



LEADER  
DEVELOPMENT  
GROUPS

# MENTOR GUIDE

# LEADER DEVELOPMENT GROUPS OVERVIEW

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Our desire is for the men of our church to have exceptional models of leadership and to experience authentic community with other men. We want to see men grow in their faith and become future influencers within the local church.

## DESCRIPTION

- Comprised of two mentors and six to eight apprentices.
- Meet once a month (three-hour sessions) for nine months.
- Have one overnight retreat.
- Have one-on-one meetings between group members.
- Have one-on-one meetings between the mentor and each group member.

## PRIMARY WINS FOR EACH MEMBER

- Have a clear understanding of his identity as a son of God with a greater understanding of grace
- Be intentionally tracking with another man in his life by whom he is fully known
- Step into a spiritual leadership role at our church within nine months of completing the group

## VISION

Our vision is to be a community of men who are fully alive. We want to develop leaders and create environments that result in men who are rooted in Jesus, fully known by a few, and engaged in their unique callings.

We want to give future leaders a model of exceptional leadership and authentic community in order to increase the quantity and quality of male leaders at our churches. We will do that by modeling humility, teachability, curiosity, and intentionality for the next generation of leaders. And they will experience the power and freedom of authentic community so they can one day create that for others.

These new leaders, in turn, will step into leadership roles within our church, and the ripples of their influence will shape a culture of men through their leadership.

# PRIOR TO LAUNCH

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## BEFORE KICKOFF MEETING CHECKLIST |

### 1. Attend Mentor Meeting #1

(4-6 weeks prior to launch)

- Meet the other mentors.
- Discuss the “why” and history of LDG.
- Discuss the primary goals and wins.
- Discuss how LDG fits within the church vision/mission/model.

### 2. Attend Mentor Meeting #2

(3 weeks prior to launch)

- Receive spreadsheet overview and binder.
- Discuss best practices.
- Discuss meeting details.
- Receive roster of group members.

### 3. Send Initial Email to the Group

- A template for Email #1 can be found at [groupleaders.org/ldg-emailtemplates](http://groupleaders.org/ldg-emailtemplates)
- The email will include an invitation to join the group, logistics about the group, mentor bios, and a link to the Group Commitment.

### 4. Send Second Email to the Group

- A template for Email #2 can be found at [groupleaders.org/ldg-emailtemplates](http://groupleaders.org/ldg-emailtemplates).
- For those who respond that they are in the group, send a follow-up email to provide them further vision for the group.

### 5. Prepare for initial launch meeting.

- Coordinate your calendar with your co-mentor. One of the primary goals for the initial meeting is to set the calendar for the year, so you will both need to have a strong understanding of your availability over the next nine months.
- Plan the agenda and create a timeline for the session.
- Pray for each group member.

## CORE ELEMENTS OF LDG SESSIONS

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### MONTHLY FOCUS |

This is a 5-10 minute personalized discussion about the monthly focus on the verse, selection of Scripture, and prayer. Mentor leads the first three and the apprentices are given responsibility to do the last five.

Things to consider when facilitating the Monthly Focus:

This is not a teaching devotional. The facilitator shares from a personal perspective:

- what stood out
  - what was learned
  - what happened in his heart in relation to the monthly focus
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The facilitator will ask 2-3 men to recite the memory verse.

- Process difficulties or reasons why they were not able to memorize the verse during the month.
  - This serves as accountability and maintains an expectation of challenging each other to learn how to incorporate personal disciplines into our lives.
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Wrap up the time with a prayer.

### MONTHLY QUESTION |

- This revolves around the primary question built into the monthly meeting.
- Leverage the monthly question to align the relational conversation with the focus of the month, as this will help facilitate more intentional community.
- Lead with transparency.
- Model and help the men process more of what is going on in their hearts, not just in their calendars. This is a safe space and the best place for men to experience authentic community, but they can only experience that if what is shared is more significant and at a heart level.

# CORE ELEMENTS OF LDG SESSIONS

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## MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS |

- Ask how their assignment went. If someone seems eager to share, let him go first.
- Go around the table and let each man share his experience.
- If someone didn't do the assignment, let him know that you'll be calling on him next month. Make a note and don't forget to follow through next time.
- Affirm the men who are engaging well and growing from the process.
- Summarize the reason for or goal of the assignment.
- Get the group members to think about the importance of implementing the habits and truths behind the assignments into their lives, and ask how members can help each other grow.

## MONTHLY BOOK NET-OUT |

- The purpose of this time is to leverage the content in the book for personal growth and life application.
- Start each month by asking if it was anybody's favorite book or how it had a significant impact on him. If it was someone's favorite, let him to be the first to talk.
- If someone voices that he didn't like the book or author, refocus by asking if there was something about the book that was a good takeaway.
- Don't be afraid to ask specific men what they think. Certain guys will always want to share, and others will usually not speak up.
- Engage the quiet group members, as they usually are sitting on the nuggets of wisdom. Keep in mind, however, that many times the quiet members can better verbalize their thoughts after hearing from others first.
- Focus on life change and personal application by asking the group what they want to apply after they share what they learned.
- Close out this time by sharing your thoughts—both from their takeaways and yours. Share any other points you want to make at the end—principles, quotes, or real life examples.

## MONTHLY HOMEWORK |

- Discuss the next month's assignment, book, verse, and confirm the meeting schedule.
- Pass out copies of assignments and answer any questions about what is coming up or is expected.
- Delegate any upcoming responsibilities.

# CORE ELEMENTS OF LDG SESSIONS

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## PRAYER ELEMENTS |

- Close each meeting with prayer.
- Pray for each person (and yourself) by name, and ask God to give him the wisdom to know how to make good decisions and the courage to stand by them.
- Consider kneeling as you pray, to represent your personal submission to God.

## TYPICAL AGENDA |

7:00	Monthly Focus
7:10	Monthly Question
8:10	Monthly Assignments
8:45	Break
8:55	Net-outs and processing of monthly book
9:45	Discuss next month's book/assignment/focus
9:55	Prayer
10:00	Dismiss

## TIPS FOR GOOD CONVERSATION

You will identify the verbal processors early on. Guide them early about how to speak more succinctly from the heart instead working through every detail out loud. It's best for the group if one person doesn't dominate the conversation, and it's a growth opportunity for anyone who has that tendency.

You will be able to identify the people who have a hard time going deep and keep it surface level. Feel free to verbalize that pattern after a couple meetings and ask that person to try to share differently that month or next.

# BEST PRACTICES FOR LEADING

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## LOVE EACH PERSON IN GROUP

- You'll have to choose to love some of the men in your group.
- Some will be very different from you, and some will have stories from their past (or in their present) they are not proud of.
- Pray for each person by name, asking God to open your heart and help you love them proactively.
- “Do they know how much you love God and love them?” is a good question to ask yourself throughout the process to gauge how well you are leading.

## MAXIMIZE THE RETREAT AND ONE-ON-ONES

- At the retreat, have everyone take notes during the sharing of stories.
- As soon as everyone has told their stories on the overnight retreat, start scheduling to meet with group members individually.
- At the retreat, many people will share events and beliefs that carry shame and give you clues to their views of their identity. The one-on-ones may provide a powerful opportunity to help replace the shame-based beliefs that he is telling himself.
- The one-on-ones also help connect you on a deeper level relationally and provide opportunities to encourage potential areas of personal growth.
- Have a one-on-one with each group member within 45 days after the overnight retreat to process stories, affirm them, etc.

## MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- God will be at work in each person throughout the group
- It may not be at the pace or in the way you desire.
- Know that sometimes life change happens years after the group. A seed that is planted takes time to grow.

## ENFORCE COMMITMENT LEVEL

- Your group members will rise or fall to the level of expectation set for them when expressed clearly with love. It is easier to start strong at the beginning.
- It can be difficult to enforce people being at every meeting, being on time, reading and ‘netting out’ every book, and completing assignments, but push yourself to confront and set a bar expecting full engagement.
- Start on time. Ask the group to treat these meetings with the same promptness they would if meeting with their boss or a client.
- Demonstrate a fair balance of grace and expectation.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR LEADING CONT.

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### PRIORITIZE LISTENING OVER TALKING

- Offer thoughts at the end of a discussion, amplify points as they come up, and ask good questions.
- Avoid lecturing, and don't tell long and/or irrelevant stories.
- Ask good questions, follow emotions, be okay with silence and talk less.

### SHOW CAUTION WHEN GIVING ADVICE

- When you give advice, you unknowingly take on responsibility for a decision's outcome.
- Dig out or point them to relevant Scriptures, and share a similar experience you may have had.
- Share what you did and why it worked (or didn't), but let them figure out what to do on their own.
- Allow space for apprentices to practice encouraging and speaking into each other's lives.

### MODEL VULNERABILITY

- Your faith story sets the tone for everyone in the group.
- When we attempt to make ourselves look better, we miss the chance to give God the glory he deserves for changing us and making us new.
- Model vulnerability through sharing, not just the 90 percent that you would share with anyone, but even your last 10 percent, setting the precedent for the men in your group.
- If some things that are shared are not uncomfortable for you or your apprentices, you are playing it too safe.

### BE AVAILABLE

- Similar to how Jesus spent much of his time with his disciples just "doing life" with them, open your life to these men over the nine months.
- If group members feel like you are too busy for them, they will distance themselves, significantly limiting the fruitfulness of your time together.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to intentionally pour into these men for a season by prioritizing the time you spend with them.

### CREATE A SAFE, CONSISTENT ENVIRONMENT

- Groups will typically meet in your home. Some groups will meet at the church, but history has shown that more effective community is built by allowing men to see you where you live.
- For the most part, do not feel obligated to prepare food.
- Sundays (1pm-4pm) or any evening Sunday through Thursday (7pm-10pm) are common meeting times.