

*The following is what Scott Miedema, Training Director for Latin America, wrote to Ken Knipp, Vice-President of Training, after teaching the Ministry Strategy principles in South America.*

**What have we learned from teaching *Summerall* material in Latin America:**

Summerall training is quite recent in Latin America. We taught this to South American AD's in May, to Central American AD's in August and to a larger number of Peruvian leaders in October, so it's still a relatively new discussion.

We can't apply the ministry calendar as Brian presents it, since our reality and calendar are often different in many of our countries. So, what we've done is taken 4 principles out of the summerall teaching and discussed how to ensure we're applying those in Latin America.

**Principle #1.** Increasing student ownership in Young Life

**Principle#2.** Do great 'marketing' in pursuit of 'critical mass' at YL events.

**Principle #3.** Bring more students to camp and do GREAT follow up with them in the few weeks after camp.

**Principle #4.** Put all this planning in a ministry calendar that helps you map out your year well and uses camp as your beginning or flagship moment to build off of.

Here's what we've seen so far.

1. Student ownership is already quite strong in many of our countries, in big part because we've often trained students as leaders at a fairly young age and to their fellow students. Since most ministries in Latin America revolve around neighborhoods rather than schools, they can often be leaders to others in the same club they were a student in. But the discussion does help push leaders at times to consider how to involve even non-Christian kids at a deeper level in club as 'theirs'. More purposeful student involvement in planning music, sketches and games, even early on in their connection with YL, has been good for our leaders to focus on.

2. Principle 2 is a challenge. Figuring out how to market well in poor communities is not easy-- soaping car windows or school newspaper announcements aren't reality in Latin America-- but we tie in the discussion of critical mass and how to create it is relevant and important. This connects with principle #1 too, so our leaders are trying to be creative in how to involve students in helping them promote club.

3. Camp follow-up has been a real bright spot with teaching this. Leaders in Paraguay, Nicaragua and other countries have been MUCH more intentional and well planned in doing events and times with students after camp than they had been before. There have been some growing pains with this. It takes good planning, resources, preparing leaders, managing expectations, etc. to do this well, and our first generation to try this has learned from some mistakes, but being much more invested in the students right after camp has been invaluable and very well received.

4. A well planned ministry calendar that applies these principles has been a helpful place to finish the discussion. This empowers the local club team and gives them some time to evaluate what they're willing to try in their areas. Our club directors and area directors are following up on this step now. Latin America tends to be a more flexible and less planned culture, so their needs to be some flexibility with this, but putting as much planning down as they can helps the teams make sure they have some very practical next steps in their plan. Peru is just starting to do a good follow up plan to our training time which involves putting this calendar and plan together, so we'll see how that goes.

We're fairly early on in our teaching and application of Summerall principles so far. Early responses have been good and the training has been helpful, but I think we'll know a lot more about the best applications and fruit of this in the next 6 months as leaders in Nicaragua and Peru have a better chance to apply their plans and figure out what works in their culture.

*Scott Miedema*

**Young Life**

Training Director-- Latin America