

## Intro to Leadership

### Leadership Posture

#### The Most Important Traits of a Starting Point Leader

In Starting Point, our desire is to set up an environment that is helpful, engaging, and relevant, and then we let God do what only he can do—change lives. But we know that in addition to God's handiwork, the success of each Starting Point group hinges on the quality of its leaders. To help us articulate what that means, we use four different traits to describe the qualities of a Starting Point leader: *humility, teachability, curiosity, and intentionality*.

**Humility** is born out of a strong connection and relationship with Jesus. It is the acknowledgment that, as leaders, they are sinners and are totally helpless without the love of God. Because they have been so dramatically changed by this love, they want to move out of the way to help seekers connect with God in his timing. Humble leaders approach the conversation as a fellow journeyman, not as one who is handing off truth. They are on the same side of the table as their group members, as one who is also in need of a Savior.

**Curiosity** is a genuine interest and concern for others. Curious leaders prioritize getting to know the people around them before being known. It's the assumption that in every interaction there is something to discover about that person and an openness to engage with people who are very different than they are.

**Teachability** is not just about responding to direction. It is an attitude, a spirit that says, "I will constantly be learning about myself, others, and culture so that I can be used in new and different ways." Teachable leaders are always inviting feedback from co-leaders because they know it isn't about leading perfectly; it is about continuing to respond effectively to the people in their group. They actively pursue what it means to create a conversational environment for people to explore faith and experience community.

**Intentionality** is the mindset that each opportunity to lead a group is an opportunity to invest in the lives of others, and grow as a child of God. It's "on purpose" thinking that results in pursuing group members, more than adequate preparation for facilitating the conversation, and consistent connection with co-leaders in order to become a better leader.

### Leader Facilitation

The traits of a Starting Point leader set the tone for how a leader will facilitate the group's conversation. This posture allows the leader to encourage members to discuss what they are learning and isn't afraid or offended by a group member's input that is troubling or "out of left field." Starting Point leaders are prepared for difficult questions and discussions, but they limit

their input. ***They understand that they should be talking only 30 percent of the time at most.*** Their role is to encourage others to share, listen attentively when they speak, and be affirming whenever they can.

***Asking good questions*** is the best way for a leader to create a conversational environment. We know this is true because of Christ's example. Throughout his ministry he was asked many questions and responded with few answers. In return, he asked questions back. Jesus knew that a good question forces people to consider the truth, think about their own experience, and take ownership of their faith journey, which is also our goal in Starting Point.

To begin asking questions, leaders use the Questions for Reflection in the Guide, and then follow up with other questions that pertain to their group's circumstances. Here are a few tips:

- Ask open-ended questions, not those that can be answered with a simple yes or no.
- Ask questions that evoke feelings, thoughts, and insights.
- Ask questions that do not have just one right answer.
- Ask questions that require personal examples.
- Ask questions that stimulate people to apply what they are learning.

Leaders don't simply answer group members' questions; they respond by promoting participation from the whole group and asking follow-up questions. They connect questions to the Bottom Lines of the chapter, admit their own struggles with difficult questions, and encourage self-discovery by allowing the group members to arrive at conclusions themselves.

## Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is our method for training new leaders. It is crucial for new Starting Point leaders to gain an understanding of the Starting Point environment and the leadership role. If you are an Apprentice or are apprenticing a new leader, [get more information](#).

## Starting Point in Long-term Small Groups

Starting Point can be a great curriculum choice for [long-term small groups](#).