

Small Group Meeting Guidelines
(Suggested agenda for creating a consistent & balanced group meeting in 90 minutes)
Study for the week of: **Jan 22-28, 2012**

The Office : Finding God in a Dysfunctional Workplace - The Slacker

Getting Started: (15 minutes)

People arrive (meet & greet time)

Icebreaker: (5 minutes)

Think of a situation where you have been part of a team or project where everyone was meeting their responsibilities to get the job done. Describe the feelings you experienced working with this group and your satisfaction with the end results. How do you think others on the team felt about the team's progress during and after the project? Specifically how did your team leadership keep the group motivated and making good progress toward the goals?

Gather The Group for Announcements: (5 minutes)

- 1) Welcome new people
- 2) Pass around the roster and
- 3) Announce group plans for upcoming meetings or socials

Worship: (5 minutes)

Options:

- 1) Use a CD player and play two songs,
- 2) Ask someone to lead with guitar,
- 3) Read a hymn
- 4) Do a meditative scripture reading and/or
- 5) Ask people to share something for which they are thankful

Discussion & Application: (30 minutes)

In today's discussion we focus on two types of Slackers: the first type, the "Shirker", is characterized as one who does not fulfill their responsibilities but rather displaces their work to others on the team. The second type, the "Lacker", is characterized as one who lacks the drive and motivation to perform the tasks as required in their given responsibilities. We'll examine the behavior of the "Slacker" and discuss ways to identify each these types. It's important to understand the distinction as the remedy to help someone is different for each type.

Share/Discuss: Now, contrast the good experience you described during the icebreaker with another time when the team or project was unsuccessful due to unmet responsibilities by one or more unproductive team members. How did the under-performance of others affect your ability to get your work assignments completed? What was the overall mood of the team and how did it affect each team member? What did you do to meet your responsibilities as well as help keep the overall project schedule on track?

Discussion & Application (continued):

Let's spend some time discussing the characteristics of the two types of "Slackers" in order to gain a better understanding of their lack of performance and a correct path for remedy.

Read Proverbs 16:10-12; 12:24; and 15:6

Share/Discuss: From this passage what do you observe as the behavior of the "Shirker" as compared to the Righteous? Compare and contrast their rewards? How would you describe the behavior of the "Shirker" as a manifestation of their personal character (e.g., sly, selfish, manipulative, etc.)? This can also be regarded as the sinful nature. Do you see Christians that exhibit this as well?

Read Proverbs 16:26; 26:16; and 28:19

Share/Discuss: From his passage what observations do you make regarding the behavior of the "Lacker"? Do you think the "Lacker's" under-performance is linked to their personal character traits or associated more towards their consequences and personal experience? What are some examples of things that might be lacking which could explain the under-performance of this person?

Thought Questions: How has this discussion helped you make a clearer distinction between the "Shirker" and the Lacker that may be present in your work environment? Do you feel that you have a better understanding of how to identify a person's under-performance as either a character flaw or a personal deficiency?

Now let's spend some time discussing how and what we can do to help the "Slacker".

Read Proverbs 15:10, 31-32

Share/Discuss: Think of some constructive ways that you can directly (or indirectly) discipline someone that is consistently shirking their responsibilities and relying on others to do their work. How does your role and influence on the team affect your ability to hold others accountable to the job that they are expected to perform? Why is strong accountability important to one that is shirking their duties? How can a probationary period with strict consequences be a good tool to help someone in this situation? What does this do to help the "Shirker" and as a result also help the team?

Read Proverbs 3:1-4; 9:9; and 22:29

Share/Discuss: How do you see the significance of the "Lacker's" continuing education and learning as you read these passages? What other observations do you notice in this passage that provides insight into helping the "Lacker"? How could these words be helpful to encourage and bring a blessing to this person as well as to others on the team?

Thought Questions: How can you and your team at work provide assistance within your control so that the "Lacker" may develop the necessary skills to do their work? What personal issues experienced by the "Lacker" are affecting their ability to complete their work? If they are out of your realm of control how can you point them to others that may be able to help resolve their issues? How does an attitude of love and cooperation help bring energy to the team in order to boost productivity?