


LEAD AND LAUNCH AN ONLINE GROUP



BEST PRACTICES FOR ONLINE GROUPS



VantagePoint3
vantagepoint3.org



A Mentoring Way
amentoringway.org

We are committed to helping adults grow up in every way into Christ's good work. (Eph. 4:14-15)

May your imagination be stretched, and your leadership encouraged to what is possible through a virtual gathering in Jesus's name.

1. Adults want to participate well.

- They choose to spend their time to be with you.
- Can assume they are motivated. God is up to something good.
- Prepare well yourself.
- Share expectations and any overviews.
- Agendas/flow/timelines help guide everyone
- Encourage preparing personal thoughts ahead of time

2. The living Christ is the central participant in your group.

- We are not “talking behind God’s back.”

3. Paying attention to people uniquely is a really big deal.

- What barriers are in the way?
- Who do you need to move toward?

4. Building trust and intimacy will take time.

- Every adult has something to say. And will, when they feel safe.
- Some adults may engage more in this format

5. Create a conversational environment.

- This will require preparation on your part
- Being more directive will be appreciated in this format
- Get comfortable with silence
- Share your screen. Share images.

I pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles, in which vital and transforming events take place. — Rufus Jones (1863-1948)





6. Adults like to move around.

- Think in “segments” of time.
- Think large group. Small group. Twos or Triads.
- Open hands.
- Stand Up at different times.

7. Adults retain what they discover for themselves.

- Questions
- Reflection
- Discussion, journaling.
- Connection to their lives
- “What are you taking home with you?”

8. Lead out of who you are.

- Have fun
- Eat together
- Playfulness
- Wholistic invitation to see people
- Blessings

9. Meaningful conversation and companionship is catalytic in people's lives.

- It is slow, messy, and inefficient
- Listening people to life
- Discovering who God created them to be and how he desires to work through them for Kingdom purposes

For a deep dive into leading and launching online groups, go to www.vantagepoint3.org/online-education/ and watch our recorded webinar called *Leading and Launching an Online Group*. We discuss in detail each of these best practices.

Additional Resources and Virtual Tips

For setting up and running a meeting:

- Simplify the invitation - send only what they need to log in. Delete all the “extra” information.
- If you have people new to the platform you are using, ask them to test it prior to meeting time. Ask if they want to test it with you.
- If you have a recurring meeting, resend the Meeting ID# and password to the participants the day of the meeting.
- Keep meetings to 90 minutes or less. Online fatigue is real.
- Some platforms have a call-in feature. This can be especially handy for those traveling, or not familiar with computers, or tired of a screen for the day.
- Consider what the ground rules or covenants ought be for virtual small group gatherings. What intentionality is required? For instance, how can you protect confidentiality when adults are online in their homes with other people around?
- Keep in mind that some people may be more thoughtful about what they say or more participatory online than they would be in an in-person gathering. This is a good surprise.

Personal aspects to give you peace of mind as you lead:

- Lighting is important. Lights behind your camera, screen, or phone is much preferred to light behind YOU. Poorly lit settings are also not preferred. Watch for shadows from lights and outdoor windows.
- Camera angle is important. It is more desirable to place your device so you look straight at the camera or so that it is slightly above eye level versus looking up your chin(s!) or nose!
- If two people in the same household are going to be participating it works better to use two different devices in two separate areas. Sharing a screen works, but not as well.
- Pay attention to how you look BEFORE you log in.
- Have a non-distracting, clean area behind you.
- Be sure you are in a place, if possible, that has a minimal amount of distraction.
- Over time you will get more and more familiar with the mute, video, and volume buttons.

