

## Group Guider Tips: Top Ten

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(1) **Get a helper** to help you guide the group. If we teach that relationships are everything, we should lead this way as well. Meet a little before your group meeting or at another time to pray with your co-leader for the members of your group.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!  
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

(2) **Confidentiality** is essential...what is said in a small group must stay in the small group. Don't share information that was shared "inside" the group "outside" the group... and never with someone that is not a member of the group. Information that is shared with a group member that was absent at the last meeting about another group member is normally considered gossip – we feebly disguise this as a "we need to pray for..." statement. Unless it is a dire situation, absent group members can always catch up on other group members status at the next meeting.

A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret. Proverbs 11:13

(3) **Names are important**...make it a critical point to learn each others names and make sure you take time for each member to introduce themselves to any new member that joins the group. It is helpful if you lead off and pattern the introductions "let me tell you who I am and a little about myself."

And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter). John 1:42

(4) **Be Thoughtful**: If there is conflict or someone gets angry during a discussion, don't engage in the conflict but guide it away to another topic. Please note body language in the group, it may indicate an issue that someone is uncomfortable - try not to assume things however, your observation may not be what you think - so ask first if someone is ok. Additionally, if someone is habitually disrupting a meeting, maybe it is showing up late all the time, or perhaps something else, first meet with him or her separately and see what is going on in his or her life. Tactfully and carefully share with them what you're seeing in the group. If you can't get them to change their behavior, for the sake of the group, you may have to ask them to leave the group... if you are forced into asking them to leave, do it with another member of your group but never in front of the entire group.

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1

(5) **Be Compassionate**: If someone gets emotional or breaks down during a discussion, help that person get through it by being a good listener, and when they are finished talking acknowledge them in a thoughtful way. Don't try to solve anything but simply state: I understand that it must have been difficult for you to share that with us... thank you.

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2



(6) ***Be a Facilitator not a Teacher or Preacher:** remember your job, as group facilitator, is foremost to listen and guide the group interaction. If someone tries to monopolize the discussion, politely interject and guide the topic or question to another member or to another topic.*

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, James 1:19

(7) ***Avoid Some Topics:** it is certainly acceptable to find out what each person does for employment, but never allow someone to use the group time to solicit group members for business purposes. Also, if you allow political discussion to take place... it will normally end in someone getting angry/hurt and leaving the group. Praying for the leadership of our country/state/city is always acceptable. If the discussion goes in a wrong direction, simply guide the group back to the study topic.*

On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. Mark 11:15-16

(8) ***Your Group Area is Important:** Groups can meet at church, at home, at restaurants, at office areas, and almost anywhere... wherever you meet make sure it is accommodating or it won't be a good group experience. If you are meeting in a home, you may want to rotate with some members of the group to ease the hospitality burden on any one particular member. Some restaurants are very noisy making it difficult to have any discussion.*

He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there. Luke 22:12

(9) ***Treat your group members like family:** It is helpful to recognize important dates (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.) and other important occasions and events of the members in your group. It is also helpful to make sure that everyone has entire groups contact information. If a member misses a meeting, you might contact them and touch base. Always encourage your group members to contact absentees... it should not fall to the group leader alone.*

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.  
Hebrews 10:24

(10) ***Be welcoming to new members God leads to your group:** You may want to ask your current group members what their thoughts are about bringing in new members to the group and agree on a process. Remember to emphasize the confidentiality rule for your group to any new member. Also, it is helpful to set up a "get to know you better" meeting between you and the new member outside of the group meeting in order to make them feel welcome and more connected with the group. For the first time a new member attends - have group introduce themselves one by one and tell a little about themselves... this does wonders in helping a new person feel welcomed.*

So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. Luke 19:6

