

Training for Group Leaders

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1. Define Leadership

A leader should be a humble servant, willing to put his wants and needs above others. He should be un-offendable and not afraid to say, "I don't know". Jesus was the perfect example of a leader.

2. Qualifications for a Group Leader

A group leader has walked in freedom from sexual sin for at least nine months and in most cases, has served for at least 6 months as an assistant group leader. He should be actively seeking a deeper relationship with the Lord through studying the Word, worship, attending church services, and mentoring other men. The fruit of his salvation should be easily seen.

3. An Encourager

A group leader is an encourager, not a teacher or trainer. Let God change lives. Ephesians 4:29 (NIV) reads, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." A group leader is careful not to correct (unless a guy is saying something that is non-biblical), but to encourage with his words. James 1:19 reminds that group leaders should be "quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry". Finally, Hebrews 3:13 says to encourage DAILY, so a group leader will reach out to his guys by text or phone every day to exhort them to victory.

4. A Gatekeeper

As a group leader, the guys in your group are your flock. Jesus is the good Shepherd, but you are gatekeeper. Your job is to keep the enemy out. Maintain utmost confidentiality in the group (don't even discuss situations with your wife) – what is shared in group, stays in group. Also, guard against guys who the enemy uses to try to monopolize or disrupt the group. Speak with them separately and let them know the ground rules of the group. Keep each guy on task to a 5-minute check-in. You pray for the group and have guys pray for each other during the group time. If you have a guy who is taking too much time, remind him (in love) of the 5-minute check-in. If it persists, speak with him outside the group.

5. Question Asker, Not a Teller

A good group leader will ask questions, rather than telling. You are not a counselor, nor should there be any counseling during the group time. If a guy is struggling, ask questions that can help him uncover his triggers and possible solutions. Don't try to fix your guys – that's God's job and you are not God. Also, don't be a know-it-all. Let other guys answer questions.

6. A Good Listener

Listen to what they say and then feed it back in your own words to make sure you understood. Ask the Lord for wisdom. Ask other guys in the group. If there is no answer, say, "I don't have an answer, but I'll pray about it and get back to you." Prayerfully posture your answers.

7. Be Faithful

A group leader is responsible to be there to support his group. Should be there at least 3 out of 4 weeks each month. If you can't be there, make sure you have an assistant who can take over the group. Notify the leader of your overall group and the members of your group that you won't be there. Group leaders are faithful!

8. Minister to Your Flock

Know the condition of your guys by staying in daily contact – use the daily texting system that is discussed in the Pure for Life Relational Ministry document. Call and meet with your guys. Build relationship. Encourage and build them up. Hold them accountable to gaining freedom from sexual sin and developing a powerful relationship with the Lord. Pray for them daily.

9. Take Care of Yourself

There is nothing that hurts a group more than if the leader falls. Now, this doesn't mean that if you fall, you lie and deceive your group. Remember that there is no condemnation in this groups. Be honest with the overall group leader and with your group of guys. The best way to make yourself fall-proof is to invest time with the Lord every day. Read, study, and meditate in the Word of God. Renew your own mind, so that you can enjoy purity of thought and body. Pray throughout the day for strength against temptation. Stay balanced – work, family time, spiritual time, exercise, healthy eating, etc. If you are married, work daily on your marriage – be a servant to your wife, as Jesus was to the church.

10. Be Accountable

You should have accountability to men outside your small group. First, to the leader of your overall group. Second to another man who has never struggled with sexual sin or has many years of purity. Third, to a Pastor or men's leader at your church. They should be free to call and ask if you've viewed anything, done anything, etc. You should be checking in with them weekly. Report any change in your life that is causing stress. Tell them how they can pray. Report to the overall group leader how your small group is doing.

11. Some More Basics

Make sure you share your contact information with the guys and get there's (phone, email). There is an old saying that no one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care. Don't try to impress your guys with your Bible knowledge or years of experience with the Lord, instead show them you care about them and helping them gain freedom from sexual sin. Keep your group on track and out on time. Have grace with them at all times. No guilting them. Also, no opinions, back everything with the Word of God.