

REDEEMER SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Part V – Conducting Meetings

Preparation

Why Prepare?

- Communicates to members that you have a sense of direction and leadership
- Gives the group confidence in your overall leadership
- Allows you to alter the course of a meeting (if necessary) because you are able to make choices regarding what you will cover in your curriculum.

Meeting Planner

The Meeting Planner takes you through a process of thinking through the overall purpose of your group based on the four components of group life (love, learn, serve, reach). Once you've gone through these checklists for a few meetings, you'll be able to do it quickly in your head.

Go over "Meeting Planner" handout

Choosing and Using the Right Curriculum

Choosing curriculum can be an overwhelming task. This flowchart is designed to help you sift through some of the materials to find something your group needs.

Go over chart.

Key Questions:

- What is our purpose?
- Where is the group spiritually?
- What are our key needs?
- What is our current focus?
- What are our limitations?
- What approach/How long?
- What is the best curriculum?

Group Dynamics

When conducting a meeting, it's important to always be aware of the dynamics of a group. This requires paying attention to the kinds of roles people play in groups, their individual learning styles and personalities, and their spiritual gifts. The interaction of these factors makes each group unique.

Group Roles

Often members take on certain roles (either consciously or unconsciously). People will take on different roles at different stages of your group. Below are some supportive and destructive group roles you might want to be aware of.

Supportive Group Roles

- **Information seeker** – asks other members to tell more of their story
- **Opinion seeker** – takes an active interest in what others in the group think

- **Initiator** – offers new ideas, new ways of doing things. Often sets the pace in a discussion.
- **Elaborator** – wants more than just the facts in a story. Adds “color” to the discussion.
- **Tension-reliever** – often uses gentle humor or relieve tense situations. Uses “identification” to keep the tense person from feeling alone: “I understand. I feel that way many times myself.”
- **Reviewer** – tends to provide summary statements and clarity statements
- **Consensus seeker** – looks to see what the group is thinking and whether or not there is agreement on issues or decisions
- **Encourager** – finds ways to build up others in the group
- **Standard-bearer** – holds forth the values of the group and defends them

Destructive Group Roles

- **Aggressor** – insults and criticizes others. May show strong jealousy
- **Rabbit chaser** – consistently focuses on stories or issues irrelevant to the topic at hand
- **Recognition seeker** – tends to focus primarily on his or her own achievements or successes
- **Dominator** – monopolizes group interaction. Tries to control discussions
- **Special-interest pleader** – tends to focus on personal pet peeve regardless of the topic or direction of the discussion
- **Negativist** – might be a perfectionist who is never satisfied with anything. Quick to point out the “down side” of any issue or topic.
- **Quibbler** – focuses on details. Often loses the forest for the sake of the trees
- **Practical joker** – rather than using humor positively, tends to distract people with jokes and comments. This is often a defense mechanism, and is used whenever a discussion gets too personal.

Your job as a leader is not to “peg” each person in order to figure out what their role is. Roles may change from time to time. You simply need to be aware that these kinds of roles exist in a group. Listen to each person with a sensitive spirit and heart. If you have problems working with any one particular type of person in your group, talk to me about ways to solve the problem and deal with the relationship.

Learning Styles

Adult educators and trainers often refer to “learning styles.” There are three major types of learning styles represented in your group. An effective leader should use a variety of presentation and discussion techniques in order to communicate effectively to each learner.

- **Visual Learners** – These people respond well to charts, diagrams, and other visual stimuli. They tend to like handouts and enjoy parables and stories. They are visual thinkers; that is, they respond well to word pictures and stories that are vivid and descriptive and allow them to “picture” what is happening.
 - *Tips for the leader:* Use handouts, newspaper articles, paper and crayons, and objects that keep the attention of your visual learners.
- **Auditory Learners** – Auditory learners enjoy learning by hearing. They would rather be in discussion on an issue than read a book about it. Some of them may be avid readers, but in general, they would rather listen to a story than read one.
 - *Tips for the leader:* Use subgroups to allow full participation by all members in discussions. Allow members of your group to respond verbally to questions and decisions. Use background music during prayer times or at the beginning of meetings.

- **Kinesthetic Learners** – These people like to touch and feel things. They like to participate in the action. They learn by doing. While a visual learner might be motivated to help the poor by seeing a picture of the poor in an issue of *Newsweek*, the kinesthetic learner would be motivated by a field trip to the inner city.
 - *Tips for the leader:* Utilize objects and experiences for your group. Plan outings and events that allow people to experience the truth in action. Allow kinesthetic learners to learn by trial and error, rather than simply telling them the answer to something.

Personalities – God made us different!

Our purpose here is not to identify each person’s personality in some technical sense. Rather, to understand that the students in your group are “wired” differently. Again, do not spend a lot of time trying to “peg” each student to a particular personality name or style. Simply be aware of the tendencies of each personality that might be in your group.

Here’s a series of questions you might ask as you think of each member of your group:

- Do they tend to be more introverted or extroverted?
 - Does extensive interaction with people tend to energize them (extroverted) or drain them (introverted)?
- Do they experience life with their senses or more intuitively?
 - Do they make insightful judgments about the way life is and how it functions, or do they tend to seek experiences where they can taste, touch, feel, smell, and hear what is happening around them?
- Do they initially process information and decisions with their head or with their heart?
 - Some people are more logical and cognitive (head), while others are feelers who tend to respond more emotionally (heart).
- Do they approach life in a structured or unstructured fashion?
 - That is, are they more like to plan out each day before they leave for school, or are they more likely to just hop on the bus and decide along the way?

DISCUSS: Break up into groups and answer these questions together. Each person identify themselves in these four categories.

Helping members use their spiritual gifts in your group

Here is a process for helping people deploy their spiritual gifts in your small group. It will help the group function more effectively and allow each member to grow and mature in their area of giftedness.

- Cast a vision for mutual
- Help members identify their gifts
- Discuss giftedness with each other
- Serve in areas of giftedness
- Consider ministry opportunities

Go over handout

The Role of the Holy Spirit in Group Dynamics

We have already seen how the Holy Spirit has gifted each member of the group so that the group functions as a body. However, He can also work through promptings and experiences. As a group leader, be sensitive to the working of the Holy Spirit as He moves among group members. Here are a few suggestions that will help you be open and sensitive to His leading.

- Pray that the Holy Spirit would do His work of conviction and teaching during your group meeting.
- As a leader, be sensitive to group consensus. If the group senses there should be a change in direction, this may be the voice of the Holy Spirit. Do not automatically assume your agenda is the right agenda.
- If you sense a strong conviction from the Spirit of God to discuss a certain matter or issue, feel free as the leader to tell the group. Do not use it in such a way as to force others to agree with you. Rather, simply explain that you sense God wants you to share some feelings or issues. Then allow the group and the Word of God to be your guide as how you might move forward.
- Allow time for the Holy Spirit to work. Sometimes it is best to wait if there is not consensus on an issue. Ask members to pray consistently throughout those weeks and seek the will of God. Allow the Spirit of God to work within people over time.

Remember, the Holy Spirit wants to edify and unite a group. That does not mean all members will agree on all issues. However, it does mean that members of the group should be willing to submit to one another as they seek consensus, understanding that this consensus is likely the result of the Spirit of God working among them to develop community and mutuality. In all cases, verify or compare promptings of the Spirit through the clear teachings of the Bible. Where the Word of God is clear, obey. Where the Scriptures are silent, seek the will of God and the group consensus as each person submits his or her agenda to Christ and is willing to compromise for the sake of the group.

Acts 13:2-3, "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off."

Also be willing to set aside your agenda and lesson a meeting. There will be times with a student will come to the group with something on his or her heart that they really need to share – something happening at home, at school, in their private lives, in a relationship, etc... That's what these groups are all about, so don't think that if you don't accomplish your agenda for the meeting that you've somehow failed. Be flexible for the Holy Spirit to change the agenda at the last minute.

Meeting Follow-Up

Gaining Feedback for Your Ministry

The purpose of all feedback and evaluation is improvement and increased effectiveness for your ministry. Gaining feedback from others about your leadership and about your group is designed to help you build on your strengths and strengthen your weaknesses.

Three Tools that will help you evaluate and improve your small group ministry.

Go over "Tools for Evaluating Your Ministry" handout

- Go over "Touching Base" handout
- Go over "Leader Feedback and Development" handout
- Go over "Planning for life change" handout

MEETING PLANNER

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

Leader: _____

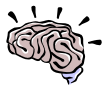
Meeting Date: _____

Agenda

Start	Finish	Item	Who

Desired Outcome

I want my group members to KNOW...



I want my group members to FEEL...



I want my group members to DO...



I want my group members to PLAN...



Post-Meeting Summary

Agenda	Personal Stories
What worked well?	Things we celebrated:
What was weak?	Concerns:

P.L.A.N.

P – Point: *What will the meeting accomplish?*

- Write out KNOW, FEEL, DO, PLAN statements
- Write out meeting agenda
- _____
- _____

L – Logistics: *Is the setting for the meeting prepared?*

- Seating
- Distractions eliminated (*phones, noise, people*)
- Open chair in place
- Temperature
- Lighting
- Refreshments
- Background music during arrival
- Location of future meeting(s) set
- _____
- _____

A – Activities: *What will happen during the meeting?*

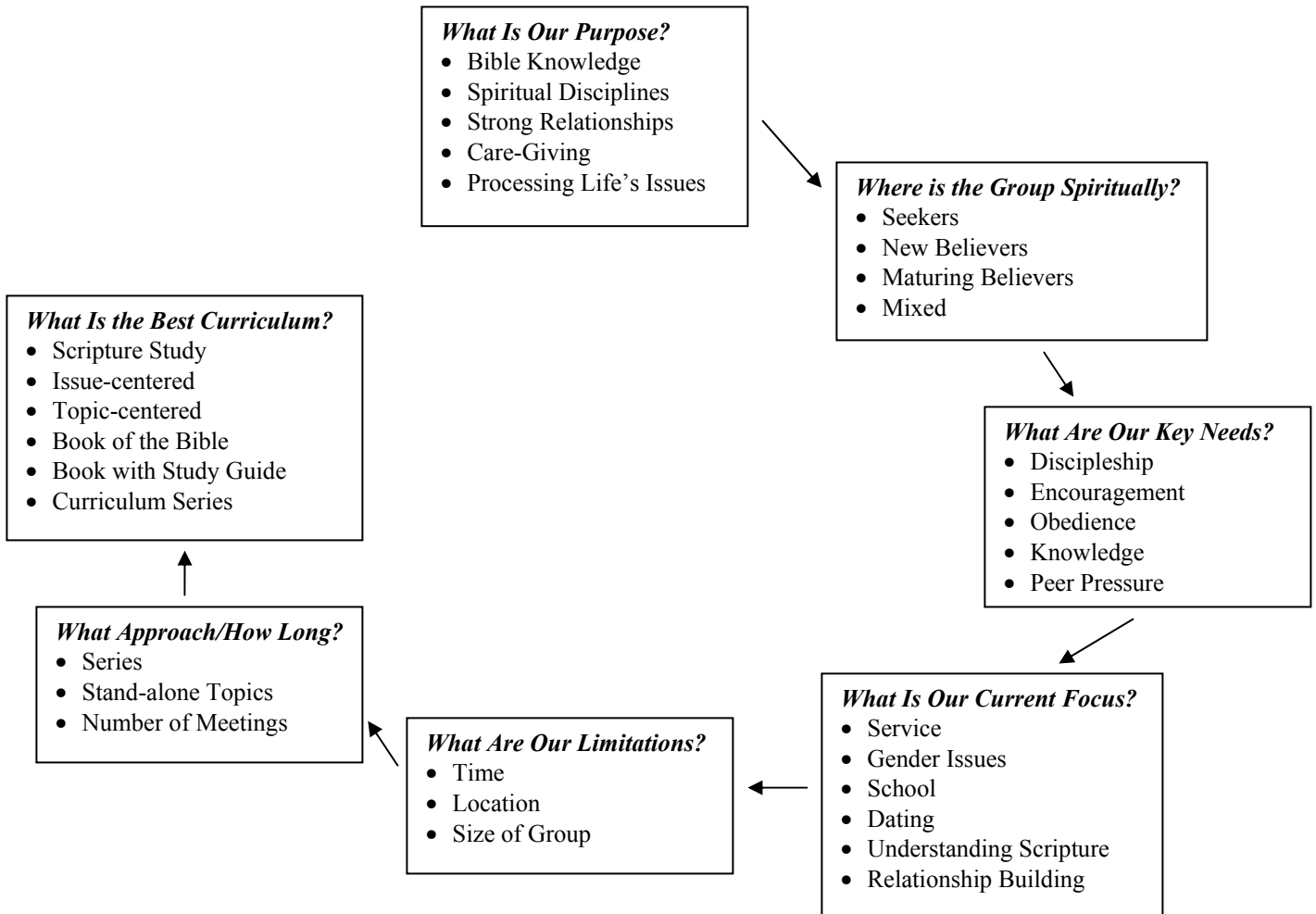
- Come up with ice breaker/group mixer
- Special skill training
- Group prayer
- Game/social activity
- Gather or prepare materials
- Bibles, pencils, paper, etc. available
- Announcements to be made
- _____
- _____

N – Needs: *What's happening in group member's lives?*

- Unresolved problems between members
- Financial needs
- Tough decision to make
- Health concerns
- Family issues
- _____
- _____

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CURRICULUM

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue



A Few Tips About Curriculum

1. **Curriculum should never “drive” a group.** It is a mistake to forfeit opportunities for extended prayer or service, or to cut short a necessary community-building activity because “we have to get through the curriculum.” Remember, Jesus did not say, “Go therefore into all the world and complete the curriculum.” Your goal is ultimately to make disciples – Christ followers – who are obedient to Jesus, yielded to the Spirit, and loving toward others.
2. **Never substitute a curriculum for the Bible.** Curriculum and study guides should be used to enhance the group’s purpose and move people into the Scriptures.
3. **Don’t feel obligated to finish all the questions.** Competent leaders know what questions to use and how many of them to use. If a curriculum has too many questions, then choose a few good ones. I recommend five to seven questions at most. Many times, two to three good questions followed by the right kind of group process are more than enough. Better to have a great discussion grappling with a few good questions than answering all the questions at a superficial level. The goal is to actively engage people with the truth of God’s Word as it relates to their own heart and growth.

4. **Make sure the curriculum is “group friendly.”** Many small group studies are designed for understanding the Bible, not building relationships or generating a deep sense of community and caring. Look closely at not only the questions but also the process. Does the curriculum allow for lots of interaction? Does it ask person disclosure questions that challenge people to open up and share their lives? Or is it filled with content-based “what” questions, often ignoring personal “why” questions?

An application section that simply asks, “How would this apply to your life?” is weak. But if the writer asks questions like, “It’s clear from this passage we need to share our faith with others. And it is clear that we all know how and that it would please God. But let’s talk about why it is so hard for you and me to start spiritual conversations with seekers. Are there fears or other barriers you face in communicating the Gospel? How does it feel when you picture yourself talking to an unsaved person about Christ?” These questions will get a people’s motives, thoughts, feelings, and needs. Only then can we truly encourage and pray for one another.

HELPING MEMBERS USE THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

Here is a process for helping people deploy their spiritual gifts in your small group. It will help the group function more effectively and allow each member to grow and mature in their area of giftedness.

- **Cast a vision for mutual ministry** – Together you should read and study Ephesians 4:11-13 and 1 Corinthians 14:26. Help your group understand the value of serving together and serving one another.
- **Help members identify their gifts** – Spiritual gift assessment tools like will help people identify their gifts. Go through this material as a group.
- **Discuss giftedness with each other** – Ask group members to explain their gifts to the group and how they might use them to encourage other members of the group.
- **Serve in areas of giftedness** – Allow people to serve according to areas of giftedness and passion within your small group
- **Consider ministry opportunities** – Discuss ministry opportunities within the group that will utilize people's giftedness.

Here are some group activities that can be shared by members of your group, depending upon their gifts and desires.

- Leading discussions
- Social time
- Prayer time
- Phone calling
- Keeping the group roster
- Maintaining a list of serving opportunities in the church
- Organizing group outreach
- Hosting the group
- Becoming an apprentice
- Leading worship
- Writing notes and cards
- Visiting members who have needs or who are ill
- Preparing for group meetings
- Maintaining calendars and schedules
- Keeping a list of birthdays of members
- Choosing curriculum
- Providing feedback and evaluation

This is just a partial list, but it should help you and your group share the responsibilities of group life together.

CONFRONTATION PRINCIPLES

Tim Schmoyer (1/17/01)

1. Confrontation is necessary in genuine, truthful relationships. It is a way to help people and relationships grow to maturity.
 - Ephesians 4:15-16: *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*
 - Colossians 4:6: *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*
2. Confrontation is needed when there is an unaddressed or unrecognized problem.
3. Confront when absolute truths are at stake.
 - Galatians 2:11ff: *When Peter came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs? We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.*
 - Titus 1:10, 11, 13b: *For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach – and that for the sake of dishonest gain. ...Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth.*
 - In both of these passages, men were teaching the old Jewish laws that were no longer in effect. After Jesus' death, the laws changed. Man no longer had to be circumcised or not eat certain foods. Other laws changed also, but these two were hard to drop. Many continued following the laws, though they meant nothing to God. In fact practicing these old laws anger(ed) God because they promoted the idea of gaining redemption through doing good works rather than through accepting God's grace. Therefore, the main beliefs (absolute truths) of Christians were being defiled and needed to be rebuked.
4. When you confront someone in love, you are showing them your love. If you do not confront them it is as if you hate them.
 - Proverbs 27:5 *Open rebuke is better than secret love.*
 - Leviticus 19:17-18: *Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.*
5. Our closest friends are those whom we should be willing and ready to confront, and be confronted by.
 - Mentoring relationships are another good place for confrontation. The Book "As Iron Sharpens Iron" discusses that three types of mentoring relationships are represented in the Bible and suggest it is good if we have all three. The first is having someone whom you respect and is older than you to help guide you [Sr. High Leader, parent, older and wiser friend]. The second is to have a peer in an accountability relationship. The third is to have someone whom you are willing to mentor [Children's ministry, Jr Higher friend].
 - Proverbs 27:17: *Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*

- Hebrews 10:24: *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.*
6. Confront in humility. You are not perfect. Once you confront someone you open the door for yourself to also be confronted. Do not be judgmental!!!
 - If you confront in humbleness, not in judgment it looks like...
 - A. “I know I may not be perfect in this area. I am probably not the best person to be mentioning this to you, but I see you doing ____ and so it seems like you may be having problems in the same area.
 - B. Maybe we can help each other out with this and keep each other accountable.”

Galatians 6:1: *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*

Luke 6:37, 41-43: *Judge not, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*

John 8:3-11: (The story of the adulteress that was not stoned.) vs. 7b “*If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.*”
 7. Do not confront everyone. There are those that would not benefit from confrontation. How do you know who to confront and who not to? ...Pray, ask God!
 - Proverbs 9:7-9: *Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse, Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.*
 8. Stop the confrontation if it does not appear that it will be helpful.

Proverbs 17:14: *Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.*
 9. Remember that you cannot change someone. Some people, God calls them fools, will not take the wise advice of a friend.

Proverbs 27:22: *Though you grind a fool in a mortar...you will not remove his folly from him.*
 10. Focus on the facts, not on your personal conclusions. ¹Do not interpret someone’s problem for them. Instead, tell them what you observe, and in what way it concerns you.
 - Example: If a person seems to spend very little time with you even though she claims to be a good friend, you would be better saying, “I notice you have spent a lot of time with Susie and Jane lately, but we haven’t done anything for a few months. Is there anything that you are upset about? I miss spending time with you and I’m not sure why we haven’t been getting together.” That line of questioning will get you much further than jumping to conclusions and saying, “Why don’t you like me any more? We used to be good friends and I don’t know why you hate me so much all of a sudden.”
 11. Tell how you are feeling. Use defensive “I feel” statements rather than offensive “you did” statements.
 12. Do not exaggerate with words like “always” and “never”.
 13. Don’t ask pointless, broad questions like, “Why do you do that to me?” or “How does that not bother you?” Usually “why” questions are good to avoid.

¹Augsberger, David. (1981) *Caring Enough to Confront* Regal Books: California.

² Lee, Jimmy R. (1995) *Concerned Persons Group: Because We Need Each Other* Turning Point: Chattanooga, TN.

14. Do not label the person or attack her self-esteem. Example: “You are rude.”
15. Do not label actions as “good” or “bad”.
16. Identify the problem, but do not tell the person what you think they should do about it unless they ask. Your opinion on some options may be helpful, but give them only if they are asked. In other words, do not give advice where it is not needed. Most people will be able to figure out how to deal with a problem once the problem is identified.
17. Search for truth, understanding and knowledge in order to be more able to confront in truth.
 - 1 Peter 3:15: *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*
 - Proverbs 2:1-7, 11: *My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out to insight and cry aloud for understanding and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless...Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.*

TOOLS FOR EVALUATING YOUR MINISTRY

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

Form	Purpose	Required or Optional	Completed by	How often
Touching Base (TB) form <i>(Meetings)</i>	To summarize meeting activity, apprentice development, future plans, specific prayer requests and celebrations	Required	Apprentice and/or Leader	Monthly
Leader Feedback and Development <i>(Leader)</i>	To help leaders build on strengths and improve areas requiring skill development	Optional	Apprentice, Members, or Tim	As desired (at least twice a year)
Planning for Life Change <i>(Group)</i>	To help groups discuss their growth and maturity as a group	Optional	Leader and group together	Every six months

TOUCHING BASE

Meeting Summary

Leader: _____ Month: _____ Year: _____

Apprentice Leader 1: _____ Apprentice Leader 1: _____

Instructions: Leaders, please fill out this form each month. Keep your copy, then pass a copy to Tim.

Attendance Record

	Meetings:	Date 1	Date 2	Date 3	Date 4		Summary
Total Attendance (total # at meeting)						AVG=	
Primary Care Attenders						AVG=	
First Time Visitors						AVG=	
Guest (ex. Tim, adult, out of town)						AVG=	
Regular Attenders Absent						AVG=	

Has anyone left your group the past month? Yes No If yes, please provide their name and reason for leaving.

Name

Reason for leaving

Activity Summary Briefly describe what your group did this month; include in-group, out-of-group, and one-on-one activities.

Next Steps What are your plans for the group for the next month? What are you going to do to develop your apprentice(s)?

Just to Let You Know... Is there anything you'd like to celebrate? Do you have any problems, prayer requests, or questions?
(Note: For urgent problems or prayer requests, please see Tim.)

LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK AND DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Summary

From: _____

Please note: This tool is designed to evaluate for the purpose of encouragement, not to judge for the purpose of condemnation.

Leadership during meetings

1. On a continuum, how would you rate the leader's style of communication during the meetings?
Mark with an "X"

Pure lecture

Pure discussion

On the scale above, place an "O" where you would like the leader to be.

2. On a continuum, how would you rate the leader's control of the flow of the meetings? Mark an "X"

Autocratic/Control

Collaboration/Relaxed

On the same scale above, place an "O" where you would like the leader to be.

3. On a continuum, how would you rate the group members' overall participation in the discussions?
Mark with an "X"

A vocal minority

Balanced participation

What, if anything, could the leader do about the balance of participation?

4. How did the leader handle the different elements of the meeting?

- Starting on time
- Homework review (if applicable)
- Scripture explanation or teaching
- Discussion portions
- Helping to make personal applications
- Ending on time

Leadership Outside the Meetings

5. What experiences with the leader outside the regular meeting times have been especially valuable to you?

6. What aspects of the leader's life do you most need (want) to observe so you can see a godly example?

7. What steps could your leader take beyond leading the regular group meetings to help you grow (be specific)?

8. Comment on the leader in the following areas:
 - Availability outside of group times

 - Approachability and concern

 - Keeping me accountable and being firm if necessary

 - Sensitivity and compassion

9. Is there any other feedback you would like to give the leader?

10. Are there issues that are unresolved or require attention?

11. What affirmation can you give the leader – what aspect of the whole small group experience has been especially meaningful to you?

12. How will you pray for the leader?

PLANNING FOR LIFE CHANGE

Group Summary

Name: _____

Leader: _____

How Are We Doing?

Evaluation Scale

3 *Doing well; please with results*

2 *Going in the right direction; see areas for improvement*

1 *Struggling; need help*

Our Group Is...

Maturing Spiritually

Group members are spiritual self-starters and are actively developing their relationship with God. They are participating in the church through the use of their spiritual gifts and material resources.

Comments:

Growing Relationally

Group members are actively building relationships with each other both inside and outside of the group setting.

Comments:

Fostering Safety

The group is a safe place where all members willingly share their thoughts and feelings in a straight forward and transparent manner

Comments:

Generating Excitement

Group meetings are full of life and energy. Members look forward to coming and consistently mention how the group meetings are on of the highlights of their week.

Comments:

Welcoming Outsiders

Group members invite unconnected people. The open chair is utilized, and new members are being brought into the group at a rate of at least two regular attenders per every 24 meetings.

Comments:

Preparing to Birth

The group embraces the value of needing to birth, and new leaders (apprentices and host/hostesses) are being recruited and developed to ensure healthy daughter groups.

Comments: