



Road Requirements to be a C-Group Leader at the Road

1. Member of the Road – Completed “The Road Map Session”
2. Signed the Covenant of Harmony
3. Completed Shepherd Interview

Before the First Meeting

- 1. Find a Partner Couple / Battle Buddy.** It may be your spouse or another couple if you are thinking of a home Bible study. Find a like-minded Christian co-worker for a workplace study.
- 2. Pray** about starting a group, about who to invite, what to study, where to meet, time/ place, etc. Let the Holy Spirit speak before launching on your own strength.
- 3. Invite** initial participants. Face-to-face invitations work best. Using flyers, bulletin board announcements, or e-mail works better after you have an established group going.
- 4. Be prepared.** If this is your first time at starting/leading a group, take a close look at Effective ROAD Fellowships and Step by Step Guide.

After the First Meeting

After the first meeting you'll have a better idea of what the group prefers/needs.

1. Is childcare an issue? Find a creative way to mind the kids while the adults study the Bible.
2. Is proximity to dinner a problem? Think about having a potluck prior to starting the Bible study.
3. In the workplace, maybe a "brown bag" study during the lunch hour will help.
4. Most often, studying a book of the Bible works best. You can quickly learn (as a group) how to conduct an inductive study of one of the books of the Bible. Start with an easy one that is not too theologically challenging or too long-like one of the Gospels.

Once Established

- 1. Connect.** Communicate with the Road office on the status, meeting and place of your Group. Coordinate with Shepherds for a visit.
- 2. Continuity.** Train your Battle Buddy / Partner Couple or someone else to take over when you are absent or you move away. (The Next Man Principle)
- 3. Be Flexible.** Our Christian community has many needs. Be sensitive to the needs within your group. Have focused time in prayer before or after the teaching time. Find practical ways to support each other.

Practical Tips for Leading a C-Group

This list was modified from the Officer's Christian Fellowship (OCF) Booklet, "Small Group Leadership."

If you plan to lead or host a C-Group, this is a condensed list of practical tips as a means to summarize key points of leading effective C-Groups.

- 1. Start and end on time.** Starting on time will establish a practice of people coming on time. Timeliness on both ends shows respect for people.
- 2. Make sure the room setup is such that everyone can see everyone else.** In most homes, this will be a limiting factor as to the number of people in the C-Group. Having people sit on a stairway or in an alcove usually inhibits them from participating.
- 3. Design the room setup and rules of engagement so that there is a minimum of distractions.** Have a policy regarding phone calls and childcare so that these and other issues will not be disruptive for others.
- 4. If your group is young in the faith, consider having multiple copies of the same translation of the Bible.** This is also wise if you have Internationals. You can obtain these copies for a reasonable price at Mardell's or other Christian Bookstore. This also allows you to refer to passages by page number for those not familiar with the Bible. This will assist greatly in helping people KNOW God's word.
- 5. Avoid praying or reading around in a circle.** While most are comfortable reading, there are exceptions. The same goes for praying. Take volunteers for these tasks rather than risk losing someone because they felt pressure to read or pray. This could inhibit the FLOW.

6. Include a short review of previous weeks if the flow of thought is important.

With the velocity of our busy lives, help those who were absent feel part of the group. This closes any gaps in KNOWing, helping the group move on to FLOW what they KNOW into hearts and minds.

7. Start with easy questions. This serves the purpose of getting people talking. Observation questions—*What does it say?*—are a natural way to do this. You might even employ a “hook”—an observation or question about life in general—that most everyone can identify with to open your discussion if doing so sets the stage for the direction you want the study to take. Though questions and discussion begin at what people KNOW, this is a critical process to FLOW the KNOWing into hearts and minds.

8. Seek to involve everyone in the interaction. If one or two people are monopolizing the responses, you will need to stop this. This will even put a halt to KNOWing. Rather than specifically calling on a person, generically ask for responses by those who have not had a chance to say anything. If this practice continues week after week, you should plan to approach the offending party and let them know you appreciate their participation but ask them to be sensitive to your goal of involving others.

9. Don't call on specific people to respond. While you may be confident that some people wouldn't mind you specifically asking them, others might be apprehensive that you could do the same to them.

10. Don't let all the questions and response come to you, the leader. If you see this pattern developing, ask others to respond to a response. Keep this up until the conversation flow is naturally multi-directional. This helps you move from KNOW to FLOW.

11. Don't allow yourself to become the group expert. As appropriate, you may need to encourage people out of their comfort zones to take leadership. Co-lead a study with a new leader or meet with him or her mid-week to answer questions and be a resource. Look for ways to affirm them after the study.

12. Don't accept a wrong answer for fear of offending. If there is a wrong response, you can ask the person to state the verse or phrase that prompted their response. (By the way, this is a good practice even if the response is correct.) You can also ask others if they agree or if they understand it differently. If a person often gives a wrong answer and you need to have it corrected, look for an opportunity to affirm them when they give a correct answer.

13. Don't allow statements that denigrate another denomination or Group. The study is intended to be a Bible study, not a justification of one church doctrine or culture over another. There may be a few exceptions if having a variety of responses enhances your purpose. Be careful, however, to ensure this technique will not offend anyone. If the truth is to offend, let that truth come directly from the Scriptures.

14. Be alert to the use of Christian/church-ese. The ROAD is not about Church or Religion. It is about being Christ Followers making disciples. At times, the 'culture' of 'Churchiness' will land in discussion and analysis of scripture. It doesn't take long for people to invent or use a word or phrase that becomes an "in" expression. Newcomers may feel lost; old-timers may need to wrestle with the concept afresh. When appropriate, ask for basic definitions so that everyone is at the same place in their understanding of the term.

15. Stick with the text being studied. This is not about what a leader or DVD or Video KNOWs. This is about facilitating what people KNOW by FLOWing it into hearts and minds motivated to GO do something for the Kingdom of God. Almost every passage should have its understanding incorporated in the immediate context. Usually the recipients of one of the Apostle Paul's letters or epistles were not required to have read a previous letter as a prerequisite for understanding the current letter. When in your personal study you find a cross-reference to be helpful, use it carefully. If you want everyone to see that passage, make a statement and direct people there together.

16. Draw the study to a conclusion. Don't quit without some sort of summation. Try to make your conclusion a challenge that FLOWs what the group studied into hearts and minds or challenges people to GO apply the truths and words discovered in the study. Discovering a bunch of interesting facts halts the group at KNOW and does not constitute a good study.

17. Don't forget to do "application praying." This helps draw the study to a proper conclusion... Aimed at GOing. Don't be troubled if it takes a few weeks to get everyone in the pattern of doing this.

18. If you serve refreshments after the C-Group study time, avoid the practice of "can you top this?" Save the real special treats for a special event. Sometimes, however, the bringing of dessert is the only way a person or couple can be involved. Don't discourage them.

19. Structure the C-Group so that you encourage growth and the incorporation of new people. Have natural entry points if the topic is lengthy and will involve a number of weeks. Make sure newcomers feel welcome, even if it means discontinuing your conversations with close friends. Hospitality of the entire C-Group is critical. Welcoming new comers puts them into the immediate position of beginning to KNOW Jesus and the Jesus Followers attending the group. As they step into the rhythm and activities of the C-Group and its fellowship, what the Group KNOWs will FLOW into their hearts and minds. Along the way, new comers will step out with the C-Group as it GOes. Look for ways to involve them in the group early on, such as inquiring if they would want to open their home for a study or bring refreshments.

20. As you grow, plan to divide the study. This needs to be understood from the start so that you do not meet with resistance when the time comes. Several sub-sets might occur. Men's and Women's D-Groups could develop. A possible way to jump start the

smaller D-Groups (discipleship groups) would be to divide your C-Group into smaller sub-groups around your house, perhaps once a month, when you begin the Study portion of the C-Group fellowship.