



## Small Group Meeting Guide

**WHAT** is it? A small group meeting is a small group of people (e.g. 4-10 people) that come together regularly to discuss a specific topic.

**WHY** have a small group meeting? Small group meetings provide a way to collaborate and share thoughts and ideas, creating a better, innovative outcome.

**HOW** to hold a small group meeting?

One person from the small group will act as a leader of the meeting. This person will provide structure to the meeting, which allows for a great discussion. It is not necessary for this person to have all the answers or be an expert on the topic, but this person guides the discussion by using the steps below.

Follow these simple steps to hold a small group meeting:

### **Before the Meeting: Preparation**

Choose one of the topics to discuss with your group. Use this [link](#) for a complete list of topics. These materials will give you everything you need to lead a conversation. Read through the materials before the meeting and complete the preparation activities.

### **Step 1: Introductions and Icebreakers**

Always introduce yourself to the group and allow others to introduce themselves.

Use an “Icebreaker” to start the conversation. An icebreaker is an activity, game, or event that is used to welcome and warm up the conversation in a meeting. Any meeting that requires people to comfortably interact with each other is an opportunity to use an icebreaker. Each lesson has a recommended icebreaker, or you can choose your own. Use this [link](#) for a list of icebreakers. Some of the icebreakers include creative ways to “introduce” the group members.

## **Step 2: Discussion**

The discussion will consist of a short opening statement about the topic to discuss, and then thought-provoking questions. Ask each question. Then do these simple things:

**Listen!!** If you don't do anything else during the meeting, do this! Everyone wants to be heard. When someone senses you are really listening to what they have to say, amazing things can happen. Solutions can be found that were never imagined. Understanding can be reached that had seemed impossible. Emotions can be overcome, and frustrations can go away. Just listen!! If it's a heavy subject, give people time to process the question. The tendency is to blow through the questions because silence is awkward; however, you might be cutting off a thought, question or idea that will move the discussion to a deeper level.

**Paraphrase** – summarize what is said to make sure what was heard is accurate. 99% of the time, what is heard is not what the other person wanted to communicate. Allow the other person to correct any misunderstandings.

**Record the discussion** – As the meeting leader, you can capture the discussion, or you can assign this to someone else. This doesn't mean to capture every word, just capture the main points of the discussion.

## **Step 3: Closing (End) the meeting.**

Review what was captured during the discussion. Ask the CLOSING questions. Don't skip this! They are very important!

In your own way, thank everyone for coming and participating in the meeting. Let everyone know when the next meeting is and where it will be held.