic outreach, or indicated interest in InterVarsity at New Student Outreach.

1. Create a Follow-Up Card

Make quarter-sheet follow-up cards that obtain the following information:

- Name
- Year in school
- Room number/address
- "Interested In" checkboxes: GIG, ministry team, dorm Bible study, etc.
- Phone number
    - Include a checkbox for permission to text about events
- Email address
- Spiritual background
    - Have them circle their interest on a scale from 1-low to 5-high, or simply use a blank line

If you don't want to print follow-up cards and will have WiFi access/cell service at your table or event, you could even create a Google form to use on a phone/tablet that inputs follow-up data into a Google spreadsheet (see #2).

2. Create a Database

Create a database (Google spreadsheets are great for collaborative follow up) using the same categories from the follow-up card above as your column headings, plus a column for "Assigned To" (see #3).

3. Predetermine Who Will Follow Up with Whom

Before your event, create a system so that students know exactly who should follow up with each contact. You might organize follow-up efforts based on where contacts live, for example, and pre-assign each student leader or staff to specific dorm floors, whole dorms, apartment buildings, or parts of campus.

After the event, you can make adjustments in the database if a certain person would have a lot more people to follow up with than others.

It is best that only one student is assigned to each new contact, though they can do follow up in pairs for higher accountability.

4. Decide on Metrics and Set Goals

Determine what you want to measure and create goals around those categories. Here are some sample goals:

- Each person gets a personal visit (or phone call) within 24 hours of filling out a card
- 90% of interested students get at least one personal visit
- 45% of interested students get visited at least three times
- 20% of interested students attend at least one spiritual meeting

5. Track Goals in the Database

Create columns in your Google spreadsheet to keep track of progress with contacts and assess where you're at with goals.

For example, if one of your goals is to have contacts attend chapter events, you could create a column called "New Student Action" with dropdown options for "Attended Once," "Attended 3 Times," "No Show (Interested)," and "No Show (Not Interested)."

If one of your goals is for leaders to visit the contacts, you could create a column called "Leader Action" with dropdown options for "Face-to-Face Connection," "3 Repeated Connections," and "No Connection Yet."

6. Delegate a Data-Entry Team with Clear Deadlines

Assign three to five people to be your data-entry team. Immediately after each event or Proxe Station, it's their job to enter the data from follow-up cards into the Google spreadsheet.

Make sure that the "Assigned To" column gets filled out within a few hours after your event as well, so that every leader knows exactly with whom they are expected to follow up.

7. Prioritize Who and How They Get Followed Up

Certain people should get higher priority in follow up, perhaps because they aren't Christian or because they are from a minority culture on campus and will take less self-initiative in getting connected.

A few ways to do this are:

- Highlight their names in the Google spreadsheet
- Assign a separate point person to quickly follow up with each of these people
- Have the person who talked with them at the Proxe Station call them within six hours of having met them

8. Train Leaders How to Handle Follow-Up Cards

Each leader at a Proxe Station or event should know exactly what to do when they get a contact card.

After the interested student has left, the leader should write their own name on the back of the contact card along with any relevant information from their conversation. If the leader desires to follow up with that person directly, note that on the back of the card as well.

All contact cards should be turned into the same location. If a leader wants to keep a phone number or email for themselves, they should copy that down on a separate paper. The main thing is that all contact cards get put in one place so they can be inputted into the Google spreadsheet.

9. Pass Off Contacts with Care

Sometimes a new student will connect with someone who was not the original person assigned to follow up with them. For example, Andy was assigned to follow up with Tanya, but Tanya ended up going to Jessica's small group instead of Andy's.

You need to have a system for "passing off" this contact. It should become the responsibility of the person "taking" the contact to update that on the Google spreadsheet. In the above example, this means Jessica is now responsible to connect with Andy and update the Google spreadsheet to say that she is now responsible for following up further with Tanya.

10. Determine How and When to Debrief the Follow-Up Process

Keeping data is a good thing. Evaluating data is even better.

- What will you do with the data that you receive from the Google spreadsheet?
- Who will examine it and how often?

- How will you debrief quantitatively as well as qualitatively?
- How will you use it to help you see where God is working and how you are growing together in follow up?

11. Train Actual Follow-Up Conversations

Likely the most important thing will be helping your leaders know what to do once they are assigned to follow up with someone.

Have them role play what they will do when they visit someone's room or make a phone call. Be very specific about what you want them to do when they connect with someone:

- How can they make a great invitation to InterVarsity as well as communicate that they want to get to know that person better?
- How long should they visit with them?
- What should they say?
- How should they pray before and after the visit?

Do you have more pointers for efficient and effective follow up? Share them in a comment below.