

Reach!

New Passion. New Places. New People.

Study Guide

Reach Adaptively:
Rev. Jacob Armstrong



Rev. Jacob Armstrong: Reach Adaptively

Watch video: <https://tinyurl.com/video-armstrong>

Discussion questions:

1. How are you currently listening to your community—especially the unchurched? What are the expressed hopes, dreams, and struggles in your community? How does what you're hearing inform what you're doing on the inside?
2. What is something unique your church has to offer your community?
3. Jacob talked about a “closed loop” that people from outside of the church often feel when attending worship for the first time. What is one thing your church can do to open the closed loop? What are some ways you can change the language used in worship to make the experience less insider-driven and more guest-friendly?
4. In the past, how have changes within your church been received? How have church leaders been supported through the criticism?
5. Who is your team? How is your church building a team that focuses on vision and connecting with those who don't yet know Jesus rather than carrying out the day-to-day work?

Related exercises:

1. Go to a Sunday morning worship service, presuming you know nothing about Christianity or your church. Start by looking at your church website before you arrive, evaluating the signage upon your arrival, and paying close attention to how people are welcomed and what the worship experience is like. Which language, practices, or rituals would you find confusing? How might a new person feel confused or unwelcome? What needs to be adapted or changed to create a more hospitable environment? Gather a team to explore these discoveries and commit to make changes that provide a more positive experience for new people.
2. Engage in listening to your community like a missionary would:
 - Pray for your community and for God to show you what is breaking God's heart for the community.
 - Hang out where people gather, and listen, listen, listen. What are the conversations they are having, and what do they care about?
 - Conduct community interviews with people of peace, such as the mayor, school principals, and other non-profit leaders. Ask them what they see and know about the community and the needs they are trying to address. Ask how your church can partner.
 - Look at the changing demographics of your community by doing demographic research (MissionInsite is a great tool that's available to your congregation at no cost—contact the conference office for a custom report), then drive and walk your community.
 - Bring a team together after completing the steps above and discuss: What are the hopes and dreams of the community? What is breaking the hearts of people who live here? What is breaking God's heart? What is unique about what we have to offer our community?