

4 KEYS TO LEADING A SMALL GROUP

LOVE

Small groups are all about sharing God's love through friendship.

"We loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well" (1 Thessalonians 2:8) The greatest thing you can do as a host or helper is to share your life with your guests and to love and respect them. "People come to church for a variety of reasons, but they stay for only one—friendship." John Wimber

LISTEN

Small groups are a chance for the guests to be free to ask anything and say what they think

This is a time to really explore their faith.

The role of the hosts and helpers is to listen; not to have all the answers or to win an argument. Love them, be interested in them, and be respectful towards them.

"[People] are never so likely to settle a question rightly as when they discuss it freely." Thomas Macaulay

A great model is host-guest. It is vital to give guests the opportunity to respond to what they have heard and to ask questions in a safe, non-threatening environment.

Groups can be ruined by one of two things:

- Hosts and helpers speaking too much; (silence is ok)
- Allowing one guest to dominate the discussion. (The soccer ball analogy is best.)

Role of the helper: (inward facing:)

- Look after the needs of guests.
- Handle administration for the group.
- Support the discussion with helpful comments, but do not speak too much.
- Pray quietly for each guest during the small group discussion.

Role of the host: (outward facing:)

- Greet newcomers to the group.
- Introduce guests to one another.
- Facilitate the discussion.
- Pray regularly for the small group.

CONTINUED ON BACK



LEADING A SMALL GROUP CONTINUED

LAUGH

The experience in a small group should be low key, relaxed, and fun.

Avoid intensity and group therapy. (You may need to offer to have coffee with someone if things get heavy. The best way is to stop and say, “Hey, let’s pray about that right now” pray, and then go back to the small group.) Remember that laughter is a key component of a good small group experience. Have fun and enjoy the journey.

PRAY

Pray with your small group. Who to invite, what to study, where to meet, all those coming, yourself! Pray before during and after!

Before you begin

- Try to meet BEFORE all arrive (even for 15 minutes to organize and pray for your session.)
- Commit to praying for each guest on a weekly basis.

Small group suggestions

- Encourage people to learn to pray (both privately and out loud for each other).
- When you first begin, have one of the “team” open and close with prayer.
- As your group feels more comfortable, you can ask for intentions and pray for them out loud. A good rule of thumb is to say: “While we would love to pray for your Uncle Bob—we would also love to try to keep these requests PERSONAL—so how can we pray for YOU in dealing with your Uncle Bob? (It is much easier to pray for others but the beauty of a small group is to get to a place of vulnerability and feel able to ask for prayer for ourselves.)
- At some point you may feel it’s appropriate to give others in your small group an opportunity to pray out loud:
 - go around the group and ask each person if there’s anything they’d like prayer for;
 - a host should start with a very short prayer; long eloquent prayers may be impressive, but they discourage others from praying; (So pray a VERY SIMPLE prayer-like: “Thank You God for the weather- bless all of these intentions-Amen.”)

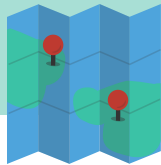


LEADING A SMALL GROUP

PREPARATION IS KEY

FORM YOUR TEAM

Pray for at least one buddy!
The disciples went out 2 by 2
(Luke 10:1) it's just a great
way to do ministry! (Prayer,
encouragement, practicality
and functionality.)



Choose the material that
best suits your group's needs.
Consider a video series, a
book or series of readings, or
a set of discussion questions

CHOOSE CONTENT

INVITE INVITE INVITE!

Don't limit who God might
choose to come! Sow broadly
and boldly! (Matt 13:1-23)
Try an evite, Facebook event
or paper invitations and flyers.
Try an ad in your Parish
Bulletin or pulpit
announcement.



6 TIPS FOR FACILITATING A GREAT DISCUSSION

ASK OPEN-ENDED
QUESTIONS

BE
ENCOURAGING

BE YOURSELF

OPEN THE
DISCUSSION

DON'T BE AFRAID
OF SILENCE

REPHRASE THE
QUESTION FOR
CLARITY



