

LEADING A GROUP EFFECTIVELY

Know your material.

It's important to review and study the curriculum before your meeting. Your group will sense that you are prepared and that this material matters. You don't want any "surprises" as you lead your group, so check it out thoroughly ahead of time.

Prepare the room.

Arrive early to your meeting (if of course, you're not meeting in your own home). Work with the host to create a warm and welcoming environment. Take into consideration things such as, lighting, noise, seating arrangements, pets, etc. Once your group arrives and it's time to start, have the group members circled where they can all see each other as they interact.

Pray for those attending and those unable to make it.

God is at work in the lives of your group members. Be in prayer for them. Spend some time praying for them before your group. Let God love on them through you and the group. It may very well be that your group is the very first place where they have ever experienced acceptance and unconditional love.

Remember, God is with you! You're not alone (John 14:16-17).

You have the presence of the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit indwells believers, and believers gather together, expect the Spirit of Christ to be there among you as a welcomed guest. He will guide, teach, convict, exhort, enable and unify. Your role is to be open and available to Him. He has promised to never leave you or forsake you.

The support of a Co-Facilitator.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 tells us that two are better than one! As soon as you are able, preferably even before you launch your group, identify your co-leader. This is the person who will assist you in any aspect of leadership during the life of your group. They can offer support during meetings and in your absence they can easily take the lead.

The encouragement of your leaders.

You will have the guidance and support of a Group Overseer. Your consistent connection with your Overseer will strengthen your facilitating and leadership skills.



Just be yourself (Romans 12:3-5).

God has made you to be you – not anyone else. He wants you to be who you are. It's alright to admit when you don't have an answer to a question. These experiences can be learning opportunities for the entire group. No one likes arrogance, and everyone appreciates humility. Remember, God is opposed to the proud - but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5). Apologize when you make a mistake. Your transparency will set the tone for others to be real and authentic.

God has gifted you (1 Peter 4:10, Romans 12:6-8).

God has given you unique gifts to be used to edify His body. Use the gifts and talents He has blessed you with.

God will empower you (Acts 1:8).

God doesn't call us to do something and not give us the power to do it. Pray and ask for His wisdom, strength, and blessing as you lead and shepherd your group. Ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit, so that those fruits of the Spirit may be manifested in your leadership.

HOSTING IN YOUR HOME EFFECTIVELY

Here are some simple thoughts to make your experience as a host more rewarding and enjoyable:

1. Set the temperature

Not only with your thermostat; but also set the "Relational Temperature." Create an "environment" that will be both welcoming and casual. Remember your objective is not to impress, but to make folks feel at home. As much as it is possible, remove any potential distractions from the room that would take away from the group discussion.

2. Pets

You just love your Rottweiler and Dobermans...but your guests may feel differently. Don't take it personal if people don't find your pets as friendly as you find them. Put your pals in a safe place for the brief time your guests are there. Any group members with allergies will love you for it!

3. Phone

If possible, allow your phone to go to voicemail and turn the ringer off. This will keep the group interaction from being interrupted.



4. Parking

You may find it helpful to give your first time guest some parking directions. If you have preferences as to where your guests should park, tell them ahead of time if possible.

5. Food

The Host need not think that he or she should provide refreshments or meals for the group each week. A good idea would be to have each of the members of the group pick a week to bring snacks. Keep it simple so that the bringing of refreshments doesn't become a contest to out-do each other.