

BASECAMP

Handy Tips for Group Leaders

We've asked an experienced BASECAMP group leader to give us some advice about how he organises his group and compiled below. If you have any other ideas or handy tips from your own experience, please feel free to email us at basecamp@kcc.org.au.

Preparation

- **Secure pre-launch tickets at BASECAMP for the following year!**

We aim to purchase tickets for the average number of attendees we usually get to BASECAMP, so we don't get stuck with tickets we're unable to sell. The pre-launch rate is usually around \$15 cheaper than the early bird price, so it's worth being prepared to purchase the tickets early.

- **Book accommodation**

Once we have the dates and tickets, we book our accommodation. Try and do this a week after BASECAMP so you don't forget or miss out! We've been staying at the same location for the past 4-5 years and already have it booked in for this year!

- **Create a group package**

In the week following BASECAMP, we put together a reasonably priced package for our men that covers ticket, accommodation, and some money to cover a basic Saturday breakfast at our accommodation. We then advertise to men while BASECAMP is still front of mind, so that they'll commit to coming to next year. We call this our 'super early bird rate' and last year we had nearly half our group sign up during this time! We advertise the package internally between men who attended via a WhatsApp chat group we create for the weekend, but this can also be done via email.

- **Promote at church men's events**

We mention BASECAMP through men's events that we hold throughout the year. As BASECAMP is our term 3 event, we don't push too hard until June/July the following year when we're starting to ramp back up again.

We highlight BASECAMP at our term 2 event around May/June and encourage men to come along. It's also around this time that we start promoting BASECAMP within our regular church services/weekly church emails and through direct emails to all the men at church. We also ask men in-person too, especially if they've been before to check if they're coming again.

- **Personally invite men to attend in the final weeks!**

As a group leader, in the two weeks leading up to BASECAMP I'm asking men individually if they're able to come. Whilst we try to encourage men attend the whole time, we have some who can only attend for the day, and we lock them in for that too.

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Other Tips & Ideas

- Following each BASECAMP event, take the opportunity to record short interviews with some of the men from your group (of different age groups) – ask their highlights, why they came, why other men should attend. These short interviews can be used for promotion in church services during the month or two prior to BASECAMP, as testimonies to the other men at church, encouraging them to attend rather than relying on the minister or men's group leader to tell them.
- Download and use BASECAMP promotional materials (flyers, social media graphics, videos) to use during services and on social media accounts. Printed flyers are helpful to hand out at church men's events and with service materials on Sunday.
- We try to make BASECAMP Mountains a fun weekend away, rather than just attending the event. Each year, we normally have half our group arrive early on Friday for a round of golf at one of the courses in the Blue Mountains, teeing off around lunch, then wrapping up about 5pm, ready to have dinner together as a large group before heading to StayKCC for BASECAMP.
- On Saturday after BASECAMP finishes, we try to quickly head back to our accommodation for afternoon tea and a short debrief/discussion following the day. We find this helpful (rather than catching up in the following weeks) as all the talks/thoughts/ideas are still fresh in our minds before we head down the mountain and get home and back into the busyness of life.
- A way to build a sense of bonding as Christian brothers at BASECAMP is to create something unique as part of the BASECAMP weekend. For us, it's presenting any new members with a special BASECAMP/Men's weekend cap (like a cricket 'Baggy Green'). Only men who come on the weekend away are presented with one that has a number. These are presented back at our accommodation following the Friday night session, as we share supper together and debrief the first talk. It's encouraged that we wear the caps for the first session on Saturday morning and they're then brought back each year.
- For the past few years, we've created a WhatsApp chat group for all those attending each year. We use this during the event to share thoughts, photos, jokes etc but also using it to connect with each other. We also use it at other times during the year to help promote BASECAMP for the following year and other men's events.
- Whilst we don't have many younger men at our church (18-21) we had a couple of them attend BASECAMP last year and from that those who did come were able to encourage and ask others in that age group to come this year. We've been thankful that some of our younger men have fathers at church who have already attended and encouraged them to come along as well.