

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

I. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE LEADER

- A. Initiating
 - 1. *Guidance of transition*
 - 2. *Ask questions*
 - 3. *Getting something started*
- B. Information input
 - 1. *To stimulate group thinking*
 - 2. *Clarify*
 - 3. *He gives input by providing resources*
 - 4. *Linking*
 - 5. *Reflection*
- C. Regulating
 - 1. *Setting and maintaining goals; having an agenda*
 - 2. *Keeping on track*
 - 3. *Turning questions asked him back to the group*
 - 4. *Question wrong conclusions*
 - 5. *Summarizing*
- D. Climate making
 - 1. *Listening with understanding*
 - 2. *Treating contributions with respect*
 - 3. *Tension relief*
 - 4. *Supporting and encouraging*
 - 5. *Handling the overly aggressive*
 - 6. *Encouraging expression of personal feelings*
 - 7. *Harmonizing and integrating emotions*
 - 8. *Knowing everyone's name*
 - 9. *Remembering what everyone has said and how they feel*
 - 10. *Drawing in the maximum number of participants*
 - 11. *Encouraging minority views*
- E. Decision making
 - 1. *Resolving controversy*
 - 2. *Recognizing and allowing for conflicts*
 - 3. *Seeking consensus where needed*
 - 4. *Assisting individual decision making*

II. GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- A. Questions have three main functions in a discussion:
 - 1. *They start a discussion*

2. *They redirect discussion, emphasize the point or they bring new thinking to bear on a topic*

3. *They support a participant and encourage him in self-revelation*

B. Not all topics are suitable for use in group discussion

1. *Is the topic recognized by the participants as significant and related to the business of Christian living?*

2. *Can it be stated in the form of a question that cannot be answered by "Yes" or "No"?*

3. *Is the topic narrow enough in scope to encourage focused exploration and to discourage broad abstract generalizations?*

C. Five different types of questions

1. *Fact*

2. *Meaning*

3. *Concretizing*

4. *Balance*

5. *Response*

D. Questions prepared by Interservice Christian Fellowship

1. *Observation questions*

2. *Interpretation questions*

3. *Application questions*

III. VARIATIONS ON A DISCUSSION GROUP

A. Neighbor nudging

B. Circle response

C. Role playing

D. Buzz groups

CONCLUSION