

Life Groups #2: Leading a Life Group

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADING

1. Leading or co-leading a life group is not about age, marital status, culture, education, or personality. Any follower of Christ is qualified to lead or co-lead a life group if they:
 - Desire to reach others with the Gospel.
 - Have a hunger for God's Word and prayer.
 - Are willing to give their time and energy to regularly meeting with others.
 - Desire to set a godly example through their lifestyle to the people they will be serving. (I Corinthians 11:1)

2. There are leadership qualities that are important to develop as a life group leader or co-leader. Successful leaders and co-leaders are people who:
 - Submit to authority. (Romans 13:1-5)
 - Understand that blessings come when you submit to the godly authority in your life, and when you align your vision with the vision and values of the church God has planted you in.

 - Are faithful in the little. (Luke 16:10-12)
 - Keep their word. (Psalm 15:1-4)
 - Have a servant's heart. (Matthew 20:26-28)
 - Walk in wisdom. (Ephesians 5:15)
 - Are sensitive to the Holy Spirit. (Romans 12:2)
 - Have compassion for/on others. (Matthew 9:36)
 - Boldly reach out and invite others in. (Matthew 9:9-10)
 - Have knowledge of the Word. (Joshua 1:8)
 - Consistently demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-25)

HEALTHY LEADERSHIP HABITS

1. As leaders, it is important to make sure that you:
 - Have a consistent prayer and devotional life.
 - Have a balanced family life.
 - Take time to rest and do things you enjoy.
 - Are walking in accountability and discipleship with other believers.
 - Are developing and empowering new leaders and co-leaders.
 - Realize that it's not about being perfect, just available.

CHALLENGES IN A LIFE GROUP

1. Personality types.
 - Every life group will have a variety of personality types.
 - Empower those who are quieter by asking for their input and affirming what they say.
 - Help guide those who are more talkative by affirming what they say and then giving the opportunity for another to speak up.
 - As the leader, this is not the time for you to use your teaching gift and not allow for group discussion.
2. Leader burnout.
 - Facilitating every detail of the life group on your own will lead to burn out. Part of leadership is empowering others to lead.
3. Awkward gaps of silence.
 - Don't feel intimidated by moments of silence.
 - Allow room for the Holy Spirit to speak to everyone.
 - When silence persists, try rephrasing the question or asking one person to answer.
4. The life group becomes ingrown.
 - Consistently encourage your life group to reach out to new people and invite unsaved friends.
 - Take time as a group to pray for unsaved friends and family and for opportunities to invite them.

5. Sporadic attendance.

- Designate a clear start and finish time and do your best to stick to it.
 - Not ending on time or leaving adequate time for application and prayer can lead to people becoming discouraged or you losing credibility as a leader.

- Follow-up with those who didn't show up to the life group.
 - Let them know that they are valuable and were missed.
 - When a person consistently misses life group, offer to meet up outside of the life group to see how they are really doing.

- Ask the group what they are interested in studying, and allow them to help pick the curriculum.

6. Straying from the topic.

- As a leader, you are responsible for steering the course of the conversation.
- Your primary focus should be the Word of God, not conducting long counseling sessions week after week.

7. Being too rigid.

- Leave room for the leading of the Holy Spirit, who brings life and lasting change.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Since leading and co-leading a life group is not only for those we might classify as “outgoing”, what characteristics do you have that will make you a great leader or co-leader? How will those characteristics make you a great leader or co-leader?
2. Which “healthy leadership habit” comes most natural to you? Which one do you find to be or think may be the most challenging for you?
3. Do you have someone personally pouring into and discipling you? If yes, what does that look like? If not, what action step(s) do you need to take to find someone to disciple you?
4. What challenge mentioned above do you think would be the easiest for you to overcome? What challenge do you think would be the hardest for you to overcome? Why?

HOMEWORK

1. Write one paragraph reporting on a challenge you observed in a life group or small group setting. Answer the following questions in your report:
 - What kind of small group setting were you in at the time?
 - What was the challenge presented?
 - Was the challenge handled well or poorly? How so?
 - Having learned what you have in this class, what, if anything, would you have done differently in this scenario?