

Suggested Principles for TEE Group Leader Training from SEAN



Introduction: TEE Group Leaders are prepared effectively in different ways in different programs. These principles have in mind a situation where a new user wants to start using TEE materials, and a national or regional TEE team visit the new user and run a training workshop to prepare the first Group Leaders in that new situation.

1. Prepare the ground with a new user before setting up Group Leader Training.

TEE Programs are most fruitful with a good partnership between the Program and the local user. The TEE Program needs to understand the vision and context of the local user. The local user needs to understand how to use TEE courses effectively and fruitfully.

2. Choose and prepare Group Leader trainers and coaches with great care.

The experience, wisdom, knowledge and attitudes of trainers who run the training, and any experienced Group Leaders who act as coaches during the training, directly affect the quality of the training. A TEE Program should choose and prepare trainers and coaches with great care.

3. Help a new user church or organization to make a good choice of new Group Leaders.

The choice of new Group Leaders, especially the very first Group Leaders, is very important for the future fruitfulness of the new TEE group. It deserves prayer and great care. The TEE Program's role is to make sure that the new user understands the general qualities of an effective and fruitful Group Leader.

4. Provide training that equips new Group Leaders to start leading a TEE group effectively.

There is a core of knowledge, skills and attitudes new Group Leaders need. By the end of Group Leader training, successful participants will have demonstrated knowledge of:

- * some of the key Scriptures that nurture a passion for building up God's people through TEE, [Matthew 28.18-20; Ephesians 4; 2 Timothy 2.2 but others as well]
- * the three stages of TEE methodology: Home Study, Group Meeting and Practical Application
- * the use of the Group Leader's Guide
- * the steps a Group Leader takes to prepare for each week's Group Meeting
- * the characteristics of a good discussion
- * the criteria for self-evaluation after a group discussion
- * the qualities of an effective and fruitful Group Leader
- * the requirements for successful course completion
- * the reasons for assessment in adult learning

Successful participants will have demonstrated competence to:

- * use the Group Leader's Guide to prepare a lesson plan
- * lead a group meeting effectively, including
- * use the group meeting time effectively
 - listen well
 - ask good questions
 - involve all group members as appropriate
 - achieve the lesson objectives
 - help the group find and commit to appropriate practical application
- * evaluate themselves after they have led a group meeting
- * manage any tests or forms required for successful course completion

And by the end of the training, successful participants will have shown some signs of passion for the way that God can build up his people using TEE.

5. Structure Group Leader Training around group meetings.

Giving a demonstration of key skills, opportunities for practice and feedback is an effective way to structure Group Leader training.

- i) The skills involved in group leadership, like all skills, are learned through practice. So the training needs to provide opportunities to practice.
- ii) Learning is most effective (and enjoyable!) when people are engaged and actively involved. Participants will learn best about group leadership when they are actively engaged in a group themselves.
- iii) The experience of studying, exploring and applying God's Word together with others using TEE materials often gives participants a vision and a passion to use them.

6. Give all participants opportunity to lead at least two group meetings with feedback.

Although they have just seen a demonstration of a good group meeting, many participants still give mini-sermons or lectures during their first group meeting they lead during training. The feedback they receive can be discouraging! But the second group meeting gives them another chance. They are able to show they can lead a group meeting effectively. Coaches and trainers are able to assess them fairly, and encourage them.

7. Use teaching/learning methods that support the teaching/ learning methods of a TEE group meeting.

Many people assume that lecturing is the most effective way of teaching. If TEE Group Leaders understand themselves to be lecturing teachers, discussion in group meetings is very limited! Group Leader Training based around lectures may reinforce the assumption that lecturing is the most effective way of teaching. Group Leader Training can model a teaching/learning method that involves questions, discussion and feedback. Learning Tasks are a powerful tool to help here.

8. Assess participants by providing an opportunity for them to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitude needed to lead a group.

A simple test for core knowledge, observation of practice group leadership for core skills, and a simple question or brief interview for attitudes gives participants opportunity to show what they know, what they can do, and their vision and passion for using TEE materials.

Continuing Support

Group Leaders will continue to develop as they gain experience, and lead more advanced courses. TEE programs may also offer continuing training and support to Group Leaders, helping to equip them with further knowledge and competence in many areas, such as educational methodology, group dynamics, adult learning theory, mentoring, framing effective questions, and designing practical and ministry assignments.

Group Leaders appreciate opportunities to share together and pray together with other Group Leaders, and with TEE Program staff. Group Leaders are encouraged when there is recognition from church leadership, and from TEE Program staff when groups they are leading complete courses.

Many TEE programs arrange events of various kinds that bring together Group Leaders in a town or region, either on their own, or together with students.