

***NEW SMALL
GROUP LEADER
ORIENTATION
HANDBOOK***

LEADER GUIDE

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BCA VISION STATEMENT

To make, mature and _____ **mobilize** _____ _____ **more** _____ disciples in _____ **ministry** _____ ,
mission and _____ **magnification** _____ .

B. BETHANY VALUES

Behavioral _____ _____ **preaching** _____

James 1:22—Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Every _____ _____ **member** _____ _____ **a** _____ _____ **minister** _____

Romans 12:5,6—So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

Total _____ _____ **commitment** _____ _____ **to** _____ _____ **reach** _____ _____ **the** _____ _____ **lost** _____

I Corinthians 9:22,23—Whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground to him about Christ and let Christ save him. I do this to get the Gospel to them...

Colossians 4:5—Be wise in the way you act toward unbelievers.

Holistic _____ _____ **small** _____ _____ **groups** _____

Acts 5:42—Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

Romans 15:7—Accept one another, then just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Authentic _____ _____ **leadership** _____

Hebrews 13:7—Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Need-oriented _____ evangelism _____

Your _____ family _____ in _____ focus _____

Ephesians 4:13-15--...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants... we will in all things, grow up into Him, who is the Head, that is, Christ.

II. SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP

A. TYPES OF SMALL GROUPS AT BCA

We recognize that people are at various stages of life with a variety of interest and needs. Because of this reality we want to be a church “OF” small groups, not “WITH” small groups. Making Small Groups part of our DNA means we have the opportunity for group life available each time a person steps on the BCA Campus. Small Group categories include:

- Home Groups
- Shared Interest Groups
- Support Groups
- Task Groups
- Departmental Groups
- Adult Bible Fellowships

Our goal is _____ **100%** _____ involvement in small groups.

The more small group _____ **leaders** _____ we have, the more _____ **small** _____ **groups** _____ we have. The more _____ **small** _____ **groups** _____ we have, the more _____ **people** _____ we have involved in a group.

B. THE ROLE OF THE LEADER

The Small Group Leader takes overall _____ **leadership** _____ of the group. This includes being the primary _____ **Shepherd** _____ of the group, and the _____ **Coordinator** _____ of group meetings.

MYTH vs. TRUTH

| | |
|---|---|
| Must be a Bible scholar | Must be a Bible student |
| Super Shepherd ! | Creates (with help) an environment where group members care for one another |
| Has it “ together ”. | Knows he/she does not have it together |
| Leads group as though it is a “one man/woman show ” | Understands the importance of involving everyone |
| Seldom asks for help | Insists on help |
| Needs to have a big, fancy home | If no fancy home , no big deal! |
| Cannot be effective without lots of advance training | Understands that some advance equipping is necessary, but knows the most useful training is “ on the job ” |
| Should be an administrative wizard and provide visionary leadership | Should be a facilitator , keeping the group headed toward the goal |
| Dominates discussions ; makes almost all of the decisions | Delegates ; decentralizes the ministry; divvies up responsibilities |
| Has all the answers | Knows where to go for answers |
| Entertainer | Encourager |
| Is responsible to plan everything | Is responsible to make sure things get planned |
| The goal is great meetings | The goal is relationships marked with love, acceptance, honesty, and encouragement, which ultimately leads to lifechange and growth |

We discourage our leaders from doing everything alone. It is important to build a leadership team. Roles on this team could include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| _____ Food _____ | _____ Worship leader _____ |
| _____ Bible Study _____ | _____ Fellowship events _____ |
| _____ Icebreaker _____ | _____ Evangelism opportunities _____ |

The “wins” for the Group Leader are:

- When the group **deepens** their relationship with God and their small group members.
- When the group is practicing the **five** **community** building components.
- When there is a sense of **belonging** from each of the group members.

LEADER EXPECTATIONS: 6 ESSENTIALS

1. Think ____ **Life** ____ ____ **Change** ____
2. Cultivate ____ **Community** ____
 1. This focuses on how you build community in a group by practicing the 5 community building components.
 2. Relationships take ____ **time** ____ to form.
 3. Healthy groups require regular relational deposits.
3. Promote ____ **Participation** ____
 1. This focuses on how you lead the group meeting.
 2. Group members should be encouraged to participate in the facilitation and leadership of the group meeting.
 3. Shared participation creates broader group ____ **ownership** ____.
4. Attend ____ **Training** ____
 1. Leaders are expected to attend quarterly training sessions.
5. Provide ____ **Care** ____
 1. This focuses on how the leader deals with tough situations.
 2. Life is messy and challenging times are a ____ **normal** ____ part of any group experience.
 3. Meaningful ____ **support** ____ during difficult times comes from people you know well.
6. Multiply ____ **Influence** ____

Each small group leader is provided with a small group ____ **coach** ____.

C. THE ROLE OF THE COACH

The Small Group Coach comes alongside our small group leaders. The Small Group Coach is a person the Small Group Leader can go to when they have any questions or concerns.

The Coach Provides the Leaders with:

- A ____ **person** ____ to ____ **turn** ____ to
- ____ **encouragement** ____
- ____ **ideas** ____ and ____ **resources** ____
- ____ **prayer** ____ and ____ **support** ____
- ____ **help** ____ with ____ **conflicts** ____

The “wins” for the Coach are:

- The 5 Small Group Leaders under them are feeling _____**supported**_____.
- The coach and leaders are _____**communicating**_____ regularly.
- The coach is having one-on-one _____**meetings**_____ with the leaders under their care.

D. STRATEGY TO TRAIN AND CONNECT WITH LEADERS

- Quarterly Gatherings
 - 2 SG Leader Rallies a year.
 - 2 SG Leader Luncheons a year.
- Provide each SG Leader with a Coach.
- Send out Quarterly SG Newsletter.
- Provide subscription to smallgroups.com.

III. SMALL GROUP GATHERINGS

A. SEMESTERS

Our small groups function on a semester system:

1st Semester: October-February

2nd Semester: April-August

March and September are off months so groups can take a break if they like.

B. COMMUNITY BUILDING COMPONENTS

Holistic small groups build authentic biblical community by regularly practicing the same five community-building components exercised by the Early Church (Acts 2:42-47).

Component #1: **Fellowship**

Creating a sense of belonging, partnership, and oneness through friendship, fun, relationship building, meals, activities, celebrations, and regular time together.

Component #2: **Word**

Growing together in the understanding and application of God's Word through regular Bible study and group discussion.

Component #3: **Mutual Ministry**

Cultivating a caring environment where needs are shared and met by group members, and each one discovers and uses his or her ministry gifts to bless "one another."

Component #4: **Outreach and Evangelism**

Sharing faith in Christ individually and as a group through inviting others to group and church, conducting compassion and mercy ministries, and supporting worldwide missions in some specific way.

Component #5: **Prayer and Worship**

Surrendering our hearts and devotion to Christ through conversational and intercessory prayer, singing praises, taking communion, offering thanksgiving, and celebrating water baptism.

These five components parallel the five purposes of the Church mandated by Christ in the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. A Bethany Small Group is a smaller group of people practicing at least 3 of the 5 Community Building Components.

C. SAMPLE MEETING AGENDAS

Sample A:

5:00-5:45 Food and Fun

5:45-6:00 Ice Breaker

6:00-6:15 Group Study

6:15-6:30 Prayer and Dismiss

Sample B:

6:00-6:45 Food and Fun

6:45-7:00 Ice Breaker

7:00-7:15 Worship

7:15-7:30 Group Bible Study

7:30-7:45 Prayer and Dismiss

D. CURRICULUM: WHAT DO WE STUDY?

At the Small Group Rally we have a _____ **Curriculum** _____ **Buffet** _____ that provides leaders with many options of study. They can choose from:

- Videos
- Small Group Discussion Booklets
- Books for a “Book Study”
- Pastor Rob's Weekly sermon notes
- Choose your own curriculum!

E. 10 WAYS TO KILL A GROUP

1. Don't meet _____ **regularly** _____.
2. Have too _____ **many** _____ members.
3. Have too _____ **few** _____ members.
4. Don't start on time or end _____ **on** _____ **time** _____.
5. Don't deal with problem people.
 - The _____ **Dominator** _____
 - The _____ **Terminator** _____
 - The _____ **Lacerator** _____
6. Allow _____ **prayer** _____ **request** _____ time to become story-telling time.
7. Don't follow a _____ **curriculum** _____.
8. Ignore the _____ **needs** _____ of group members.
9. Never _____ **multiply** _____ to form a new group.
10. Do everything _____ **yourself** _____.

F. WHAT NOW?

STEP ONE: *Decide if you would you like to take the step to lead a small group.*

STEP TWO: *If yes, decide what day and how often you'd like to meet, and pray about who you should invite to join.*

STEP THREE: *Attend the Small Group Rally, where we will introduce you and give you a coach! At the Rally, you can also select curriculum for your group.*

STEP FOUR: *Go for it!*

ANSWER KEY

Page 2

mobilize; more; ministry; magnification

Behavioral Preaching

Every Member a Minister

Total Commitment to Reach the Lost

Holistic Small Groups

Authentic Leadership

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Need-oriented Evangelism

Your Family in Focus

Page 4

100%

leaders; small groups; small groups; people

leadership; Shepherd; Coordinator

Page 5

scholar; student

Shepherd; care

together; together

show; involving

help; help

home; home

training; on the job

administrative; visionary; facilitator; goal

discussions; decisions; delegates; decentralizes; responsibilities

answers; answers

entertainer; encourager

plan; planned

meetings; relationships; lifechange

food

Bible study

icebreaker

worship leader

fellowship events

evangelism opportunities

deepens

five community

belonging

Page 6

life change

community; time

participation; ownership

training

care; normal; support

influence

coach

person; turn

encouragement

ideas; resources

prayer; support

help; conflicts

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supported

communicating

meetings

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Fellowship

Word

Mutual Ministry

Outreach and Evangelism

Prayer and Worship

outreach

curriculum buffet

Page 9

outreach

curriculum buffet

regularly

many

few

on time

Dominator

Terminator

Lacerator

prayer request

curriculum

needs

multiply

yourself

APPENDIX

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What training opportunities do you provide for me as a Leader?

A. Small Group Leader Orientation
Quarterly Gatherings
Connecting with your Small Group Coach

Q. What is the expectation regarding my involvement in these various Leader trainings?

A. Because of the limited number of training events during the year, we ask that you make it a priority to attend each event.

Q. How do I choose and prepare an Apprentice?

A. Choose someone who could replace you and challenge them to lead: “I really think you should lead a group when we multiply because of _____ that I see in you.”

Q. If a member of the group is having serious emotional issues, what can we do for them?

A. Our ministry has a variety of ways to help, whether through professional counseling, or a specific support group. The number one thing to do is notify your Small Group coach.

Q. If I am leading a group and need to step down because of emergency, what do I do?

A. Discuss your plans with your Apprentice and contact your Small Group coach. It is ill-advised that you step down without an Apprentice, as the group will likely collapse.

SAMPLE ICEBREAKERS

Using icebreakers is an essential small group skill. They should begin with light and informational questions then move to deeper and more personal levels as the group progresses together. If used well, they can move the group to experience greater community!

Level 1

Information: What you know.

- *What is your favorite movie and why?
- *What is your favorite city? Why?
- *What day of your life would you most like to relive? Why?
- *What does your name mean? Why were you named that?
- *If your house were on fire, what three items (not people) would you try to save?
- *What was the best gift you ever received as a child?
- * If you suddenly lost your eyesight, what would be the thing you missed seeing the most?
- *What was your first job? What do you remember most about it?
- *Tell the group briefly a story from your wedding day.
- *If you could go to college (again), what would you study?
- *You have been given a year sabbatical from work. What would you do?
- *What has been one of the greatest adventures you have ever been on?

Level 2

Opinions: What you think.

- *Who is one of your heroes and why?
- *Who is your number one advisor in life and why?
- *My favorite way to spend time is...
- *Just for the fun/thrill of it, before I die I'd like to...
- * I was (or would have been) voted "Most likely to _____" in high school?
- *I wish before I got married someone had told me...
- *If you were going to leave the world one piece of advice before you died, what would you say?
- *Who was one of the most interesting people you or your family ever entertained?
- *Who was the best boss you ever had? What made him or her good?
- *People might be surprised to find out that I...
- *Describe a grade school teacher that made a big impression on you (for good or ill).
- *Each person in the group answer for the person on their right "_____, I am so glad God made you because..."

Level 3

Feelings: Who you are.

- *What is your biggest fear about death?
- *What do you miss most about childhood?
- *I am most like my mom/dad in that I...
- *One of my biggest pet peeves is...
- *When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? Are there any surprises?
- *For what do you want to be remembered?
- *An emotion I often feel but don't usually express is...
- *Where do you go or what do you do when life gets too heavy for you? Why?
- *In what area of your life would you like to have greater peace? Why?
- *What is one of your biggest fears about the future?
- *When you were a child, what was your favorite time of day and why?
- *In general, I worry too much about...

SAMPLE ICEBREAKERS

Hours of the Day

Gather 24 small items for each person in your group. (i.e. M&Ms, dice, buttons, pennies, etc.) Give each person a set of 24 items and tell them that each item represents one hour of their day. Have them group their items according to the time they spend in different activities each day. For example: 7 buttons in a pile for hours they sleep, 1 button for the hour they eat, etc. Ask them to share what they spend the most time each day doing and what they spend the least time doing. Ask the whole group what this exercise tells them about the way they spend their time.

Logos

Each person is given a blank name tag. Explain to the group that corporations are recognized by a specific logo or symbol. (McDonalds arches, 3M, Apple Computer's Apple, etc.) They are given 2 minutes to draw their personal logo. This logo should reflect their personality, their interests, major or any thing they would like other people to know about them. Then give the group time to mingle and see what each others logo looks like. When it looks like the entire group has mixed, instruct everybody with a similar logo to form a small group. You may be surprised at how many similarities there are in your group.

Personal Bingo

The small group host or leader will need to do a little homework before the meeting to find out a few tidbits about each participant (favorite hobbies, books, vacation spots, number of children, favorite foods, etc). Prepare a bingo card (duplicate the card for all attendees to have the same one) with one tid-bit for each square, and instruct the participants to mingle with the group to identify the person for each square. As the information is uncovered, they ask the participant to sign their corresponding square. Keep moving among the guests until all squares are filled. First person who fills card wins a prize.

Famous people/cities

As each participant arrives, tape a 3 x 5 index card on their back with the name of a famous person or city. They must circulate in the room and ask questions that can ONLY be answered with a YES or NO to identify clues that will help them find out the name of the person or city on their index card. EXAMPLES: Paris, Madonna, Santa Claus, John Wayne, Casablanca

Let's Make a Deal

Divide your group into teams of 4-6. Make up a worksheet with 8 items listed that the team members would likely have with them. Make 1 or 2 items, more uncommon things. Assign a recorder based on some criteria (i.e., person with the oldest car, whose birthday is next, who has the longest last name, etc.). The team gets points for each person who has these items. Only 1 of each item per person can be counted and the team with the most points wins. Your list could include: a photograph, a calculator, a pencil, more than 3 credit cards, an unusual keychain, something red, and so on.

Alphabet Search

Divide into small groups. Search your person for objects that you have on you ranging from A-Z. Place items in buckets. First group or person (if done individually) to get all 26 letters represented wins. Exercise can explore how diverse we are - insight into our individual selves.

NOTES