

Small Group Job Descriptions



Table Of Contents	Page
Leader's Guide	2
An Overview of Small-Group Roles	3-4
Small-Group Ministry Job Descriptions	
Apprentice—Form 1	5
Apprentice—Form 2.....	6
Small-Group Host	7-8
Discussion Facilitator	9-10
Group Leader—Form 1	11-12
Group Leader—Form 2.....	13
Group Leader—Form 3.....	14
Group Leader—Form 4.....	15-16
Coach—Form 1	17
Coach—Form 2	18-19
Coach—Form 3	20-21
Director—Form 1	22
Director—Form 2	23
Small-Group Member.....	24
Additional Resources	25



Leader's Guide

How to use "Small-Group Job Descriptions" by www.SmallGroups.com

Welcome to SMALLGROUPS.COM. You've purchased an innovative resource that will help you assemble concise and complete documents dealing with the various ministry roles and positions common in churches using small groups. These documents include job descriptions, qualifications, and responsibilities for different areas of ministry within a small-groups program. Selected by the editors of LEADERSHIP Resources at Christianity Today International, these documents address formation and sustenance of small-group ministry in its many forms; they come from a variety of churches and denominations.

We have assembled a total of 14 job descriptions for the following positions in small-group ministry: apprentice, discussion facilitator, host, group leader, coach, director, and member. You may use these sample forms—adapting them as necessary—as part of your policy and procedures handbook, especially in view of the great variety of small groups that reach people within and outside of the church. These documents also help congregations develop a standard of excellence for the many levels of workers in a small-group ministry.

These 14 job descriptions and forms will provide apprentices, discussion facilitators, hosts, small-group leaders, coaches, directors, and small-group members with qualifications and expectations that clarify their differing roles and responsibilities. With these documents in place, your church will be able to promote the spiritual development of church members and to attract potential members who can come to know Christ through close and caring fellowship opportunities.

We hope these forms will assist your church in deepening and strengthening your church's understanding of ministry roles, and will help the people assuming those roles to minister in a more effective way.

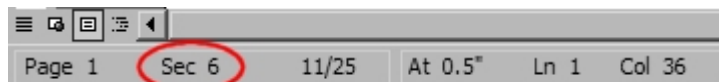
Need more material, or something on a specific topic? See our website at SmallGroups.com.

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Printing Note: To print out the forms you would like to use, put your cursor on the page to print and notice the section number located on the left side of the status bar at the bottom of the page.



Click "File" + "Print," select "Pages," and type "s" and the section number in the corresponding box. For example, if you would like to print the third form, "Job Description: Small-Group Host," type "s6."

USAGE TIP: For the purposes of these general forms, we have used "Community Church" wherever you might like to put your church's name. To save yourself some effort in customizing these for your particular congregation, click "Edit" + "Replace," then enter "Community Church" in the "Find what" field and your church's name in the "Replace with" field, then click "Replace all."

* We've worked hard to make sure this information is accurate and legally sound. However, we remind you that this is not a substitute for legal counsel. If your church has a legal question, be sure to talk with an attorney.

An Overview of Small-Group Roles

It takes a village to launch and maintain a successful small-groups ministry.

by John R. Throop and Sam O'Neal

Since the 1980s, churches have developed many forms of small-group ministry. In an increasingly secular age, leaders have found great value in bringing people together for intentional work in spiritual development, fellowship, and service. Through groups of 6–16 individuals who meet regularly for prayer, study, and connection with one another, people can develop their faith and break through the anonymity of modern life to share life with others. In this way, the 21st-century church can pattern itself after the 1st-century church to grow in faith, hope, and love.

Volunteer Roles for Small-Group Ministry

Generally, small groups meet outside of Sunday or weekday education and fellowship times in the local church. A member's home is the typical location of a small-group meeting, and the member is known as the **host**. In that home, learning and fellowship activities take place. In some cases, it is more convenient for a person—especially a single person—to host a gathering at a restaurant or office building.

When a small-group member designated as the host, he or she usually takes on a variety of responsibilities. These may include preparing a room or area in their home so that it is comfortable for group members (including setting up chairs, adjusting the temperature, providing enough light, and so on); providing food, whether it be snacks or an entire meal; eliminating potential distractions, such as pets, children, ringing telephones, etc.; providing extra pens and paper when needed; and other tasks.

A **group leader** (either an individual or a couple) takes primary charge of the meeting, which can include leading an icebreaker or activity, prayer, worship, outreach opportunities, and a Bible-study discussion of some kind. Sometimes one or more of these responsibilities can shift to other group members so that all can learn to lead at some point. The group leader often serves as a correspondent who keeps in touch with group members between meetings and reminds them of the gathering.

Small-group leaders also must be careful to ensure that groups do well in their meetings and assignments. Leaders are trained to help the group to stay focused, and to ensure everyone's participation. They also are trained to redirect dominant or counter-productive behavior in group interaction. It is important to monitor the openness and comfort level of all participants and to quietly confront any poor behavior or reluctant participation.

Many group leaders also train an **apprentice** within their group. It is the job of the apprentice to observe how the group leader operates, and then gradually take on different responsibilities within the group. Ultimately, the apprentice is training to become the group leader for a separate small group.

Some small groups also designate a specific person to be in charge of teaching a lesson and facilitating discussion during the Bible study. This person is often called the **facilitator**. A facilitator differs from a group leader in that he or she is usually not responsible for areas of

the group beyond the Bible-study discussion, including worship, prayer, physical atmosphere, coordination, and so on.

Staff Positions

Many churches also create paid-staff positions that are specifically focused on small-group ministry.

The bottom level of these positions is usually referred to as a **coach**. Whether paid or unpaid, coaches are the direct supervisors of the church's volunteer small-group leaders, and can be responsible for supporting and equipping anywhere from 5 to 25 individuals. The primary responsibilities for coaches include recruiting and training small-group leaders, and serving as a representative of the church when group leaders are in need of assistance or correction.

Coaches usually meet with each of their leaders separately on a regular basis. These meetings can be conducted in person or over the phone. However, most coaches also gather all of their leaders together for training meetings, sometimes called "huddles." These may happen anywhere from once a month to once a year. The position of coach is also referred to as "shepherd" or "coordinator."

Churches that use a small-group structure involving coaches usually employ a **director**, as well. This person's job usually consists of supporting and training the small-group coaches within a church, as well as charting and maintaining the overall vision for the church's small-group ministry.

Small-group directors are usually members of the church staff, and are often designated as pastors. Titles can include "Pastor of Small-Groups Ministry" or "Pastor of Community Life."

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Job Description: Small-Group Apprentice

Responsible to: _____ (Small-Group Leader)

_____ (Small-Group Coach)

Training Requirements and Qualifications:

A small-group apprentice must be able to meet the training requirements and qualifications for a small-group leader, or be willing to develop them.

Main Responsibilities:

1. Develop your ministry skills: Assist the small-group leader and gain experience in ministry by participating in the following tasks, as assigned by the group leader:

- Open the meeting with an icebreaker
- Lead the sharing and prayer times
- Lead the Bible study (both discussion and application)
- Follow up with absentees, visitors, and new group members
- Any other area that the small-group leader deems necessary

2. Exemplify a teachable spirit: A small-group apprentice must demonstrate humility to listen, receive feedback, learn, and grow.

3. Begin attending small-group leadership meetings: When the time is right, begin attending the bi-monthly group leader training with your small-group leader. (The timing for this will be decided by your small-group leader and his or her coach.)

4. Be willing to become a small-group leader: When you are ready to lead be willing to “multiply” the existing group when it is ready or leave the existing group and birth a new group.

— Source: Hope Church, Mason, Ohio.

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Job Description: Apprentice Group Leader

Ministry Overview

The Group Leader Apprentice helps facilitate group discussion and leads other areas of the group meeting—such as icebreaker activities and prayer—as requested by the Small-Group Leader. This individual should also participate in all areas of group life both as a member of the group and as the apprentice leader.

Finally, a Group Leader Apprentice should operate as a prayer partner with the Small-Group Leader, and should engage with the Group Leader to evaluate group meetings and progress.

Ministry Qualifications

A Group Leader Apprentice should be:

- Faithful
- A person who understands the church's vision for the community
- Someone who is eager to learn
- Someone who is a natural leader in the group (influential)
- Someone who fulfills the qualifications of being a Small Group Leader

Responsibilities

A Group Leader Apprentice will move along the following growth and leadership track:

1. Watch what the Small-Group Leader
2. Help the Group Leader
3. Imitate what the Group Leader has done, with his or her help
4. Have the Group Leader watch as you lead the group
5. Lead the group on your own
6. Find your own apprentice

I have read and understand the Ministry Qualifications and Responsibilities of a Group Leader Apprentice.

[Name of Apprentice]

[Date]

[Name of Group Leader]

[Date]

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Job Description: Small-Group Host

The role of the host is critical to the success of any small group. Sometimes the leader also hosts the group, but often another person will open his or her home, freeing the leader to focus on teaching and managing the group. Although the host may appear to be of lesser importance than the leader, this is not true. These are two very different roles requiring different gifts—and both are essential to the success of the group. A prepared, relaxed, and welcoming environment will enhance the small-group experience for everyone. But this will only come through thoughtful preparation.

The structure of the group will determine requirements for the host and the meeting space. While many groups consist of 6 to 12 people meeting in a home, there are also other configurations. Some small groups meet at a church, a coffee shop, or other public place. Sometimes a larger group meets together for teaching, with smaller breakout groups or table hosts for discussion. Regardless of the group type, it's helpful for one person or couple to be designated as host and/or hostess—responsible for the physical space and the ambiance of the meeting.

I recommend that you adapt the following suggestions and guidelines to your unique situation.

Personal Characteristics

Objective: Although the host is not the identified spiritual leader of the group, he or she still must maintain a strong personal walk with the Lord by practicing the spiritual disciplines necessary for spiritual fitness and for growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

Goals:

1. Spend time reading the Bible each day, pursuing personal growth and maturity.
2. Practice a consistent prayer life that focuses on praise, thanksgiving, personal needs, the needs of believers, and the needs of the lost.
3. Spend time in spiritual fellowship with others for the purposes of mutual love, encouragement, and growth.
4. Be involved in fulfilling the Great Commission by reaching out to the lost, both in word and deed.
5. Develop and practice the heart of a servant.

Duties Within the Small Group

Objective: To provide a physical and emotional setting that is conducive for a small group of believers to grow toward maturity in Christ.

Goals:

1. ***Be prepared to welcome members 20 to 30 minutes before the meeting.*** This will create a welcoming environment for early arrivals, as well as for leaders, apprentices, and table leaders, who should arrive early to prepare, pray, and settle before the other group members get there.

2. ***Spiritually cleanse the meeting space*** by praying for a removal of any defilement left by others who have been in the space, as well as by sin, arguments, and tension. Bring the peace of the Holy Spirit into the room. This is essential for public space, but is also important in a home.
3. ***Provide and/or set up comfortable seating for the number of members and guests expected.*** Work with the leader to ensure that the set-up accommodates his or her leadership style. For example, will the leader need tables or a white board?
4. ***Eliminate as many distractions as possible.*** These might include:
 - ***Children.*** If yours is not a family group, members must agree upon the policy for children. As the host, make sure that your own children are able to safely and quietly play or sleep without creating distractions for the group members. This would include crying, music, TV, telephones, quarrels, and other noise. Children running in and out of the room also create a confidentiality issue.
 - ***Pets.*** Unless you know that everyone in your group loves Rover and Puff, make sure they are in another room and not barking, jumping at the door, or otherwise creating a nuisance. Also, if you have pets, make sure that no one in your group is allergic. If they are, can you still host the meeting? Is a thorough vacuuming sufficient?
 - ***Telephones.*** Hopefully, the group leader will ask people to silence their cell phones during the meeting. You can help by allowing voicemail to answer your home telephone. Jumping up to answer every phone call communicates that the unidentified caller is more important than the group.
 - ***Odors.*** Don't cook fish or cabbage on small-group night. Change the kitty litter. Some hosts light a scented candle, which can add a pleasant fragrance, but be sure the candle is smokeless and that no one has fragrance allergies.
5. ***Provide a space and service for refreshments, if necessary.*** Depending on your group, this may include providing (and preparing in advance of arrival) the coffee, tea, or water; providing plates and forks; and perhaps arranging a centerpiece or some other welcoming focal point. I recommend that hosts share the load for refreshments by rotating that responsibility among all group members. Keep a list and, if necessary, e-mail a weekly reminder.

If your budget is tight, don't hesitate to ask for help with food and beverages. If attendance varies, ask people to confirm by noon if they plan to attend (or not). This will reduce wasted food. And consider hosting a potluck from time to time.
6. ***Coordinate with your leader*** to determine schedules and the type of space that will help accomplish the goals for the group.

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Small-Group Discussion Facilitator—Essential Characteristics

First-class small-group facilitators should demonstrate the following eight characteristics when leading, and preparing to lead, group discussions.

Spiritual Characteristics

- **Love.** The most important requirement for somebody who wants to serve as a small-group facilitator is that they hold the Greatest Commandment in their heart: love for God and people (Mark 12:29–31). When a facilitator’s leadership finds its source in this love and shares it with others, he or she is bound to be strong and successful.
- **Prayer.** Prayer expresses our dependence on the Lord, mediates the flow of his grace into the small group, strengthens our receptivity to the Holy Spirit’s guidance and teaching, and shields the group from the enemy’s attacks (Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17). Make no mistake about it: any person serving as a small-group facilitator is at war with the Devil, who wants to throw apart what God has set apart (made holy) in order to bring together.
- **Humility.** This is a key attribute to any person who imitates Christ’s example, as all facilitators should. It allows the facilitator to hear from the Lord, receive his wisdom, serve others, and model spiritual intimacy with the Lord. Good facilitators prioritize the needs of others above their own desires and agenda.

Most people can only be themselves when they feel safe, and a safe environment is born out of humble leadership. Truth and trust go hand-in-hand. Humble people have a way of disarming others and helping them be truthful about who they are and where they need spiritual encouragement.

Practical Characteristics

- **Authenticity.** Arguably, the greatest influence on the dynamics of a group discussion is how real the facilitator is with the other participants. The health of a small group can be directly linked to how free people feel they can be with one another—especially during group discussions. People want to go someplace where they are loved for who they are, rather than who they feel they are supposed to be. Demonstrated vulnerability from the facilitator has tremendous “imprinting power” that ensures the health of the group for the life of the group.
- **Inclusiveness.** Effective facilitators convene and care for people. They intentionally draw participants into the discussion and include them in prayer because they know this enhances their spiritual growth. They find ways to play to people’s strengths during a lesson. They look for ways to give everybody a voice and a purpose to fulfill within the group, because they know that building biblical community takes all of the parts working together.
- **Encouragement.** Small-group facilitators will most likely use encouragement as a primary catalyst for calling out people’s gifts within a discussion and prodding them to participate. Encouragement enables people to hear God’s Word for their lives and helps them to see themselves the way God sees them.

In general, people respond positively to facilitators with positive attitudes. Hope and faith resonate from a facilitator who is encouraging, while a discouraging person dampens the hope and faith of others. A splash of humor doesn't hurt, either—this doesn't require wit as much as an ability to look optimistically at life and its challenges.

- **Consistency.** It is vital for group facilitators to follow-through on what they say and promise to do. Showing integrity in word and action creates structural integrity for group life and group discussions. For example, if the facilitator promises to provide time for a member to express an opinion later in the discussion, he or she *must* do it. Otherwise, the participant becomes disheartened. A lack of consistency also demolishes one of the pillars that biblical community is built upon: trust.
- **Listening.** Of course we understand that communication is vital to the role of a small-group facilitator. But listening is the key to good communication (James 1:19). One of the best ways facilitators can love the people in their group is to really listen to them. Listening to others shows respect and increases each person's sense of self-worth within the group, as well as builds greater cohesion or bonding among group participants. Cohesion brings encouragement and motivation for true discipleship. As a group's cohesion increases, so does its level of communication and positive interaction.

— Source: Reid Smith; copyright 2007 by the author or Christianity Today International.

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Small-Group Leader Ministry Description

Who can be a 2:42 Leader?

Small-group leaders at Community Church agree with the following statements:

1. Jesus Christ is my personal Savior and is the Lord of my life.
2. I regard the Bible as the authoritative guide for my faith and life.
3. I am a member of Community Church.
4. I agree to fulfill the requirements of a small-group leader.

Ministry Responsibilities

1. Attend all training sessions.

Basic Training

- a. **Turbo training.** All Community Church small-group leaders take this six-hour session that focuses on the basic elements of small-group leadership. It covers basics in general small group leadership, and also informs leaders on our way of doing small groups. This means that even those with leadership experience elsewhere should still participate in the training.
- b. **Basic theology.** All Community Church small-group leaders take this three-hour course at least once. It is designed to make sure that our small-group leaders have a solid foundation in basic teachings of the Bible.

Ongoing Training

- a. **Fall retreat.** The all-church retreat for group leaders is in mid-August. It begins after supper on Friday and lasts through Saturday afternoon. This information/inspiration event is designed to get leaders off to a good start for the new year. All Community Church small-group leaders should plan to make this event an annual priority, since essential information about vision and plans will be presented.
- b. **Fall forum** Group leaders need to attend at least one of these 90-minute sessions. The forums are designed to give 2:42 leaders a chance to reconnect and be encouraged once the new small-group year settles in.
- c. **Prayer meeting.** Attend at least one of the sessions of this January event for all 2:42 leaders, where we set aside “business” and spend time praying for our small groups and ourselves.
- d. **Spring training.** Attend at least one of the 90-minute sessions of this March event, designed to help small-group leaders get a better handle on one specific area of their ministry.

2. Remain in contact with a small-group coach.

For small-group leaders, your assigned coach is your first point of contact with the church (not the church office). As both the leader and the coach take responsibility to develop a relationship, leaders should approach coaches with questions and for advice.

- a. **Phone calls.** Coach and leader should have at least four personal contacts per year, either by phone or face-to-face.
- b. **Personal meetings.** At least once each year, group leaders should meet with their assigned coach in person for updates, training, and support.

Leading a Group

As a small-group leader, you agree to carry out the following duties within the group to the best of your ability.

1. Shepherd your group members

- a. **Regular group meetings.** I will convene the group at least two times a month.
- b. **Group size.** I will work to maintain a group size that is appropriate. I understand that both too few and too many group members can be unhealthy.
- c. **Preparation.** I commit to adequately prepare for group meetings.
- d. **Prayer.** I will regularly pray for the spiritual growth and protection of my group members.
- e. **Personal worship.** I will make my daily, living connection with Jesus Christ a priority—being in community with Him is the backdrop and foundation for all other community.
- f. **Personal walk.** I will lead an exemplary Christian lifestyle—group members watching me will see a sincere believer growing toward maturity.
- g. **Safe meetings.** I will seek to create a safe place in our group where true feelings can be shared, and I will exemplify the kind of transparency I desire of others through my own openness. I will guard the principle, “What’s said in the group stays in the group.”
- h. **Unity.** I agree to maintain unity and won’t teach or practice those things that are contrary to the teaching of our church. I will let the leadership of Community Church know about particularly troublesome discussions and will not use our small group for such discussion.
- i. **Spiritual gifts.** I will encourage group members to discover and deploy their spiritual giftedness in the ministry at Community Church, and to be faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to them from God.
- j. **Worship attendance.** I will encourage group members to participate in the weekend services of the church.
- k. **Team with church leaders.** I will notify the leadership team of any intense conditions within the group that require specialized pastoral care or counseling.
- l. **Positive attitude.** I will maintain a positive attitude towards the church and its leadership.

2. Expand the Ministry

- a. **Open Chair.** I will maintain an “open chair” in our group as a symbol of our responsibility to pray for, invite, and receive new members.
- b. **Apprentice.** I will encourage and support my assistant group leader, so that in due time my group will be able to multiply from one to two.
- c. **Accountability.** I agree to surrender the ministry of small-group leader if I am unable to fulfill my responsibilities, or if I am requested to do so by the leadership or elders of the church.

I have read and understand the ministry expectations and requirements of a small-group leader at Community Church.

[Name of Group leader]

[Date]

[Name of Coach]

[Date]

— Source: *Crossroads Christian Church*.

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Small-Group Ministry Job Description

- POSITION:** Small-Group Leader
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Your Coach
- MISSION STATEMENT:** To promote healthy relationships through small groups that empower people for ministry.
- PREREQUISITES:**
1. Attend initial Small-Group Leadership Orientation
 2. Complete and meet requirements of Small Group application process
- RESPONSIBILITIES:**
1. Attend leadership training meetings held one Sunday evening of each month, as well as monthly gatherings called by your Coach during the semester.
 2. Pray for and coordinate weekly small-group meetings.
 3. Pray for everyone on your small-group roster, and for your Coach, daily.
 4. Provide a supportive atmosphere in which group members are able to discover and to develop their spiritual gifts.
 5. Be a “life coach” to your small-group members.
 6. Identify and mentor assistant leaders in order to support them in their ministries.
 7. Maintain unity by representing the philosophy of ministry and theology of Community Church, as stated in the Statement of Faith.
 8. Live an exemplary Christian lifestyle strengthened by Bible reading and prayer, as stated in the Honor Code.
 9. Speak with your Coach weekly about highlights and concerns—both personal and in your small group.
 10. Consider Community Church your “home church” and support it with your tithe.
- LENGTH OF COMMITMENT:** 2 Semesters

— Source: *Freedom Church in Lebanon, IN.*

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Life Group Leader Job Description

Prerequisites:

1. Complete the “Investigating Life Group Leadership” course
2. Complete all forms in the Life Group Ministry Commitment Packet
3. Meet with a member of the Life Group Ministry Team to discuss leadership commitment
4. Complete the “Life Group Leader Basic Training” course

Expectations:

- Spend time daily with God
- Pray daily for the members of your group
- Shepherd group members to help them experience the abundant life
- Involve all group members in the life and functions of the group
- Keep the group meeting regularly
- Build relationships outside of meeting times
- Meet regularly with your Leader-in-Training to help support and develop his or her ministry skills and expectations
- Upon request, furnish information about your life group and attendance roster to the church
- Attend Life Group Leadership events, optional workshops, and retreats

Time Commitment: About 2–5 hours per week

Length of Commitment in this Position: 1 year to ongoing

Further Training:

- Ongoing Life Group Training events offered by the LG Ministry (e.g. quarterly Leadership events, workshops, and retreats)
- Read books on small-group leadership, and other helpful material

— Source: *Northeast Christian Church in Louisville, KY.*

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Small-Group Leader Job Description

Small-group leaders fill a pivotal role in the life of our church. Their role is to shepherd a small group of believers to together experience and extend Jesus' truth, love and power. They do this by reaching Upward, Inward, Outward, and Forward with their small group.

I. **Reaching Upward**

- a. Consistently taking time with God
- b. Growing in relationship with Christ
- c. Praying for small-group members, the small-group meeting, and unbelieving friends

II. **Reaching Inward**

- a. Nurturing community, loving relationships, and fun activities within their group
- b. Guiding their small-group meetings to include the components of *Welcome* (Icebreakers), *Word* (Bible Study), *Worship*, *Witness* (Reaching out to the unconnected, unchurched, and unbelievers), and *Wind* (Ministry)
- c. Occasionally having the group extend love to Community Church members in times of special need
- d. Attending Leadership Team meetings and completing SG Reports to receive support and to keep their Coach and Community Life Pastors current with what is happening in the group

III. **Reaching Outward**

- a. Envisioning the group to reach beyond itself in mission and outreach
- b. Taking time as a group to pray for friends, family, and co-workers who need Christ
- c. Helping with an ALPHA or Beginnings meal at least once a year

IV. **Reaching Forward**

- a. Encouraging potential leaders to come to our Leadership Team meetings and Small-Group Leader Training
- b. Giving away ministry to others
- c. Progressively handing over leadership of as many parts of group life as possible to others

What We Offer Community Church Small-Group Leaders

We want our small-group leaders to receive continual support and encouragement from the church and pastoral staff. To this end, we plan and provide:

- I. Monthly leadership team meetings to provide a context for encouragement, ministry, and envisioning.
- II. Ongoing training at our winter Leadership Rally.

- III. A support team of Coaches and Community Life Pastors to offer prayer, encouragement, and problem-solving for group leaders.
- IV. An annual appreciation event.

Small-Group Leader Relational Requirements

Small Group Leaders are imperfect people who are nevertheless growing in their relationship with God and others. The lifestyle they live is pivotal because in Small Group relationships values are more often caught than taught. We expect leaders to demonstrate integrity and growth in the following relationships:

I. Relationship with God

- a. Has a consistent devotional time
- b. Has been to (or will soon attend) an “Encounter God Retreat”

II. Relationship with family

- a. In obedience to God, is seeking to have as positive a relationship as possible with their immediate family
- b. Takes the time needed to grow in family relationships
- c. Is not involved in any extramarital sexual relationships

III. Relationship to church

- a. Is a committed member of Community Church
- b. Speaks positively and supportively of the church and its leadership
- c. Gives a tithe (10 percent) of their income to the church
- d. Has attended (or will soon attend) the “How to Lead a Great Small Group” training event
- e. Recognizes the value of Holy Spirit ministry and welcomes expression of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit

IV. Relationship with others

- V. Has a good reputation among church members and others where they work and live
- VI. Has attended (or will soon attend) the “Learning to Minister Like Jesus” course
Wants to positively impact their relational world with the kindness and love of Jesus

— Source: *The Vineyard Church in Urbana, IL.*

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Small-Group Ministry Job Description

POSITION: Coach

RESPONSIBLE TO: The Area Pastor

MISSION STATEMENT: To promote healthy relationships through small groups that empower people for ministry.

PREREQUISITES:

1. Meet all the requirements for a small-group leader
2. Have successfully led a small group

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Attend leadership training meetings held one Sunday evening of each month during the semester, and conduct a huddle with your area leaders during the last half of these meetings.
2. Pray daily for your small-group leaders.
3. Identify and mentor small-group leaders to be future coaches.
4. Assist your small-group leaders in identifying and mentoring their assistant group leaders.
5. Live an exemplary Christian lifestyle strengthened by Bible reading and prayer, as stated in the Honor Code.
6. Maintain unity by representing the philosophy of ministry and theology of Community Church, as stated in the Statement of Faith.
7. Be a “life coach”—providing inspirational leadership, continual training, support, and accountability to your small-group leaders.
8. During each semester, visit your assigned small groups at least once.
9. Have personal contact with each leader in your area each week (i.e. phone, e-mail, note, lunch meeting, and so on).
10. Initiate the flow of important information or requests for volunteers to small-group leaders.
11. Having attended Community Church for at least 1 year, consider it your “home church” and support it with your tithe.

LENGTH OF COMMITMENT: 1 Year

— Source: *Freedom Church in Lebanon, IN.*

Community Church

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Coach—Yearly Responsibilities

Summary of a Coach's Role

1. **Coach Leadership Team.** Each coach is a vital member of our church's team of coaches, who guide the overall spiritual direction of the 2:42 program. In this team role, coaches participate in monthly coach meetings, e-mail discussions, and individual meetings with the 2:42 director and division leaders.
2. **Shepherd 5–7 small-group leaders.** Coaches build relationships with the 2:42 leaders assigned to them and offer assistance and guidance as needed.

Note: the following guidelines are intended to convey the spirit of coaching, not legalistic practices.

All-Church Training:

1. **Fall Retreat.**
 - a. Assist with planning for retreat in monthly coach meetings.
 - b. Conduct an elective at the retreat, if possible.
 - c. Be available to cover various tasks leading up to and during the retreat.
 - d. Attend all general sessions.
2. **Fall Forum.** Support the event by attending at least one of the training sessions. These October Forums are designed to give 2:42 leaders a chance to reconnect and be encouraged now that the new small group year has settled in.
3. **Prayer Meeting.** Attend at least one session of this January event for all 2:42 leaders.
4. **Spring Training.** Attend at least one session of this March event, designed to help small-group leaders get a better handle on one specific area of their ministry.

Coach Training

These are events in which the 2:42 Director and coaches get together.

1. **Monthly Coach Meetings.** Held the first Sunday of every month, these strategic, one-hour meetings are the place where general direction for the 2:42 program is decided.
2. **One-one-One.** At least once each year, coaches need to get together with the 2:42 Director for an individual meeting.

Group Leader Training

These are events where coaches interact with the small-group leaders assigned to them.

1. **Phone Calls.** At least four personal contacts per year, either by phone or in person. Prime times for this are September, November, February, and April.

2. **One-on-One.** At least once each year, coaches should have a personal meeting with each of their assigned group leaders.

Suggested Elements for Coach/Leader Meetings

These are some sample questions you'll want to ask your group leaders when you contact them.

1. How is the group bonding?
2. What is your group studying right now?
3. What is one thing about the group so far this year that has really encouraged you?
4. Have there been any "challenging group member" situations?
5. Are there other aspects of group leadership that you are finding challenging this year?
6. Are you taking steps to share the load by asking group members to bring refreshments, lead the prayer time, host the group in their home, and so on? (Remind them that this takes weight off the shoulders of the leader and also gives others a chance to minister.)
7. How are you doing personally? How is your family, work, and so on? How are you doing in your relationship with the Lord?
8. Have you identified someone in your group who might be a future co-leader or leader-in-training? If so, do you have a strategy to bring them along?
9. Do you have any scheduling, leadership, or other changes that we should let the office know about?
10. What can I, as your coach, do to help you as a leader?
11. What can I pray with you about?

— Source: *Crossroads Christian Church in Evansville, IN.*

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Ministry Role Description Life Groups Coach

S.H.A.P.E. desired (Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experiences):

S= Encouragement, shepherding, leadership, administration

H= Radically Real Christian Community and the people in your affinity area (i.e., men, women, singles, couples, etc.)

A= Team building, communicating, encouraging, nurturing

P= Highly Relational

E= Life Group Leader

Prior Training: Fruitful experience as Life Group Leader. Regular attendance at Life Group Training Meetings and other gatherings.

Expectations:

- Pray for the Life Group Leaders in your affinity area on a regular, consistent basis.
- Care for Life Group Leaders, encourage them in their own spiritual lives, shepherd them in living the Abundant Life.
- Support LG Leaders in their ministry by:
 - Responding to their questions and needs, providing counsel as needed
 - Assisting Equip Ministry with affinity-specific curriculum selection
 - Encouraging and challenging them in setting and attaining their God-Sized Plans
 - Helping them discover, develop, and then deploy an emerging leader (Leader-in-Training) from their group
- Meet face-to-face with each leader individually monthly (this may include a meeting in a coffee shop, restaurant, home, etc. or a more informal face-to-face meeting before or after church services, for instance).
- “Huddle” with all leaders occasionally to build community, share ideas, discuss your affinity’s specific needs, plan for your involvement around your affinity’s events, etc.
- Work with other ministries within your affinity to develop midsize community opportunities. These ministries include:
 - Equipping Experiences (i.e., Men’s Fraternity, women’s, or singles Bible studies)
 - Serve Events (i.e. Mom’s Closet, CARS Ministry)

- Reach Events (i.e., Body & Soul Aerobics, Basketball, Softball, etc.)
 - Special Reach Events (i.e. Women's Tea, Guy Fest, Single Parenting Seminar)
Involve your Affinity Team in helping to plan and execute these events, serve together at these events, help connect people into Life Groups, etc.
- Build Affinity LG Leaders into a team, sharing ownership and leadership with them.
 - Develop an emerging Affinity Groups Coach in your Affinity Area in order to continue to grow and multiply your affinity area.
 - Act as a liaison between the fellow affinity leaders and the Life Groups Minister as necessary.

Support: Affinity Coaches Team Leader

The Affinity Coaches Team Leader will meet individually with and communicate regularly with the Affinity Groups Coach for support in his/her personal Christian life and ministry. Quarterly huddles with all Affinity Coaches may also be scheduled.

Time Commitment: 3-10 hours per week

Length of Commitment in this Position: 1 year to on-going

Further Training:

- Ongoing Life Group Training offered by the LG Ministry
- Read small group leadership and other leadership books
- Attend an upcoming small-groups conference

— Source: *Northeast Christian Church in Louisville, KY.*

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Division Leader Ministry Description

Position: Division Leader

General description: Enhance the “shepherding” and “discipling” aspects of the 2:42 ministry through personal ministry with 2:42 Coaches.

Estimated average hours per week: 10

Length of Initial Commitment: One year

Compensation: The joy of shepherding our Community Church members

Why is this Ministry Position Needed?

- To increase the quality of each individual’s small-group experience.
- An intermediate step to help move toward staffing for a church with several hundred people in small groups.

Ministry Description:

- Oversee the “shepherding” issues of small groups
- Make sure our church is “delivering the goods” when it comes to shepherding and discipling the people who attend our small groups.
- Monthly face-to-face meeting with each coach.
- Conduct follow-up and accountability meetings as necessary.

Qualifications:

The following statements should define a Division Leader at Community Church:

1. Jesus Christ is my personal Savior and is the Lord of my life.
2. I regard the Bible as the authoritative guide for my faith and life.
3. I am a member of Community Church.
4. I agree to fulfill the requirements of the Division Leader

I have read and understand the ministry expectations and requirements of a Division Leader at Community Church.

[Name of Division Leader]

[Date]

— Source: Crossroads Christian Church in Evansville, IN.

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Ministry Role Description

Team Leader—Life Group Coaches

S.H.A.P.E. desired (Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experiences):

S = Leadership, shepherding, encouragement, administration

H = Radically real Christian community

A = Team building, communicating, encouraging, nurturing

P = Highly relational

E = Life group leader and coach

Prior Training:

Fruitful experience as a Life Group Leader. Regular attendance at Life Group Leader gatherings.

Expectations:

- Care for, support, and regularly pray for the coaches under your care.
- Support and continue to develop coaches by meeting with them regularly—both individually and as a huddle.
- As part of the Life Groups Ministry Team, attend and engage in team meetings, helping to plan and carry out the Life Group Ministry Mission.
- With Life Group Minister, help recruit and train additional coaches as needed.
- Help develop and deploy future Coach Team Leader(s) as needed

Support: Connect Minister

Time Commitment: 2–6 hours per week

Length of Commitment in this Role: One year to ongoing

Further Training:

- Read books and other materials on small-group ministry as requested by the Connect Minister.
- Read other leadership books as necessary.
- Attend an upcoming small-groups conference with the church's Life Groups team.

— Source: *Northeast Christian Church in Louisville, KY.*

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Small-Group Member Expectations and Responsibilities

The reward for involvement in a small group is often directly proportionate to the group member's willingness to invest time and effort in forming relationships within the group, and to engage in the different areas of group life. In light of this, our church encourages group members to be involved in all areas of group life whenever possible. The more participation and involvement in the learning process, the greater the retention and spiritual growth.

What is important to group members?

- A leader who cares about them
- Building relationships with group members
- Seeming themselves grow spiritually
- Belonging and having a safe place in the group
- Being challenged
- Being able to speak for themselves
- Clear and agreed expectations about the group
- Having the group stay small enough to maintain intimacy

Responsibilities

- Attends group meetings as faithfully as possible
- Participates in the group's system of care
- Is open to learning, changing, and developing as a follower of Christ
- Is available to fellow group members
- Engages in all areas of group life
- Prays for the group leader and apprentice leader
- Protects what is important to all group members for the good of the group

I have read and understand the ministry expectations and responsibilities of a small-group member at Community Church.

[Name of Group member]

[Date]

[Name of Group leader]

[Date]

— Source: Sheila Ely; copyright 2009 by the author and Christianity Today International.

Additional Resources

Resources for small-group ministries

Organizations and Electronic Resources

Smallgroups.com: Small-groups training resources from Christianity Today International:

- “Best Church Practices: Small-Group Ministry”
- “Small-Group Leader” Orientation Guide
- “Leading a Great Small-Group Bible Study” Practical Ministry Skills

An excellent resource for starting, monitoring and evaluating the performance of small group ministry is a web site called **Why Didn't You Warn Me: Dealing With Small Group Challenges** at <http://whydidntyouwarnme.com/resources>.

Books and Printed Resources

Coaching Life-Changing Small Group Leaders: A Practical Guide for Those Who Lead and Shepherd Small Group Leaders by Bill Donahue and Greg Bowman. (Zondervan, 206; ISBN 978-0310251798)

Creating Community: Five Keys to Building a Small Group Culture by Andy Stanley and Bill Willits. (Multnomah Press, 2004; ISBN 978-1590523964)

Go Big With Small Groups: Eleven Steps to an Explosive Small Group Ministry by Bill Easum and John Atkinson. (Abingdon Press, 2007; ISBN 978-0687491353)

Leading Life-Changing Small Groups by Bill Donahue. (Zondervan, 2002; ISBN 978-0310247500)

Making Small Groups Work by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend. (Zondervan, 2003; ISBN 978-0310250289)

Seeker Small Groups: Engaging Spiritual Seekers in Life-Changing Discussions by Garry Poole. (Zondervan, 2003; ISBN 978-0310242338)

Small Group Idea Book: Resources to Enrich Community, Worship, Prayer, Bible Study, Outreach. Cindy Bunch, ed. (InterVarsity Press, revised expanded edition, 2003; ISBN 978-0830811243)

Small Group Ministry in The 21st Century, M. Scott Boren, ed. (Group Publishing, 2004, ISBN 978-0764427695)

The Big Book on Small Groups by Jeffrey Arnold. (IVP Connect, 2004; ISBN 978-0830823703)

The Spirit-filled Small Group: Leading Your Group to Experience the Spiritual Gifts by Joel Comiskey. (Chosen Books, 2005; ISBN 978-0800793869)