

## Step Two: A Steady Flight!

Once a plane is airborne, the goal is to reach its destination. The destination is only reached if it stays on course. Here are a few suggestions for steady flying.

◆ **A Destination** – Know where the group should be going before you ever takeoff. You are sure to get lost if you don't have a goal.

◆ **Pilot Communications** – Regularly communicate with the group how you are doing in the flight. Report the goal and declare the next step.

◆ **Take Off the Seatbelts** – Once the group is flying, give people room to share and express their thoughts.

◆ **In-Flight Service** – See yourself as a steward of the group. Make sure everyone is having a good flight. Ask "Why?" and "How?" questions to help people open up.

◆ **Watch your Radar** – Stay sensitive to the Spirit's leading. He may redirect your agenda.

◆ **Bring the Luggage** – Be sure to deliver some content. Let Scripture be the central part of the group. Ground the group in truth, not just experience.

## Step Three: A Smooth Landing!

Bringing the plane down is every bit as important as taking off. Consider the following for a great landing.

◆ **Prepare for Landing** – Trays, seat backs, overhead compartments, and trash have all been checked before landing. In a group, you prepare to close by putting everything in its place.

◆ **Lower Landing Gear** – Wind up the group by letting everyone share. This is a time for accountability, prayer concerns, or just down loading.

◆ **Touch Down** – Put the final touches on the group by praying together. Pray for each other and the requests you've shared.

◆ **Goodbyes** – Like the flight crew standing at the plane door, thank everyone for coming and invite them back next week.

## GROUP PARTICIPATION

Small groups go best when everyone participates. They struggle when members dread coming, don't prepare, dominate discussions, or don't engage in the discussion. Here are a few helpful hints to build good participation.

1 – *Select Well!* The chemistry of your group can be affected by whom you recruit.

2 – *Share First!* If the leader does not open up, don't be surprised if no one else does.

3 – *Stay Relational!* Balance agenda and relationship. Be flexible and Spirit led.

4 – *Spot Trouble!* Deal with trouble group members one on one.

5 – *Stir 'Em Up!* Ask good questions and you'll get good involvement.

6 – *Spend Time!* Being together outside the group will make the group better.

7 – *Stay Focused!* Don't get sidetracked.

For more information contact:

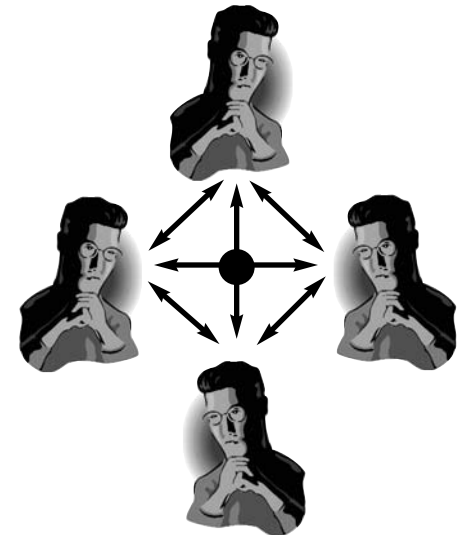


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## LEADING AN IMPACT GROUP

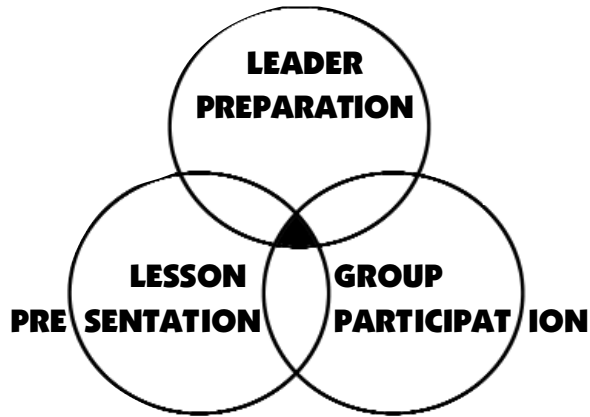


by Ken Adams

If you have ever participated in a small group, you know firsthand how important it is to have a skilled leader leading the group. I have been in small groups that never made it off the runway and seemed like they would never end. On the other hand, I have been in small groups that seemed to be over as soon as they started and I wished we had never landed. Such feelings tell us that having a good small group is not an automatic event. Good small groups are planned. They do not just happen!

There are three essential dynamics for a successful Impact Discipleship Group. They include 1) Leader Preparation, 2) Lesson Presentation, and 3) Group Participation.

### “Three Dynamics of Group”



When you have a small group where the leader is prepared, the lesson is presented in an interesting manner, and the group is actively participating, you will have a group where God will show up. These dynamics are the kinds of things God’s Spirit is looking for in a small group in which He works. God will do His part if we are willing to do ours. When these three human dynamics come together – watch out! This is the kind of group God’s Spirit will use to bring about “life-change.”

Let’s take a closer look at each of these dynamics.

### LEADER PREPARATION

Have you ever heard this phrase, “The speed of the leader equals the speed of the team.” That statement could not be any truer than it is in relationship to a small group. The leader of an Impact Discipleship Group is the pace-setter. If the leader is who he is supposed to be, the group will soar. If the leader is slack, the rest of the group will suffer and stay stuck at the starting line.

Let the following metaphors help you define the role of a prepared leader.

◆ **Conductor: “Organizes”** – A good leader has the ability to blend all the parts of a group together. He or she organizes and directs the flow of the meetings.

◆ **Guide: “Directs”** – A good leader keeps the group on course, but knows when to detour if necessary.

◆ **Coach: “Challenges”** – A good leader knows how to push the group and stretch them and when to rest.

◆ **Shepherd: “Protects and Cares”** – A good leader sees danger and watches the sheep closely.

◆ **Teacher: “Instructs”** – A good teacher is familiar with both the subject and the student and knows the best method for learning.

◆ **Tutor: “Assists”** – A good leader is able to give special assistance to students in need.

◆ **Counselor: “Comforts”** – A good leader comes alongside group members who are hurting.

This list of leadership metaphors could go on and on. There is one more metaphor, however, which, in many ways, sums up all the rest. It is the metaphor of a “Parent.” In some ways a good parent does all of the above roles. In the same way a good discipleship leader sees his role as a parent. Parents nourish, care for, train, protect, comfort, assist, organize and direct life for their children. A good Impact group has to have a good leader.

### LESSON PRESENTATION

Lesson presentation means much more than just the material. Lesson presentation refers to the entire flow of the group meeting. The flow of a small group meeting is critical to the success of the group.

Think of lesson presentation like flying a plane. A successful flight requires three things: 1) takeoff, 2) flight, and 3) landing. In similar fashion, a good group needs the exact same components. Let’s look at each component individually.

#### Step One: A Successful Take-Off!

Like a good flight, every small group needs a good takeoff. If the takeoff doesn’t happen correctly, nothing else matters. Here are some things to consider for a successful takeoff.

◆ **Pre-Flight Checklist** – Before the group even arrives, go over your flight plan (agenda) and make sure everything you need is in place. Have chairs, lessons, pens, refreshments, etc.

◆ **Contact with the Tower** – Like radio contact with a flight controller, prayer is the key to leading a good group. Pray before you go and then pray before you do anything else.

◆ **Adequate Warm-up** – No plane takes off without a good warm up. This includes de-icing. Good groups start with a time for breaking the ice. An ice breaker question or just a share time can give your group great liftoff. This warm-up time lets everyone download so they can better engage in the group time.

◆ **Take Off** – When the group is ready, give it some throttle and you should be able to make a smooth transition to smooth flying.