

Life Groups Leadership Training

03 Our Fundamentals

So, before we get started I just wanted to say, way to go. Your church family needs you and so does your group. I think it's awesome that you've stepped up to the challenge.

And maybe you're thinking right now, what have I gotten myself into. And if you are, I'd like to say welcome to the club. Leadership can be such a challenge. Serving others is not easy.

All of us are plagued with feelings of insecurity and questions. And if you've ever wondered, "Am I enough?" I just want to reassure you that you aren't alone.

So let's push forward. It's my prayer that this video serious you would find some tools for your Life Group toolbox. Be on the look out for tips that will help you be a more effective leader for your Life Group.

So, here's the next thing we need to talk about, success is built on fundamentals, whether it's sports or raising a family or in business. Fundamentals aren't just the first thing you learn and then move on, these are the habits that you keep practicing and perfecting.

So let's tackle two leadership fundamentals.

The first is this is that you would **view your prep time as a quiet time**. It's hard to make time every week to prepare for your time together, and I get it. Everyone is busy.

However, taking the time to prep can make all the difference in the world. So let's back up just a little bit. Here's just a word of encouragement for you. please, don't settle for winging it. Can God work without a leader taking the time to prepare. of course. God is not limited to our actions. But here's a couple of reasons why you should take the time to prep.

The first is this The Bible teaches that our best ministry comes from what God is doing in our hearts. The greatest commandment is that we would love God first. The second is that we would love others. And of course this is the correct order. When we love God first, it will lead to loving others.

So here's what I'm suggesting that you would consider I your prep time, a quiet time. During your Time Alone With God, let God work in your heart.

Before you facilitate your group time together as a Life Group, remember it is more about transformation, than it is information.

Therefore let the Holy Spirit work in you before he works through you.

So here's a practical tip, pick a time and a place to prepare that you'll be free from distraction, shut down the computer, put your phone on silent do whatever it takes, you won't be distracted in our over connected world this advice has never been more important.

And here's what your prep time might look like. You know, number one, begin with prayer to get your heart ready to next, number two, review the materials, and three ask God, "What do you want me to learn through this."

That's view your prep time as a quiet time.

So here's the **second fundamental** I want to talk about is that you **would build unity, by clarifying expectations.**

You see everyone in your group, they bring different assumptions to the table. Or more accurately everyone in the group has different needs to be met and it can be frustrating when everyone isn't on the same page.

Let's just look at a couple examples.

Let's say Sally joined the group because she's looking for an in depth Bible study, but Joe on the other hand he joined the group because he's looking for a safe place to share and to receive prayer.

Now these desires aren't necessarily mutually exclusive, of course. But when they are not clearly communicated there could be tension, and there could even be conflict. You see if you spend half your group time in prayer, Sally might get really frustrated. If you spend most your time together digging into a passage, Joe might get frustrated and why would they get frustrated? It's because they're expecting different things from the group. So how do you get on the same page.

Well, there's two questions that you might ask, and the first is this, (1) What do you want to get out of this group. And second one is, (2) In your opinion, what do you think a healthy group looks like?

Here's a discussion leaders' tip that might be good for you in this situation.

When I want to get feedback from everyone, I like to have everyone write down their ideas first, maybe on a little note card or something. And then share and talk about them. See this will allow everyone to reflect and come up with their own unique perspective. You see, when you have a discussion after one or two people share, the rest of the group might be tempted to pile on and say yeah I agree with that or I agree with that. But you want to get everyone's point of view. So what happens when the expectations are different?

Well this is okay. Healthy groups, they don't need just unity, they also need diversity. And we need diversity because different perspectives help us grow. It's important to get everything out there in the open. Have someone write down all the expectations that are shared, and then take some time on your own to summarize everything into a shorter list of values for your Life Group.

And of course you don't have to be the one to do this. Ask if someone else would like to help make a list of values that reflects what the group want to be all about. And to help you with this process I will e-mail you a sample Life Group covenant.

Oh!, here's one last thing I want to talk about once you have a list. What do you do with it. Well here's what you do, periodically you review it. And to see how you're doing as a group, you can review it on your own as the as the leader, - as the facilitator to see if there's any changes you need to make. Bbut you can also review it as a group, and you could ask hey how are we doing, are we reaching our stated values? Ask, "Do we need to make any changes on how we are doing things?"

So in this session we looked at two fundamentals. The first was that you would view your prep time, has a quiet time. Love God first before you love others and let him work in you, before he works through you. The second principle is this, build unity in your group by clarifying expectations. Have everyone share what they're looking for from the group. Refine these ideas into a shortlist and make sure everyone has a copy. When the timing is right for your group, pull it out and evaluate how you're doing.

I'm very excited about the next session, you're not going to want to miss it.