

VOLUNTEER ON-BOARDING

6 Meeting Guides For Your Student Ministry

Volunteer training is a key element of any successful ministry plan. This training packet includes 6 meeting guides that will walk your leaders through what it means to be a volunteer leader in your student ministry. These outlines are fully editable so you can customize each session to fit your context and ministry model.

Outlined here are 6 20-30 minute meetings or components of larger meetings you can use to cast vision, instill ministry philosophy, and impart big picture thinking to your newly recruited youth ministry volunteer.

Meeting 1: **Leading Through Teaching**

"The best small group leaders understand who they are as a leader."

Q: Who am I as a small group leader? What is the role I play?

Friend

- Friendship is not your primary role as small group leader.
- Relationship is important, but too much focus on friendship can undermine the authoritative role that you need to maintain as a leader.

Surrogate Parent

- Remember that you are not their parent and must be careful not to cross this boundary.
- The goal is to be a partner to parents who are the primary disciplers (even if they don't understand what it means to be the primary discipler).

Leader

- As a small group leader, you are not just a teacher! You are leading your students, through the example of your life, through what it means to be a Christian.
- Leadership doesn't stop at the end of each lesson.



Disciple

- One of your main responsibilities is to always keep in mind the importance of your own walk.
- Living a life above reproach
- You can't lead students somewhere that you've never been
 - "Do as I say, not as I do" will never work.

Q: **How do I set expectations?**

Understanding who you are as a leader allows you to set accurate expectations for your group. Here are a few things to consider:

Think through expectations on the front end

- Many leaders come up with guidelines after the frustration has set in from not having any. Think through this step to be proactive.
 - This will help you AND your students to have a better experience.
- What are the overall student ministry guidelines?
- How does your small group reflect the ministry as a whole?
 - How should the overall student ministry guidelines be reflected in your small group?

Communicate expectations to your class clearly and up front

- Simplicity is key
- Loving but firm communication. It isn't boot camp, but God does demand respect.
- Make sure to communicate both to students and parents.



Meeting 2: **Leading Through Teaching**

"The best small group leaders make a point to prepare for each and every lesson."

Q: Why is preparation important?

- Satan is prepared to derail your kids at every turn, we must do the work to teach them how to stay centered on Jesus.
- You don't have very long each week with your kids and you can't afford to squander your time because you aren't ready to drive the truth of scripture home each week.
- Your students pay the price when you don't prepare
 - They won't take the time seriously if they see that you don't.
 - You are a model of Christianity for your students. What are you modeling for them if you seem to be winging it each week?
- Your students aren't guaranteed tomorrow so what you pour into them today is crucial.

Q: How do I prepare?

- Give yourself time to marinate in the main scripture before anything else.
- Pray that the Lord illuminates the truth of scripture for you to extract exactly what you need to teach your students
- *(Teach through a preparation process that you would like your leaders to follow according to your model and context. If using LifeWay material you can use some of the leaders training videos that accompany your curriculum.)*
- Pray that God would help you to live out what you are teaching your students.
- Pray that God would prepare the hearts of your students to receive the truth.



Meeting 3: **Leading Through Learning**

"The best small group leaders are constantly learning from what God is teaching them in their own lives.

The Best Leaders Are Students

- We will never "arrive", there is always something left to learn and opportunity for improvement
- One of your greatest responsibilities is to remain in a posture of spiritual growth and maturity at all times.

Student Of The Scriptures

- Psalm 1 describes someone who is devoted to the Law of the Lord.
 - Christianity is about following Christ and we can't follow Him if we aren't listening to Him through His word.
- Don't let your Bible Study time be fully centered around leading your small group.
 - What you are preparing to lead your students through and what you are being lead through should remain separate so that you are always growing
- It is okay and should expected that there will be crossover because God often teaches us through our own circumstances, exactly what we need to teach our students.

Student Of The World

- This is not to say that we should be conforming ourselves to the world, but there is much to learn from what we see in the world.
- Leaders are readers
 - It is important to prioritize time to read or listen to books other than scripture that will edify and grow you in your faith.
 - These books should never take the place of scripture, but they can be a worthy supplement.
 - Book recommendations:
 - Spiritual Disciplines For The Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney
 - The Pursuit of Holiness by Jerry Bridges



- The Practice of Godliness by Jerry Bridges
- It is important to be in touch with current events
 - The world is constantly telling your students how they should feel about current events.
 - The question is how does scripture say we should respond to the events of the day?



Meeting 4: **Leading Through Learning 2**

"The best small group leaders are constantly learning from what God is teaching them in their own lives.

Remember that God is constantly leading you to Him whether through trials or victories.

- **What lessons have you learned from the Lord so far?**

- It is a healthy exercise to go back and remember the most significant lessons that God has taught you as you have matured in Him.
 - *Take 10 minutes to reflect on your life and write down some initial thoughts. You will need to spend more time on this later.*
 - What are those lessons?
 - What scripture can you pair with what you learned?
 - How has your walk been bolstered as a result of taking hold of that lesson?
 - How are you still learning this lesson?

- **What lessons do you feel like you are being taught currently?**

- *Take 10 minutes to write down what God is currently leading you through.*
 - Do any of these lessons lean into a lesson you have learned in the past?
 - If so, what have been your areas of victory/failure in this area?
 - How will obedience in this area affect your current lifestyle?
 - How will obedience in this area affect your relationships?
 - How will obedience in this area affect your walk with Christ?



Taking time to walk through exercises like this will help you not only to gain a better understanding of the things that God is teaching you, but they will also help you take inventory of the bank of lessons that God has taught you in order that you would teach someone else.

Remember, some of your greatest ministry will come out of your greatest pain.



Meeting 5: **Leading Through Obedience**

The best small group leaders are obedient and submissive followers of Christ.

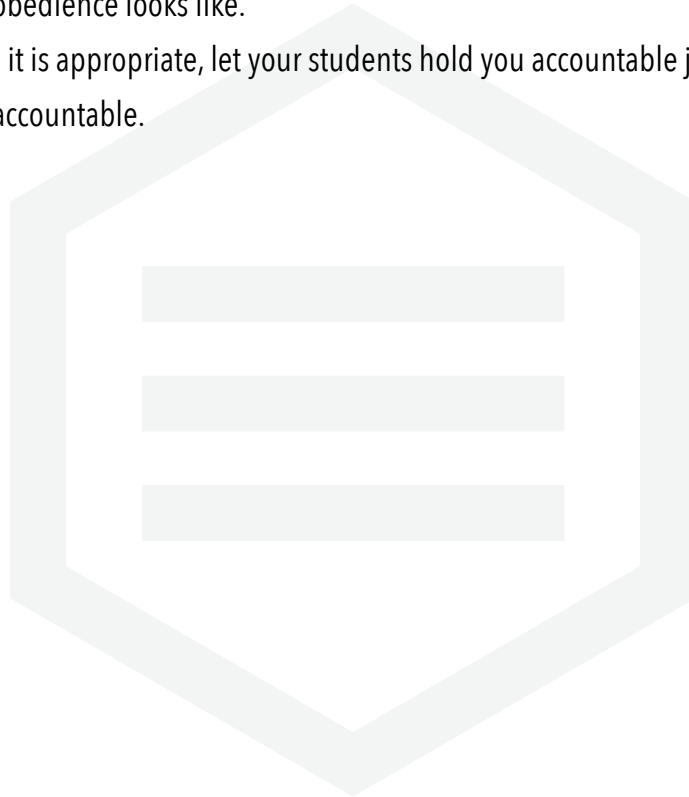
In the last training you wrote down all of the lessons that God has and is teaching you. Now the question is "How do I share these lessons with the students that God has given you to disciple?". It is important to have a level of transparency with your students as this is part of building a relationship with them. You want to share life lessons with them that illustrate how God lead you to obedience and submission to him both in the past and the present.

Some things to keep in mind:

- **Be transparent but sensitive**
 - Not every student is equal in maturity, don't give them more than they can handle.
- **Your students may not need ALL of the details.**
 - You can get the point across without all of the explicit details. Some details can do more damage than good.
- There are some lessons that shouldn't necessarily be shared with the whole group but just with those who need it.
- **Lead with scripture**
 - Too often leaders give their opinion of a situation without vetting that opinion through scripture. Make sure that what you learned is supported with scripture and then anchor that lesson in a way that students can use.
- Give your students a few promises in scripture that they can use if in the midst of the same lesson.



- *2 Peter 1:3-4* tells us that God has given us “great and very precious promises” that will help us to be “partakers in the divine nature” and escape the “corruption that is in the world”.
- **Challenge your students to be obedient in common areas of struggle.**
 - Give them a battle plan and follow up on progress each week
- Make sure that you are remaining obedient all areas in order that you can be an example to them of what obedience looks like.
 - Where it is appropriate, let your students hold you accountable just like you will hold them accountable.



Meeting 6: **Leading Through Disciple Making**

“The best small group leaders are always looking to raise leadership.

How do I raise up leadership in my group?

- **Set high expectations for your group and challenge them to meet them.**
 - We often expect much too little of our students, but if they are going to grow, they will need to be stretched.

- **Challenge your students to take on leadership inside the group.**
 - Consider these options:
 - Make it standard for 1 of your students to pray before and after each meeting.
 - Challenge your students to bring a friend to the group next time.
 - Don't just give the challenge, but help them identify who they will invite and how they will invite them.
 - Teach your students how to tell their friends about Jesus through relationship.
 - This is going to be something that you model for them regularly so they can learn from your example. (This means you have to be telling people about Jesus as well! Welcome to Christianity!)
 - What would it look like for 1 of your students to prepare and teach the lesson from time to time?
 - Think through what this would require of you.

