

Getting organised, Kicking off on the first night, Working with your leadership team

Guys – this is a short seminar that tackles 3 separate issues:

- (1) How to be organised as a Home Group Leader
- (2) What you do on your first night of Home Group
- (3) Working with your leadership team

(1) How to be organised as a Home Group Leader

ROSTER. The first thing is to do up a roster. [give out sample roster]. This is one that I've done for this year – and please note the following things that you should need to plan for:

- (1) **start date** is worked out. As said before – this is done with your leadership team. I'll talk more about this later
 - (2) **immoveable objects** are placed in. These include:
 - Week of prayer
 - School holidays (I'm thinking of the group taking at least one week's break during the holidays)
 - Money series bible studies that we will be providing
 - HGLO meeting (which is when all home groups will be cancelled that week)
 - Women's evangelistic night (where we cancel home groups again)
 - (3) **who will lead the study when.** Please notice 2 things:
 - It's important for the HGL to lead lots at the beginning. This is so that the HGL can set the tone for their home group and for people to know who the leader is
 - It's important to try and plan ahead so that you can get other people involved. Now not only is it good for you to get a bit of a break – but it's important to give people a chance to have a go and develop their skills in leading the group
- (3) need to have a **supper roster**. If you plan ahead of time of who will be providing supper so that it can be something that happens when you're not there.

(4) **Testimonies.** You don't have to do this – but this is something that I do for the 1st 2 months to help the group get to know each other – not to mention get encouraged to hear how God works in people's lives.

The other thing that I do is get people to either share an object or a photo or a song that is meaningful. It's just a way to break the ice and get people to know each other.

(5) **Birthdays.** It's a nice to do thing to remember people's birthdays. And what I'll do is give people a heads up for those who are on supper this week to do something special (eg. Cupcake on cake, something like that)

CONTACTS LISTING. On the first night, I pass out a sheet of paper that has the following headings:

- Name
- Birthday
- Best way to contact you (email or phone number)
- Beverage preference
- Gelato preference

The reason for the Gelato preference is that if possible, it would be good if supper for them had that type of flavour involved (whether it be gelato or something equivalent).

Q. Do other people have any other helpful things that they did that helped them get organised?

(2) What you do on your first night of Home Group

Besides getting people's details – let me outline what I do on the first night

(1) **Have dinner.** It's important for the first night to be really relaxed and food is usually one of the best ways to do that. Dinner also allows for that incidental conversation to happen. I usually ask people to arrive at 7pm and we usually do Pot Luck.

(2) Go through the HG pamphlet. [Go through Pamphlet]

- Read through the first paragraph
- Do the study (p2)
- Pause and use a white board to do 2 things:
 - A. see what people think home group should do
 - B. what expectations we should have as a group (don't do this one yet)
- Read the pamphlet p3
- Read through Expectations list
 - Do Expectations on the white board

(3) Pray. I would usually split into 2 groups and change the split every week and ask for specific prayer points as well as pray for the group as a whole. But if you run out of time, just pray as a big group about the home group for this year.

(4) Provide list of Purposes and Expectations on back of contact listing NEXT WEEK.

Q. Are there other things that people do on their first night of home group that they have found helpful?

(3) Working with your leadership team

It is important that you work with your leadership team with every decision that you make. There are 2 reasons for this:

- (1) **It helps you make better decisions.** With more input, you are able to get more information that will help you make good decisions
- (2) It **promotes ownership** within the people of your group.
- (3) It helps **train people** in how they can be home group leaders one day.

So with your leadership team, you would want to do the following:

- A. **MEET BEFORE YOU START.** This includes co-leaders, assistant leaders, and hosts. Things you want to talk about are:
 - a. What is a **good time to start** and **finish** the home group
 - b. **What you will study first term.** Note that I recommend that for the first thing you should study should be pre-determined. Everything else (besides the money studies) should be decided by the group as a whole. The reason for this is that at the beginning of any group, having structure is really important for the group to feel safe and that things are in control. As the group develops its own cohesion, getting the group to own decisions is more appropriate.
 - c. **WORK OUT ONGOING ROLES with each member of the Leadership team**
 - i. Do you want your female co-leader/female assistant leader to look out for the girls in your group? To lead the prayer time when the prayer time is split boys & girls?
 - ii. The conscious decision when we do split up for prayer (regardless of the split), I'm going to have the co-leader / assistant leader in that other group that I'm not running.
 - iii. **How often the co-leader, assistant leader, even host – want to lead Bible studies.** Typically, I would recommend: (but each person is different)
 1. **Co-leaders:** at least twice a term
 2. **Assistant leader:** at least once a term
 3. **Host:** totally up to them.

d. How you want them to FUNCTION ON THE NIGHT.

- i. What I'm going to tell you is stolen from Pete Denman's seminar. It's how co-leaders / assistant leaders work during the Bible study.
- ii. I want them to be active participants and observers. In particular, when I'm leading the study – I'm taking care of the overall group dynamic – I'm making sure the whole group is on task. My co-leader / assistant leader is focussing what's happening on the individual level.
- iii. So as I make sure the study is progressing, my assistant leader is watching to see how the individuals are going.
- iv. **EXAMPLE:** I was leading a study – and it was on suffering – and for one group member – it struck a raw nerve – and she ran out of the room. My assistant leader proceeded to follow her to check up on her and talk with her as he knew that my key responsibility was to the group. After I got people to work on a question in groups, I then checked the both of them – made sure my assistant leader had the situation in hand – and then I proceeded back to the group – briefed them about the situation – prayed for her – and then proceeded with the study while my assistant leader spent as long as he needed to be with other person. You see from this example – by working together on the night – the person who ran out is not left alone – and the group is not left hanging inappropriately.

B. MEET REGULARLY with your co-leader and assistant leaders.

- a. I would recommend **once every 2 months** to chat about how things are going with the group and to pray for the group.
- b. Also, if I'm thinking of doing anything about the group, I'm always going to **bounce it off them first**. So I have a thought of doing a particular activity for a social, I would firstly email the leadership team – see what they think – and then bring it to the group. Often I find that going through the leadership team makes my idea more refined by the time it makes it to the group.
- c. Now normally, you wouldn't have to meet every 2 months with your **host**. But it's helpful as the home group leader to touch base with them at least once every 3 months to see how they are finding the group, is the group working at their place, etc

C. MAKE SURE YOU GIVE FEEDBACK TO YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM. This especially applies when they lead the study.

Q. Are there other things that people did that helped when they worked together with a leadership team for a home group?