

ORIENTATION FOR NEW GROUPS OF CHURCH BASED LEADERSHIP TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

How do you begin with a new group of students that you have never met with before and they have not yet been involved in any courses? There are 3 lectures in this series. We have already talked about meeting with church leaders. This is lecture 2 in the series, and, of course this material is again similar and somewhat overlapping. And yet it is important, for you to have this material. It will make life easier for you later when you begin the actual course. And I think it is important for you to remember the lectures that you have for three different groups. Please also note that these lectures are equally valuable to share with individual church leaders.

Let me repeat.

We have lecture 1 on “casting a vision for training local church leaders” which can also be used with potential students. That is dealing with people that you are trying to recruit. You consciously begin with them at a very low level, just explaining everything. That is a separate category altogether.

Now out of this category eventually a new group of people will come, and these are the people that expect to study the Bible with you. They do not know how. They do not know exactly why. They have many, many questions. So you want to explain things the first two times before you give them study books.

Then lecture #3 is on how to have the first “*Meeting with Established Groups.*” So, that is the first meeting in the new academic year, with people who have already been involved the previous year. Again that is a separate category of people.

I. ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS FOR ORIENTATION

Here is an outline of what you can do the first time when you meet with such a new group. You are orienting the new group to the course and preparing them to study the course.

A. Build Rapport

1. *Go around and have people share their names and how they came to the Lord.*

That does several things. It gives everybody an opportunity to talk. It gives everybody an opportunity to feel a part of the group. It is usually also very interesting to hear other people’s testimonies. So it begins to create a bit of a family. It also sets the stage for future discussions. Furthermore it gives you the opportunity to get acquainted with your new students and learn a bit about their lives and backgrounds.

2. *Show how the Lord has molded your interests towards this type of ministry.*

The ministry of being a coach, a trainer, a facilitator, and particularly of working with their church. So they share as you share. First you may share more generally about the courses you have taken and about the conferences. Then you begin to share your own testimony of how you prayed about it, and how God provided contacts, and focused your attention to come and be a blessing in their group.



3. *Build rapport, gather information, group make-up*

Write down the names of the men, what ministry responsibilities they have, where they live (how far they have to come.) Probe on their expectations. Gather info — Ask what he knows and understands about church-based leadership training, etc.

4. *You want to share the present responsibilities and goals.*

Just generally how long the course will take. About how much time it takes to study. Why it is important for them to never miss any of the seminars, and those kind of things.

5. **Use material, relevant to new groups, from lectures you have heard.**

SOME OF THE MATERIAL YOU CAN USE CAN BE FOUND IN THE LECTURES: “QUESTIONS FOR NEW GROUPS;**” “**INTRODUCING CHURCH BASED LEADERSHIP TRAINING;**” “**CASTING A VISION FOR TRAINING LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS**”**

II. TEACHING ON THE A.B.C.’S OF THE TRAINING MINISTRY

When we say A.B.C.’s, we mean the most fundamental information. The very initial beginning information. In other words, an explanation of the training ministry. Not intimate details, but just the A.B.C.’s.

A. Talk about the strategy, the methodology.

1. The strategy of church-based training vs. stationary training.
2. The methodology of studying at home before coming to class.
3. How it came to your province, and how you became involved.



B. Explain the strategy of passing it on to others.

Explain to them that

1. It is your hope that what you are sharing with these people, will be such a blessing that they will automatically desire to share it with other leaders.
2. They are privileged to be one of the few groups in their province to be able to start studying the Bible right at home in their own church.
3. You feel very sad about all the other hungry Christians in other churches who do not have this opportunity.
4. You are praying and hoping that God will speak to some of these people in your group to enjoy the material and share it with others later on.

C. Discipleship

Lay member involvement philosophy. You have the lecture material on the “**secret ministry of Jesus**” . You explain the discipleship philosophy of working with small-groups, and discipling people, using Ephesians 4, Matthew 28, and 2 Timothy 2.

D. Balancing of the threefold emphasis in training a spiritual leader.

Academics, ministry **skills**, and **character** development. Explain that this is not just an academic program of studying to do a job or ministry in the future. For a Christian, ministry skills and character development are essential.

E. Specific goals and distinctions.

You know the course which you are about to teach them, so you can promise the life changes and the blessings that the Holy Spirit wants to accomplish in their lives through this course. You can mention that, the homework assignments are **more valuable** than the exams. You want them to understand that it is a college course. This is not just a little Bible study.

III. EXPLAINING STUDENT AND COACH DYNAMICS

There are three things I would like to share with you here.

A. Student selection.

Be sure to be clear on the purpose of the group and student selection. If it is not very clear to the students, you may use points of the lecture “*Selecting and Training Faithful Men.*” Explain to them:

1. the commitments they need to make.
2. the benefits of the course, for them.
3. the philosophy of discipleship and training.

B. Coach Job description.

You need to explain that you are not an instructor. You are not there to give lectures. But your job is the job of a coach. So, you need to explain what a coach does. They need to understand what your job description is. Why you do certain things, and why you do not do other certain things they were expecting you would do. This is covered in the lecture “*The Anatomy of a Seminar.*” That lecture explains about the accountability and all the other things a coach needs to do.

C. Time requirements and time management.

You need to give them a calendar for the length of the course so they know precisely when they will be meeting. Both the **day and the date**. Then you check with the students to see if there is any problem with that.

Then you need to explain that you also want to teach them some new management skills. That means when you say you start at seven o'clock, according to this new management system, you expect them to be there ten minutes **before** seven. Not according to the old system, ten minutes after seven. That is twenty minutes difference.

Explain that they need to have a place to study and a certain time to study each week at home. It is good to ask your students every time for the first month, “When did you study this week? When did you study this week?” Maybe you need to write it down so you can see if they are developing a certain study pattern or if you need to help them.

IV. BEGINNING WITH A NEW GROUP

You will not immediately give them books and start them with the books. We found that lots of people want books, and they just come and ask for books and you never see them again.

A. Notebooks.

Do not give them books right away. Give a homework assignment to write a testimony or perhaps to do the work on "**The Beatitudes**" lecture. Then afterwards give course booklets only to those who completed the homework.



B. Develop a system for dividing students from listeners.

From the beginning you can divide people into two categories: actual students and listeners. Usually in your first session there is only time to cover all the A.B.C.'s . So, now you give them a homework assignment. You explain that every student must have a notebook and two pens. If they ask you why two, you better be able to explain that.

C. Homework.

The first week you give homework for them to write out their testimony. They have one week to write out their testimony, come back the second week and give it to you.

The second week when you meet with your group, you still do not give any books, but people now come in with their homework assignment, or without their homework assignment. You greet them warmly, and you ask them by the door if they remembered to bring their homework assignment. Not, "Did you do it?" But, "Did you remember to bring it?" If the answer is, "Yes," you say, "Please, why do you not sit right here?" You will receive their paper and take it home and read it.

But if the answer is: "No, I could not." You say, "Oh, do not worry about it. That is fine. Please sit over there." So you put all the people who did their homework assignments in one group, and seat them in a circle close around you. Then all the people who did not do their homework assignment you seat in another group. Now you have divided the real students from the listeners.

Then you say, "Before we begin with studying the book, I want to give you one more fantastic lecture. A lesson that has blessed hundreds of brothers and their wives here already. It is called '**The Beatitudes**.' So, you give the lecture "**The Beatitudes**," and then you have them go home and do the chart themselves and also with their wives. Tell them that they must come back next week showing you the results of that exam at home, and which weaknesses they have chosen to work on. You can readily see that this is a more difficult homework assignment than just writing down your testimony. And you have just focused the whole attention of your seminar on homework assignments.

The third week they come: you go through the same procedure by the door. Whoever has done their homework assignment sits in one place; whoever did not sits in another place. And you say, "Look at the pile of books I brought this week. I am glad that so many of you did your homework assignment. My instruction is to give each one of you who did your homework one of these books. And I am going to do that right away." Give them their books.

Immediately there is a division in your group. Some of these others say, "Well, what about us? Do you have a book for us? You have three more left over here." You say, "Well, I would be glad to give them to you later on, but my instructions are that for every book I give, I must give a written testimony ." Many coaches who have followed this procedure have told us that they have had very good success with it.

V. COURSE ORIENTATION

A. You need to give a detailed orientation on the mechanics of the course.

Make sure that in the notebooks, they write down which pages they must read and study this week. And show them how they work together. Of course, when you start with the *Galatians or Romans* groups, you need to give them the detailed mechanics of the *Galatians or Romans* course.

B. You need to explain the grading system.

Explain the grading system. In the *Basic Christian Life Course*, one of the first pages shows you the whole list of homework assignments where they need to fill out a date and somebody needs to sign it whenever it is completed. Nobody can finish the course until the whole list is signed. What is the purpose of signing that? “Sasha, did you study that? OK, bye.” Is that the purpose? I do not think so. The idea is that the student comes to you, or another helper, and together they talk about the homework assignment and what he has learned. Only after a discussion do they decide. With the *Galatians or Romans* course, you explain the grading system like it is explained to you in the lecture: “*Grading Systems for Courses*.” Specific detailed information on grading is found in the leader’s guide for the *Galatians or Romans* course.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE NECESSITIES

Perhaps you have heard me say those words so many times that you are almost sick and tired of it. Well, you go home, and your spouse says, “Well, how was the conference? What did you learn?” “Administration!” It makes the difference between a Bible College program and a little Bible club. If your Church Based Leadership Training is part of an educational institution or an official program you will need to record the following information.

A. Group and student numbers.

For course credits you need to provide the New Life for Churches university or other institution with a list of all your students and some of their personal details discussed further in the lecture “*Questions for New Groups*.” There are two pieces of information the NLC university should keep about each group:

1. Individual records

The student’s name. A little note about their training, their secular work or what they do, and something about their spiritual ministry. Just a little bit of information. Probably with a telephone number or an address so there is a way to contact them.

2. Group records

A grade record that you will give to your institution or NLC university at the end of the course. How many times they were present. If they did their exams and so forth. This procedure is repeated for every course.

B. Literature accountability.

You need to keep a record of how many books you ordered from the Warehouse, and how many you have used with the students. If you received fifteen books and you have ten students, why do you only have two books left over? Fifteen minus ten is two? We all know that books do have legs.

I am reminded here about the story of a dying man. He had a huge library all through his house. When he was dying, he called in his son and he said, “Son, I want to give this library to you. But you must make one promise. Promise me that you will never ever lend any of these books to somebody else.” The son replied, “Why should I make a promise like that?” The father said, “Because once upon a time, I had an opportunity to borrow every one of these books!”

C. Financial reports.

Students will be paying you for their books. The church may also make a regular donation to the NLC university. Maybe some individuals give you a financial gift. That is fine, provided you tell the NLC university leaders about it. And they will write a thank you letter to these people. This way you are “above the board.” You are clear financially. Nobody thinks that you are doing something secretly with money.

D. Dates–Schedules.

Establish all dates for the whole course. Regarding the winter schedule find out the impossible meeting days due to denomination conferences, holidays, weather, etc.

E. A written trip report.

If your training ministry takes you to other cities, keep a log with travel and group information. Such a log provides you with details to take care of for future travels. It gives you insight into what to expect of your group and how to be ready. A travel log provides inspiration to pray over all the details for the next trip.

1. *How you are traveling: by bus, by train?*

2. *What the schedule is. When it leaves.*

3. *Address*

If you stay overnight, you write down the address where you sleep. You write down the address of church leaders that you visit. Another address you need to write down is where you meet with your group. Maybe you will not meet in a church, maybe you will meet in somebody else’s house or apartment.

4. *A short, general statement about the group.*

A statement about that seminar. For example: “This time, we had a wonderful meeting. Everybody was there and well prepared. We covered lesson six. There is good spiritual growth in the group.”

5. *Some of the details of the lesson.*

6. *Actions to take.*

There you write what you agreed on with the students to do the next time.

Now, I know you think that is a little funny. Once you start, you will find out it is not nearly as funny as what you thought! First of all, maybe you cannot go one time, and somebody else has to go. With this report there is a synopsis of all the information they need. They can go with this paper and do that ministry. They know which bus station to go to, what bus to take.

Another reason for a written trip report is that, once you start teaching several groups, you can easily get confused. I have found, for instance, after several years of experience, that I was teaching with no problem, and so I quit making notes. That was one of the dumbest things I ever did. I almost lost the course because I would go to a group, and I would say, “Well, um, ah, what did we do last time? Ah, let us see, did we do this? Oh, no, no, no, no. That was in another town. Well, let us do this.” So I would begin, and an hour later somebody would say, “Mr. Bible, we did this last time.” I made a fool of myself. I had nine years of coaching experience, and I still made the mistake of thinking, “I know it!”

VII. A COURSE PLANNER & STRATEGY

It is important to have a clear strategy of what you want to accomplish and a written plan that can be copied and shared with others. This example shows some of the things that occur. You know already when you have other obligations and appointments.. You will write that also on your monthly course calendar. Perhaps it clashes with one of your group schedules and so you will need to tell your students about that. Perhaps explain to your group that somebody needs to be at the train station with a car to pick you up, or to make other arrangements. You will also need a seminar plan with all the dates prepared until the end of the course. You will need to plan the schedule for the next course and order books a couple of months in advance. So there is a great need for an accurate strategy, written plan and good clear schedule. It will simplify everybody’s life!

VIII. PRAYER & THE WORD

You definitely want to close each meeting with a good prayer time, focusing on each of the points covered in your presentation and ending with prayer for the individual men. When time permits have a final encouraging Bible lesson that feeds the souls of the men. Give them something challenging that provides new insight into their ministry and gives them hope. Church leaders are looking to be fed from the Word of God. You may wish to use items from the NLC university Lecture Series.

CONCLUSION

In closing let us remind ourselves that we are sharing with men who have no understanding of what the church-based leadership ministry involves. Your job is to walk them through the full ministry, motivating and encouraging them at each point. Remember New Life's goal is not education but training new church leaders and starting new churches. To refresh your memory here is the outline. You should have it memorized and be prepared to share it anywhere with anyone.

Building Rapport

ABC's of church based training

Student/Coach Dynamics

Beginning with a new Group

Course Orientation

Administrative Necessities

Course Planner & Strategy

Prayer & the Word

Remember that "The Church" is God's invention. He will make it successful. Jesus' method was personal discipleship. Follow in His steps, you cannot fail. Success is guaranteed.

God is waiting for you to do it.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

Practical assignment

Completed

What are the ABCs of church based leadership training ?

➤ Make list of the Distinctives of the church based leadership training ministry.

➤ Make a list of the Advantages of the church based leadership training ministry.

Submit both to a Workshop leader next time.