

Following Up

Follow Up Changes Lives

Follow Up Overview

Follow up is the practice of intentionally engaging with people so that they are given the best opportunity to say yes to God and Christian community.

Follow up is critical because...

1. Follow up is where relationships start
2. Without follow up, our efforts can be lost
3. Follow up helps us show God's love and commitment

Traits for Good Follow Up

Three characteristics that will help you lean into follow up even when it's hard:

1. **Initiative** – Your follow up can help students discover what they want and how to get it
2. **Courage** – Remember that you are being sent by God and in God's authority
3. **Persistence** – Assume the answer is "Yes!" unless they say no, and don't answer "no" for them

Three Steps for Good Follow Up

Connect Personally

Follow up starts with connecting personally (face-to-face or online) by asking questions, sharing about yourself, and eventually sharing more about InterVarsity. Don't worry about immediately making best friends and give it time to build trust. At the end of your first connection, figure out what your next connection will be, whether it's inviting them to a small group, offering to bring cookies, etc.

SAMPLE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

I'd love to hear about your journey to [school].

What's your experience at [school] been like so far?

What's your spiritual background?

If they don't respond, don't be discouraged! Keep in mind that they could be too busy, keep the ball in your court, give them an "out," and share with God or others for prayer or help with discernment.

Connect Two More Times

After the initial meeting, connect at least two more times. It shows you are genuinely interested in them and gives time to build trust. This could be conversations over coffee or a meal. Or it could be an activity like studying together, going grocery shopping, or playing video games.

Connect Them to Your Community

The third step is to connect them to a community. Your InterVarsity can be a place of great belonging on campus. This can look like inviting them to a social gathering, watch an event, plug them into a small group, or casually hanging out.

Follow Up Takes Time

Follow Up: Better with Friends!

Following up alone is good but following up is best done in community. We'll unpack communal disciplines that can help you establish a culture of follow up. Consider how God might be inviting your community to participate in follow up together.

Pray

Follow up begins with prayer. It's a space where we can look to Jesus' example of love towards us and offer our anxieties and fears to God and ask for the peace, confidence, and direction that comes from the Holy Spirit.

RESPOND ACTIVELY

Host a prayer meeting for follow up. Pray for one another, for new people, and for direction.



Plan (Part 1 and Part 2)

Why is a plan important? Without a plan, focus can shift to insiders, newcomers can slip through the cracks, or you could be following up with the same person multiple times.

The key components of a follow up plan:

1. **Identify key times for follow up in the school year**
 - a. New Student Outreach (NSO) – During the first few weeks or months of the school year
 - b. January New Student Outreach (JNSO) – Similar to NSO, but not as intense
 - c. After large ministry or campus event – Especially when you plan to draw new people
2. **Make time for...**
 - a. Relationships and connections – Host a “follow up party,” block out time for your small group to follow up before your meeting, ask people to reserve time for follow up
 - b. Follow up training, prayer, and coordination – Reserve time with your group to pray, cast vision, and train together before the follow up season
3. **Develop a coordinated system**
 - a. Create a communal space where people's information can be safely stored
 - b. Provide accountability for follow up to ensure every person is engaged in a timely way
 - c. It should be simple enough for anyone to use

Coach

Here's nine tips for how to coach follow up:

1. **Cast vision for follow up** – Regularly share the vision and stories from your own experiences
2. **Give space for people to express negative emotions** – As you're honest about the challenges, you can emphasize the impact you can have and need for initiative, courage, and persistence
3. **Group follow up times** – Continually encourage people to do follow up in community
4. **Continue through the semester** – As energy and motivation wanes, keep follow up on the radar
5. **Spiritual leadership** – Help set the tone by cultivating prayer at every step of the process
6. **Practice follow up using role play** – Have everyone practice taking turns role playing a new student or leader. Remember to practice talking to both Christians and seekers
7. **Regular debriefs to check in on progress** – This allows you to learn, grow, and make pivots. Ask questions like: “How is God at work? What is God teaching us? Are our strategies working?”
8. **Share testimonies at weekly meetings or small groups** – Build ownership by inviting key members to share how God has been working through follow up
9. **Lead by example** – This helps your community in following up and give you real stories to share

Taking the Next Steps in Follow Up

God wants us to change us as we choose into follow up. It requires us to step into new places that God is inviting us into. Reflect on the course material and see what God is inviting you to. Given all the material we covered in the course, what is one thing that you would like to take away and apply in your life and ministry?

Related Resources

- [NSO Prayer Meeting Guide](#)
- [NSO Back-To-School Retreat Template](#)
- [Example Google Sheet Template](#) from Purdue Northwest InterVarsity
- [Example Google Sheet Template](#) and [Google Form](#) from Illinois InterVarsity
- [Welcome Students Through Instagram](#)

Recommended Courses

- [Growing Disciples](#)
- [Knowing Where Someone is Spiritually](#)

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