

How to be a Good Homegroup Leader

Its not hard. It's not amazing Bible knowledge that you need – it is a love of people, a gift to make people feel at home and to draw them out. Your task is to hold back those who say too much – and to create a space where those who rarely speak feel comfortable doing so.

These will always be 'leaders notes' if you give yourself 30 minutes to read through and pray – that should be enough preparation.

Other things to look out for:

- ☐ Start on time even if not everybody has not turned up yet.
- ☐ Finish on time.
- ☐ Keep refreshments simple.
- ☐ Set up a WhatsApp group for your group if you can.
- ☐ Make sure that everybody knows everybody's name – and welcome and introduce newcomers.
- ☐ Don't let the group chase 'red herrings' for too long. Keep the study on track by dividing the number of questions by the allotted time – and moving on when time is up.
- ☐ Be aware that some people might not read confidently – so be careful in asking people to read out loud.
- ☐ Be aware that somebody will have forgotten their reading glasses
- ☐ Don't automatically assume that everybody in your group is a Christian and/or is certain of their faith.

- ☐ Be aware that some people might be hard of hearing, so read out the questions and repeat / summarise the contributions of those who speak quietly.
- ☐ Strongly encourage people to let you know if they are not able to attend that week.
- ☐ Don't let the prayer time get squeezed out.
- ☐ Don't let prayer become a list of ill people. There should be at least as much praise, thankfulness and joy.
- ☐ Set some 'rules' for confidentiality and remind your group of them.
- ☐ You are facilitator not teacher – try to reduce the amount that you are speaking.
- ☐ Your task is to draw wisdom from the group – not demonstrate your astounding Bible knowledge.
- ☐ Encourage people to be open and honest about their struggles, doubts and fears.
- ☐ Questions are welcomed.
- ☐ People's life-stories, and life-experience is welcomed.
- ☐ Don't pounce on anything that you don't agree with. Be gentle. Maybe ask the group "How do you respond to that? Are there, perhaps, other points of view?"
- ☐ Never make somebody feel small.

- ☐ Try and limit those who say too much. And draw out the quiet. "This question is only for those who haven't spoken so far' might be a useful technique.
- ☐ Keep in mind that the 'one anothering' is every bit as important as the teaching.
- ☐ Don't take it personally if somebody moves to another group.
- ☐ Always be on the look out to develop potential homegroup leaders. If somebody shows some aptitude – give them the leaders notes in advance and ask them to lead a couple of the questions.
- ☐ Leaders should always be looking to make themselves redundant. The group should be able to function when you are on holiday.
- ☐ Try and keep your group size between 6 and 12. If you get smaller try and recruit others. If you get too big – form two groups.
- ☐ Don't let your group become a faction that criticises the church or the leaders. If there is dissatisfaction, encourage people to deal with it in the proper way.
- ☐ Occasionally organise a 'homegroup social' (it could be a walk, a barbecue, an outing to a craft fair) and encourage your group to bring somebody along. (maybe a partner who doesn't come to church or a neighbour).
- ☐ Make every effort to get to the 'homegroup leaders meetings' that will be arranged occasionally