

MAWL

What is MAWL?

MAWL outlines the stages necessary to follow in order to establish movements instead of ministries. MAWL stands for Model, Assist, Watch, and Leave. Coined by the Southern Baptist mission movement, it follows the same stages in the development of a movement that we've previously learned in Dan Spader material.

It can be tricky remembering the differences between a movement and a ministry, and knowing at times whether particular missionary activities will lead us closer towards a movement, or instead towards a ministry.

Globally our vision is:

Movements Everywhere - connecting everyone to someone who truly follows Jesus

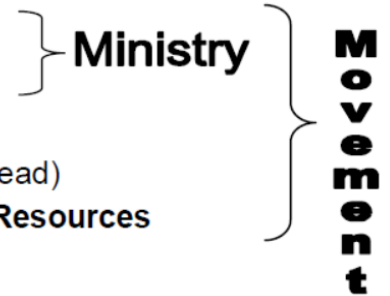
We have defined a movement as:

God working through a team of like-hearted disciples to Win, Build and Send towards fulfillment of the Great Commission.

How does a Movement look different to a Ministry?

Over time, people in prayerful dependence on God's grace will take action, resulting in the following four characteristics:

- **Connecting Lost People to Jesus**
- **Life-changing Discipleship**
- **Multiplying Leaders**
(who mobilize and mentor others to lead)
- **Generating Self-sustaining Local Resources**



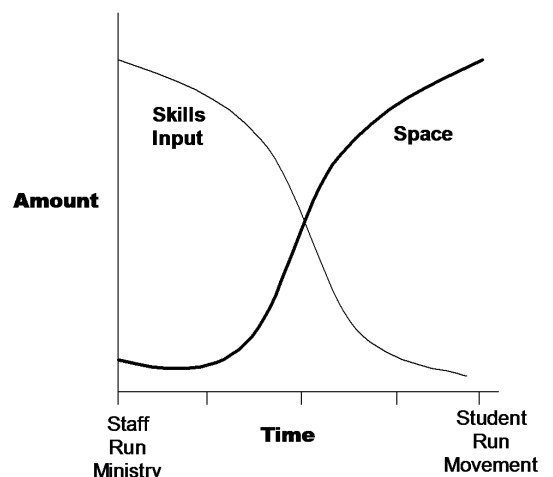
How does MAWL Fit?

MAWL Expanded

Model

We begin by Modeling the skills. In Jesus' ministry, we see that in the early days he demonstrated healthy ministry by modeling it, and he primarily wanted his disciples to focus on grasping the big picture through his demonstration. Just as Jesus was upfront with the disciples by telling them "I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19), we do this modeling openly and transparently so students know to pay attention and learn. Setting this personal example first is essential, as more is caught than taught.

When it comes to a catalytic campus, there are certain areas of ministry that must be modeled in person. One of the limitations of the catalytic



strategy is the lack of person to person contact between missionaries and students, due to the distance quite often involved. So when missionaries have opportunities to visit, the following areas are critical to model to students.

The first area that must be modeled is evangelism. If a movement can start with evangelism and have it as its primary objective, then that is how the movement will continue throughout its lifespan. However, many students may not have had the experience in doing it themselves previously, but are attracted to the vision. It is a necessity that for every Potential Key Volunteer (PKV), or Key Volunteer (KV) be taken out and have some experience of evangelism. It is the, job in this case, of the missionary or experienced key volunteer, if on an established campus, to take these students out to show them how to effectively share their faith. If we don't do it as full-time workers or as experienced key volunteers, why should new students?

The second area that needs to be modeled is vision casting. As catalytic campuses, one of the goals is to find new key volunteers who can be trained up. Vision casting is one of the hardest things to do well (even for some missionaries!!). That is why seeing it being modeled early on is critical. We need students to catch the vision, to want to have an impact for Jesus on their campus. If missionaries cannot teach their students how to vision cast, it will make it harder for them to grow as a movement in the future.

The third area that should be modeled to students is that of the Catalyst meeting. Our catalyst meeting is not just a bible study nor is it a weekly meeting - it's unique. Catalyst includes an interactive bible study in a weekly meeting format including areas such as announcements, games and evangelism testimonies. How many lectures have you been to where you just lose focus because there is no involvement with the rest of the students? The important thing in modeling catalyst is to make it engaging, interesting and challenging.

There are many other areas that can be modeled to someone, but you don't necessarily have to do it in person. Using Skype or calling someone on the phone to explain a variety of skills is an applicable option. Some of these skills may include prayer meetings, leading Christianity Explained studies or leading a key volunteer meeting. Check out the 'Skills to be Mastered Mindmap' for more areas that can be modeled to you!!

In the Sydney Metro Team, bookmarks have been developed for discipleship, core group leading, in fact, most things. The reason is, using a bookmark we give the attendees makes our leadership **transparent**, and the room on a bookmark forces us to keep things simple making it more readily **transferable**. I can give my disciple a bookmark outlining the steps I go through each time we have a discipleship appointment. This makes it eminently more easy for a student to grasp how one day they too could learn how to effectively disciple someone. By making things transparent and transferable it will be able to help students move onto the assist stage as they begin to model things for others.

Assist

As we identify FAT (Faithful, Available, Teachable) students who are grasping the big picture, we ask them to assist us in the task as Key Volunteers. In Jesus' ministry, we see a time come when he selected 12 to be disciples (Luke 9:1-6). He then began giving these special 12 some tasks - healing, and feeding the 5000 are two examples. They struggled to feed the 5000 by themselves, but by giving them the task, they were able to see for themselves what areas they still had to grow and learn in. It ensured Jesus' instructional times didn't fall on deaf ears. After each significant challenge, we see Jesus conducting a debrief session where he encouraged, and explained what went wrong and how they could see success next time.

As missionaries, we will still be there to assist students in this area, but this is where one of the true catalytic principles can be utilized. When we find a Key Volunteer, the first thing that we

ask of them is to find a 'mini-me' - someone that they can train up to do their job (Please read the 'mini-me' article in the Catch Catalytic manual for more specific information on this). When you have found your mini-me there are a number of things that you can teach them.

The first is essentially everything that you learnt in the M stage of MAWL. You can be the person who goes out and takes them evangelizing for the first time and teach them everything you know. You can help be there to co-lead a catalyst meeting with them. You can take them with you when you ask someone to become a Key Volunteer. All of these things are done in a completely transferable way that means they can do it next time.

In the MAWL of leading a CE, we encourage all CE leaders to have an mini-me, perhaps someone they led to Christ the previous semester, or a student (particularly PKV or new KV) who has not led one before. The CE mini-me's are challenged to lead lessons 3 and 5. The leader will assist them in preparing these two lessons, and after each of these lessons give them helpful feedback. By giving someone the opportunity of leading a CE with you, it has meant that they could have the privilege of seeing a person come to Christ with them, perhaps for the very first time. Now that would certainly be casting vision of what Student Life is on about!

Watch

As students gain competence in a task, we need to encourage them to have confidence in their abilities independent of yourself. You tell the students that next week in Core Group, they will be leading the lesson by themselves. You assure them that you will be attending, but only as a group participant and so they shouldn't turn to us during the lesson for help or assistance. At this stage, your primary role is to observe and provide feedback after the event. Leave room for them to learn from their mistakes and reserve your feedback (with plenty of praise as due) for the debrief times after the event. Don't step in to correct and fix things, unless things begin going disastrously wrong (students rarely learn valuable lessons from disasters, instead they become de-motivated and may be tempted to give up.)

At this time, the mini-me that you have taken under your wing should have had a number of opportunities to lead in their specific area. They might have participated in an evangelism time without you being right by their side. Or perhaps they might have led a Catalyst meeting and they were the ones who took a mini-me and began to train them up. At this particular point, there are two perspectives that should be considered - the experienced key volunteer and the mini-me.

As the more experienced key volunteer, you should be looking to cycle out of your leadership role (check out the article on cycling leaders through the year!!). Your mini-me should be competent in what they are doing and be ready to take the reins and take your spot. Consider it an honour that you should be looking to replace yourself. It means that you have been transparent and transferable in your teaching. Your mini-me has caught the vision and you should help them find someone else. As the experienced key volunteer, you will now begin to ask the question 'Where else can I go to propel the movement on my campus?'

As the mini-me, you should be expected to head up your specific area of involvement in the next semester. In the past semester you have been trained how to do the specific role and then been able to do it without any help from the person who taught you the skills. The modeller will be moving on to pioneer/model another specific area and you get to take control. Before this takes place though, you need to find your own mini-me, so that you can begin to be transferable and transparent to them. This period should last for a semester.

Leave

As students show competence in an area, we then leave the responsibility for that role to them. However, we should always communicate that “Leave” is coming up right at the beginning of the process, back at “M” or “A”. At UNSW we told the leaders at the beginning that we would be leading Core groups (CG) this semester with them as apprentices so they could learn how to run them for themselves - our leaving was always on the horizon, and served to motivate them to pay attention and learn.

There’s something very special and magical about “leave”. As that semester at UNSW started to draw to a close, one of the leaders asked me how many groups the missionaries would be available to lead in the coming semester. I re-iterated that our purpose in leading had been to train *them* up, rather than us assuming a permanent role in Core group leading, as we saw the campus as *their* responsibility to reach, and the Student Life movement as *their* ministry, with us being there to coach and support them.

The student was greatly concerned. He pointed out how there was only two student leaders, and while two of us missionaries had assisted, running two CGs had seemed quite feasible, but if it was only the two student leaders next semester, then it would be too big a burden to lead week-to-week without relief. I suggested that he might need to consider whether there were any apprentices he could take on. Finally the penny dropped, and he realized he needed to start recruiting other students to be Core Group leaders with them. That was the moment ownership for UNSW’s Core Groups transitioned from missionaries to the students - when they finally grasped what “Leave” meant. And for the rest of the semester, the leaders paid far more attention to our instruction on how to run Core Groups than they ever had before.

If we are clear and transparent about the MAWL process with our student leaders, as the realization sinks in that they will be inheriting the responsibility, it transforms your students from passive learners to active learners. They begin thinking “Oh! I’d better pay attention to what the Missionary is teaching me, because I’ll have to be leading the Core Group by myself next semester”, they pay far more attention than when they complacently assume you’ll always be holding their hand.

When we ran our first vision meeting at ACU a month back (our latest campus), with several potential student leaders in attendance, we were very careful to communicate that we missionaries weren’t starting a campus ministry and inviting them to join us, but we were seeking Christian students who wanted to see a campus movement start on their campus. Missionaries could then coach and resource in order to see a health campus movement established. The concept of leaving responsibilities to the students needs to be communicated right at the beginning, or the students will never have the level of ownership required to produce movements that can grow in spite of the size of your missionary team (instead of in proportion to the size of your missionary team.)

This viewpoint, seen from the missionary eyes, is exactly how Key Volunteers should also see their ministry on campus through Catalytic. In a sense, you are the missionaries training up others to do the job. You want to be able to leave your focus area or ministry area in the capable hands of your mini-me and take on somewhere else. For the Sydney Metro Team, that was to take on another campus to help reach their vision. But for catalytic-run campuses, it might be to pioneer an international ministry, work on the movement’s publicity on campus or start a bible study on a residential college or in a faculty group. The list is endless. But the motive is still the same. You want to leave your position to allow your mini-me to take control and to own his or her ministry area.

[Do missionaries ever entirely leave a campus?](#)

MAWL was born out of the church planting movement. It was revolutionary in encouraging missionaries not to plant ministries that depended on them, and folded after they left, but instead to believe in the capacity of local believers who can be developed into competent pastors, pastors who one day they could release local control over to and would be able to take over the church plants.

University ministry however has one significant draw-back when compared to church planting: Our “local believers” are Uni students who don’t stick around for more than a few years, so it is nigh impossible to believe a student leadership body will ever reach a degree of competency which will allow us to replace ourselves and leave a campus entirely.

As we leave individual responsibilities and roles to students, us missionaries will focus on the higher skilled roles - vision casting, maintaining the DNA of the movement, and serving as that institutional long-term memory that prevents students repeating the disastrous mistakes that we learned from four years ago, but none of the present student body was ever there to experience.

Sydney University is one campus where we have reached the “Leave” stage in most areas of responsibility. In fact, our missionaries rarely even attend the weekly student leadership meeting. But what we do do is disciple all the top student leaders who head up the various servant teams. We may not be physically present at the leadership meetings, giving the students a good sense of space and ownership, but we are aware of all the problems and ideas through the various student leaders and help coach each one through possible solutions and approaches to take in presenting them to the rest of the student leadership team.

[What happens if MAWL is failing to work on a catalytic campus?](#)

There are often signs where you can see if MAWL is not working on a campus. Numbers might be dwindling and the vision has been lost. You may not have a mini-me to take your position. If you are the only key volunteer on campus and there is no one to take your position when you graduate - what will you do? From Catalytic’s perspective, we can only help train students on a campus if there are students to train. It has been unfortunate experiences where a campus has had no new leaders and the ministry (not a movement) has had to close. Student Life would love to be able to continue on every campus it pioneers on. But the fact is, it can’t always happen. We would look to come back in maybe six months and look to pioneer again.

At Griffith Logan, near Brisbane, Student Life ran for 2 years with two main KV’s. One Key Volunteer graduated and the other felt strongly called to be more involved in her church ministry than with Student Life. Unfortunately Student Life had to finish up because there were no new student leaders. There was nothing on there for about a year, until the beginning of 2010, when Student Life attempted to begin again on the campus and successfully found some keen student leaders. These guys may only be at the Model or the Assist stage - but it does show that it is possible to continue!

[How do I know if my campus is moving through the MAWL stages?](#)

It is impossible to tie a campus movement down to one particular stage of MAWL. A campus will most probably have different levels of competence in different areas of activity. For example, a campus might be at “Leave” for Prayer because students are running prayer and passing the skills to the next generation, but at “A” for Evangelism because missionaries are still helping students learn how to be effective in survey evangelism. As a rule of thumb, if you can identify at least one or two areas that have progressed beyond “Assist”, you are probably well on your way to becoming a student-led movement.

The value of MAWL

- It short-circuits the default habit of student leaders and missionaries (at least, how I used to operate) of involving students to a particular level, but never really giving them enough room and responsibility to blossom into self-reliant leaders who can grow a movement.
- By us modelling MAWL, it teaches the students a model you then ask them to use themselves. We need students to be investing in their own legacy - recruiting apprentices whom they then train up, encourage, then give space to become leaders in their own right.
- Students get far better coaching from me through MAWL than they ever received from me when I ran Sydney University as a missionary-led campus. Because I was complacent in the knowledge I would always be there, there was no pressing need to develop students to higher levels of competency, and hence there was no sense of urgency that propelled students to step up to the plate and become more responsible leaders. Although I was focused on just one campus movement then, and I'm now focused on five, my investment in the students now is far deeper and more intentional, thus effective, and their learning is far more attentive and active. That's the investment required in order to lay the foundations for self-running movements.

MAWL does not mean...

...Leaving roles to students without equipping them

Years ago when my team first tinkered with Catalytic, we assumed that handing roles over to students, regardless of how well they ran them, was a good thing. But that approach has never built movements. "Leaving" in itself is not the goal - healthy sustainable movements is the goal. So don't hand roles over to untrained, unreliable, or unteachable students, look for FAT (KV) students, and take them through the MAWL process with the aim of leaving responsibilities to trained student leaders.

In our experience, there have also been times when we have had to back-track through the MAWL stages. When we had to step down one of our student leaders for inappropriate behaviour, we found ourselves in the position of having to return to the Assist stage. Certain areas had been competently led by the student leader with an apprentice, but at the time he was removed, the apprentice wasn't yet at a level of competence to take over. We realised we needed to retake the lead and continue his education through the MAWL process before the area could be once again left to the local student leadership.

...No accountability

Setting up students as movement leaders doesn't mean we give up influence and direction setting for campuses. I consider a campus student leadership team in the same way a regional team might view my missionary team. If I told Geoff we didn't want to do evangelism any more and we were going to focus solely on praying people into the kingdom, I would be held accountable for the results that followed, and when our evangelism statistics would most probably rapidly drop off, Geoff would ask me to change back, or he'd replace me. In short, as a local missionary team, I'm given a degree of freedom to how I run my campus which is based on trust that I have earned. But that trust and freedom is extended in accordance to how aligned and competent I am.

Geoff in this scenario is the DNA-Keeper of NSW campuses. In the same way, my missionary team is the DNA-Keeper for the Sydney Metro campuses. If our KVs were to tell us they were going to do away with Core groups all together- I probably wouldn't extend their freedom that far, or they would need to convince me they have a sound reasons within Student Life's purposes for doing so.

A key application of this in our experience has been the oversight of the KV commitment as a contract between the student leaders and our missionary team. The students are able to modify many things within their movement, but the KV contract is not one of them. So, if we have significant problems with one of our student KVs, we step them down as a KV for that campus removing them from the leadership team. This may sound harsh, but there are very gentle ways of doing so - "it sounds to me that the demands of being a KV are a little too high for you right now. I want to extend some grace to you by releasing you from that commitment and the responsibilities that you seem to be having such difficulty with. I don't want to hold you to something you are no longer willing to fulfill."

...Removing ourselves from Coal-face ministry

You may fear that movement building means that in time you will be unable to participate in the things you used to enjoy - like evangelism, running Core groups, or CEs. If so, let me put your fears to rest. The difference between missionary-led and student-led is merely that now, everything we do involves others that we are in the process of training up and pass that role over to. As we hand various time-consuming roles over for students to lead, that frees us up to invest more of our time in the strategic and enjoyable roles.

For myself, I love developing resources, so I focus most of my time on developing resources and using them to train the leaders. But Andrew Mellor loves the face-to-face ministry. So I've released Andrew to spend most of his time on our pioneering campuses - Notre Dame and ACU - where the movement is at the Model and Assist stages. This requires him to spend the bulk of his time leading Core groups and CEs as a means to developing the student apprentices. Now both of us get to do more of what we enjoy than when we were missionary-led. Movement building means that you can raise up new leadership freeing you up to invest your time in the areas your giftings are strongest.

MAWL Appendix Questions:

Model - Assist - Watch - Leave

Question: How do I know if my campus is a movement or not? How do I judge where my campus is in the MAWL process?

Answer:

In reality, a campus will most probably be at different stages of MAWL for different areas of activity. For example, a campus called Diversity might look like this....

- **Prayer** - at L because students are running prayer, and passing the skills to the next generation. Missionaries don't even go to prayer times, except by invitation, because it is fully owned by the students. Missionaries are still praying, but may have their own prayer time to which they invite key students.
- **Evangelism** - at A. Students go out doing surveys with missionaries, evangelistic events are initiated by missionaries but planned between the students and missionaries.
- **Core Groups** - at L. All groups are fully student-led, and missionaries appear irregularly just to see how things are going, and meet new first-year students.
- **Weekly Meeting** - at W. There is a weekly meeting organizing team, but missionaries oversee it, organizing speakers.
- **Publicity** - at L, done completely by students, with their own student-led publicity team.
- **Vision Casting** - at M. This is one of the hardest things for students to master, the missionaries really feel that no student would do a good job of it, so the missionaries do it, while asking students to observe and note how it's done.
- **Planning and leadership meeting** - at W. Students have a Leadership Team, with just one missionary as part of the team as a consultant.
- **Raising finances** - at M because missionaries are doing it all, this semester it is now time to have students start observing with the intention to transfer the skills.

- **Focus areas** - at M. This is a new initiative, missionaries are driving it, with students just observing.

Thus this campus over the 9 current areas of activity has:

Model - 3

Assist - 1

Watch - 2

Leave - 3

So this campus is certainly well on its way to becoming a movement.

Even a campus which has mostly L's will probably have some M's as they are looking to open up new areas of activity. This is a good measure of continued health & growth.

Question: How do I transition an area of activity using MAWL?

Answer:

Example Plan for MAWL in the Area of Activity --> Vision Casting.

Currently at M - Model

This is one of the hardest things for students to master, the missionaries really feel that no student would do a good job of it, so the missionaries do it, while asking key students to observe and note how it's done. Missionaries are being very transparent with the need for vision casting and transferring this skill to students.

Transitioning to A - Assist

Missionaries are training students in Vision Casting and role-playing different scenarios with them. Missionaries are still Vision Casting in situations like a public meeting, however, students are now joining in as part of it. Eg: The missionary as part of Vision Casting at the weekly meeting asks two of the students that have been trained to share for 2 minutes why they are involved in Student Life.

Transitioning to W - Watch

Now Vision Casting at weekly meeting is lead totally by Picturesque (a student) who has gained in competency, just as the missionary had done previously in A. Picturesque also asks two other students that have been trained to share for 2 minutes why they are involved in Student Life.

Missionaries are watching, helping her evaluate and gain further competence. Missionaries are also helping Picturesque train upcoming students.

Transitioning to L - Leave

Here Vision Casting is in the hands of students like Picturesque. She is training new upcoming students who are at A, as well as watching those just below her in W. Missionaries are keeping an eye on Picturesque, checking in that things are progressing satisfactorily and providing support (C-DK role).

The C-DK (Coach/DNAKeeper) also has another aspect.

It may come to pass that Vision Casting is about to drop back to M, A or W in MAWL.

How? - Several competent students could graduate at the same time that upcoming students change uni's, take a gap year, or have health issues that sideline them. It may be that no new students are gaining competence fast enough to replace the competent ones. Whatever the reason, The C-DK would recognise this and step back in to whatever level is needed.

Question: Can MAWL be used individually as part of discipleship?

Answer:

Yes! - each student leader will be at different stages of MAWL in different areas of discipleship.

For Example - in Campus Diversity mentioned above, evangelism was rated at A (Assist). However, one student called Easyover has a spiritual gift in evangelism and he is actually at L. Thus, he is assisting the missionaries at Campus Diversity with developing students at A. He is taking Da-man (a student) doing evangelism. He is moving Da-man towards W, where he will watch him share his faith. When Da-man reaches L, he will in turn join with the missionaries in helping other students grow towards L.

Question: Is MAWL taking the place of EDSA (Explanation, Demonstration, Supervision, Application)?

Answer:

I think MAWL can really propel us more effectively than EDSA. You may have noticed that MAWL is a lot like EDSA. However MAWL I believe is a better outworking of the transferability principle. It also sets the expectation that students will be able to gain competency in a skill, own it, then transfer the skill - ie: MAWL it to upcoming students.

MAWL - The Soccer coach analogy

Model - this is like Little League Soccer! Missionaries can run on the field, give them advice, show them how to kick the ball. It's all about getting your heads around soccer and the basics of how to play, the score doesn't matter.

Assist - the missionaries are still "on the field", but they are assisting students to gain competence in skills and tactics used in the game, ie: how to kick the ball, some strategy and field placement. It's not just a mass of kids crowding around the ball - there is some vision to where things are heading.

Watch - here the missionaries are starting to stand on the sideline, rather than in the field of play. This isn't Little League anymore! Missionaries would only go "on the field" in the event of an emergency. But the coaching before the game and post-game debrief become much more important, in fact vital. The players are starting to evaluate and plan themselves.

Leave - this is now an adults game. Missionaries don't even go on the field, even if things are tough or a player is injured. If students are leading and running the ministry, what on earth are the missionaries doing with all their time? Missionaries are completely in the Coaching / DNA-Keeper (C-DK) role. The C-DK knows the intricate details of how the game is played like the back of his jockstrap. He knows his players and he motivates, encourages and helps strategize for them. But he doesn't go on the field. The C-DK spurs the players on before a game. He has a game plan and expects his players to follow it. At half time, the C-DK provides the orange juice of refreshment and the harangue of mid-game correction. He motivates, instructs, supports, consults, but does not play. He does however demonstrate some field skills, especially in weekly training sessions leading up to the game.

Now this seems to go against nature and everything you've been taught. It may even go against what we have been taught in Student Life. But it's really just a quick transition from the player you once were, to the magnificent Coach and DNA-Keeper (C-DK) you will be.