

Growth Groups – Making the First Meeting Great

Four Goals of the First Meeting

1. Rekindle relationships and meet new members
2. Clarify your group's direction, expectations and commitments using the Covenant
3. Briefly discuss the sermon topic (if there is time)
4. Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

Items Needed for the First Meeting

- Dinner or dessert plans decided
- Growth Group Covenants – small ones to hand out and a large one for everyone to sign
- Nametags (host should write them out ahead of time)

Contact Your Group in Advance

- Contact all members one week before the first meeting to welcome them to the group and inform them of the exact location and time of your group.

3 Essential Parts of Your First Meeting's Agenda

1. Welcome, mingle and talk while you eat

Leadership Tip – Studies show that the first 7 seconds a person spends in a room can make or break the remainder of their experience in that room

- People greeted when they arrive
- Drinks available when they arrive
- Upbeat music playing
- House cleaned

2. Think through the uniqueness of your first group discussion

Leadership Tip – GOING OVER THE COVENANT IS CRUCIAL!

- Let people know your meeting is going to start in about 5 minutes
- Tell why the first meeting is unique - getting to know each other, and setting expectations

A. Sharing

- **Refer to the G2Qs** – Take time to do a few of the getting to know you questions
- **Share Guidelines** – Explain the purpose of sharing: Getting to know one another casually (in new groups) or reacquainted with each other (continuing groups)

B. THE COVENANT – SET THE EXPECTATIONS AND VISION

- *Everything rises and falls on how this is communicated*
- Distribute the Covenant
- Go over the Covenant and sign it
- Make plans for your social and service project if possible

C. Prayer

- Everyone participates
- Brief, one topic/sentence at a time
- Pray as many times as you want
- Ask the host to close in a brief prayer dedicating the next session to God

3. Know that your dessert conversations are just as important as your meeting ones

Leadership Tip – Never underestimate the significance of the time after the meeting. It is key to connect with people and get to know them better.