

TRAINER PREREQUISITES AND COMMITMENTS TO LEAD STUDY GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

Dear Trainer, Coach, Mentor, Discippler.

Prerequisites are things that you must do and have before you can develop a good discipleship or mentoring ministry. I am not talking about students. I am talking about coaches. I am talking precisely to you who will decide, "Yes, I want to participate in Church Based Leadership Training".

I. MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY / VISION

There must be a commitment to see the church grow and multiply by training others to help do the work of the ministry. So, the number one requirement for you is to have a philosophy, a vision. Without that the people perish. What must your vision be all about? Your philosophy? You are to have a philosophy about making the church grow and multiply! How are you going to do that? Through evangelism? No! Through prison ministries? No! Through doing missionary work? No! Through printing Christian literature? No! You are going to make the church grow through training new leaders. That is your vision. That is your plan. That is your goal. I want to do what Jesus did!

When a foreigner comes and says, "Well, we have a thousand dollars here and we would like to do a prison ministry, could you do that?" you say, "Praise God, that is a beautiful ministry. Please find another brother who would like this thousand dollars because my philosophy and my vision is to train others." Later, your students will do evangelism and missionary work and all those other things that are necessary.

II. TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

You must have a philosophy about training. There must be an understanding of and a commitment to training MEN; not only in the area of **academics** but also in the areas of **ministry skills** and personal **character**. First of all, your philosophy must include your desire to do church-based training, and not stationary classroom approach education. Let us look at the reasons for choosing church based training in preference to the stationary institutional education approach:

A. Institutional Education Institutional education has several limitations.

1. It is education for future ministry.

People are there for three or four years in a building, studying, studying, studying, hoping in the future to do something for Jesus.

2. Stationary education is very expensive.

You need dormitories, cafeterias, and classrooms. All of that is very expensive.

3. It is an isolated ministry.

It is away from the practical situations in the churches.

4. Its emphasis is academics.



So, it cannot do very much with ministry skills and character development.

These are some of the liabilities of stationary education. Now about Church- Based Training.

B. Church- Based Training

This is where the coaches go to a local church and hold the class right there in the local churches. So let us look at a few of the advantages:

- 1. *The student stays right with his family.***
- 2. *He is not culturally removed from his place of ministry, and from his place of living.***
- 3. *He maintains his job, so he does not need financial assistance.***
- 4. *It is much cheaper. They do not need big buildings or dormitories.***
- 5. *He stays with his church to do ministry immediately.***

We call this, training in ministry. Usually the student is an older person, he already has a spiritual ministry, and he is being trained while in ministry. In a stationary program he is educated for future ministry, but with NLC he is trained in ministry. While he is ministering, he is developing ministry skills and his personal character. Academics alone are not sufficient for Christian training. High moral standards and spirituality are extremely important for believers.

III. STUDENT SELECTION

There must be a commitment to select only men who meet the following qualifications. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, "*The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*" (2 Timothy 2:2). Give it to reliable and faithful men, who will give it to other capable men. Paul was saying to Timothy, "You must be selective. Do not give it to everybody."

Perhaps somebody comes to you and says, "I would like to study that Bible course." You may have to say, "Well, you are a nice guy, but I am sorry, no, because right now you do not qualify yet for this." You have to be selective. Selective means saying "no" sometimes. There are certain people you cannot train or you cannot help. And those people usually give you a bad name. So it is much better not to start with them. Tell them to wait a little bit, that they should grow, or that they should study something else.

Things you need to consider, when selecting students:

A. Approval from the church leadership

Every student must have permission from the pastor or elder, that he can officially be a student in your program.

B. Capable men

These are men who have demonstrated some abilities in studying spiritual material and so forth. If they finished the *Basic Christian Life* lessons for instance, then you know they will qualify. Check it because some people do not have an adequate level of training.

C. Faithful men

These are men who are committed to doing the work. These are men who are really committed to studying the course. Not just to be listeners. Men who make a commitment to come to the seminars prepared to enter the discussion. Men who will actually finish the lessons and not just start them.

D. Men who have the time to study and meet

It takes a lot of time to study these lessons . The difficulty with that is that you are not isolated on a college campus, just going to class and doing nothing else. Family life goes on. Work has to continue. Spiritual ministry must continue. So, studying the lessons is extra work. It means finding extra hours a week. You, as a good leader, should help every student to make a study plan per week in order for them to develop a schedule so that their wives know when they are studying and when they are free. In the seminar, later, you can ask them about it, "Are you following this schedule? Is it working for you?"

E. Men who have some kind of regular ministry outlet

All students must have a spiritual ministry of some sort. Maybe teaching Sunday school or maybe leading a *Basic Christian Life* group. Maybe a Bible study group with unbelievers. Maybe preaching regularly, or a variety of other things. But without a regular ministry, they cannot be a student.

F. Men who are established Christians and are moving in the direction of the character qualities of a church leader in I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9

"An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless -- not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it." (Titus 1:6-9)

So, you are looking for deacons, elders, preachers, and pastors, or other spiritual leaders in your churches. *"He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil."* (1 Timothy 3:6) Under NLC lectures there are other materials for newer Christians, for younger Christians. ????

G. Men who have a desire to teach or lead and serve in the local church

We want to strengthen the local churches. And through the local churches we want to see daughter churches created.

IV. COURSE STRATEGY/GROUP MEETINGS

There must be a commitment to develop a plan to systematically lead a lesson series . That means before you begin you know precisely which night of the week, what time and you know precisely when the series will be finished. This includes meeting regularly with your students in small group seminars. So we are not talking about a large classroom full of people. You must also be committed to the purpose of these small groups. This purpose is: accountability, motivation, clarification, evaluation and application.

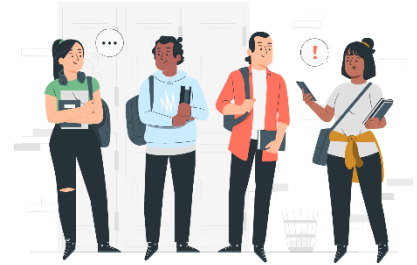
V. DISCIPLING/MENTORING

Mentoring MEN is following Jesus' example. You must make a commitment to meet individually with members of your group in order to help them with their ministry skill and character development. The lessons themselves provide assignments in these areas, and create opportunity for ministry, observation, evaluation, instruction, and encouragement. You need to think of these when working with your students individually.

A. You have some opportunities to minister to them, and during the year to encourage them.

B. Make observations of how they are doing and instruct them.

C. Evaluate, which means you discuss with them how well they are doing. You do not just have it in your own heart and mind.



D. Instruction, means you call them aside somewhere for five minutes or so, and you help them over a hurdle, or help them with a certain weakness.

E. Encouragement.

This is not a correspondence course. It is the coach's responsibility that the student completes the lesson series. For most of you this is a new commitment. Many of you are used to doing it yourself. You preach or you teach, and the people listen. Now however you are going to work through your students helping them to be workers/leaders.

I can smile because in my mind's eye I see your ministry a year from now. And all the things you wish you could do, and never were able to do, now are going to happen this year through the involvement of your student in your province. There is no way I could train eight thousand students myself. There is no way I could start a hundred churches myself. But it is happening. It is happening through others. When I go to bed I say, "God, thank you — it is happening! You are using me to change Ukraine into a spiritual country." So, instead of doing it yourself, you are now helping others to be successful.

VI. ADMINISTRATION

You must make a commitment to administration. Good administration will foster a sense of accountability in a systematic study program. Without that it will only be a Bible club; it will never be a Bible College level ministry. There must be a commitment to do things decently and in order. The Bible requires you to do things decently and in order. You are to be accountable to the pastors in the province. To the provincial superintendent. To the provincial council. To the western people who are sponsoring you financially. To New Life for Churches which supplies you with literature.

To do administration effectively, you need to commit yourself to three things:

A. Student and course records

You must make a commitment to maintain accurate course records. If your records are not accurate, the provincial superintendent will look and say, "We will not lay hands on this man because we do not believe he was a good student." It would be terrible if a good student was rejected simply because your records were not accurate. The other side is equally true. "Oh, look at our good students. Grades of five, five, four, five, four. We have only good students." Then they begin to do spiritual work and people say, "What is this?" Then they look in the students notebooks and they see half the work is incomplete. They cannot find the exams. "Well, how did you give them a five?" "Well, I lost some of the records so I thought, 'Well that will have to do. Give them a five and just forget about it.'"

Group numbering.

Each group should have a name and a number. You also need a name and a number for each student.

B. Finances

New Life Ministries offers a good standard bookkeeping system. You can use it either with a computer or by hand. Once a quarter I bring your financial records to a financial specialist to look over your records. Then if there are any mistakes or if there are things you do not understand, he can help you and train you with that.

Partners do want financial accountability about your ministry. We may advise you about investments that we feel are unwise. And we will have to talk to some of your leaders if there is misuse of funds. In most New Life Ministries it has been discovered that if a person is very honest and accurate financially, they also are honest and accurate with other parts of their ministry.



C. Literature Records

You need to have a commitment to literature records. Your organization needs to know how many students you have and what courses they are taking so that you can come to the office and collect materials. Books will only be given if the person in charge receives a written request.

You must make a commitment to only order books for qualified students. Many other pastors and spiritual leaders want to have books also, but seldom use them. One of my students went to Japan for a year, to study. Can you send me the New Testament lessons so -he can study that in Japan?" "Oh it is a wonderful idea brother and I would love to do that.

VII. PERSONAL COURSE PREPARATION

You must make a commitment to be personally prepared to go over the content of the lesson series, prior to leading it. Before you begin leading a lesson series, you should have a clear idea of the whole lesson series. What is the goal of this lesson series? How does each chapter fit into that goal? What are the separate sections about?

No one is allowed to lead a course unless they have gone through it themselves as a student and finished it with a good grade. This is a prerequisite for all your future coaches and new team.

VIII. SPECIAL TRAINING SESSIONS

You must make a commitment to improve your skills as a teacher/ coach. You have had training sessions, but you need more help as you get more involved in the ministry. Leading a small group and personal discipleship requires different skills than preaching. Several lectures are available to assist you. (see or review ????)

CONCLUSION

You should have a general document highlighting all the training and requirements you have for your coach team. Lectures like these should be on your list of required preparation for all future coaches. A written job description should be prepared for each coach. Such a written note or document eliminates a lot of misunderstandings.

Casting a vision and communicating spiritual possibilities are a big part of the job. Your team needs a vision. Many of these good lectures can help you with that. Make your team successful.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege upon completion of your practical assignment to use this lecture with others.

Practical assignment

The practical assignments for this lecture are mostly applicable for training ministry leaders. Verify or implement the following with your team.

- You should have a general document highlighting all the training and requirements you have for your coaching team. Lectures like these should be on your list of required preparation for all future coaches
- You need to prepare a written Job Description for each coach. Such a written note or document eliminates a lot of misunderstandings.
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