

TIPS TO BEING A GOOD FACILITATOR

- **Prepare well-** Pray and know your material and where you want to land the discussion.
- **Facilitate, don't teach-** Facilitation cultivates discussion; teaching disperses information.
- **Don't be afraid of silence-** Let the people sit for a moment and think. If there is silence, it may mean the questions wasn't heard or was unclear; however, God may be working in someone's heart preparing him or her to share.
- **Do value input-** Do whatever it takes to affirm people's comments, but do not be artificial with your praise. Be delicate with answers that are clearly wrong because discussion times aren't just about getting the answers right. Do not feel like you have to finish, complete or correct a person's answer, ***unless the comments could be destructive to the faith.*** Feel free to circle back around with a student after group to help correct and point them to truth.
- **Don't feel like you have to know all the answers-** We are human, and it's okay for your group to see that you are limited.
- **Don't talk more than the rest of the group-** Ask questions to generate discussion, ask students to explain their answers and go more into depth. Use "tell me more about that." Allow multiple students to respond, even if the first person gets the "right" answer. Do your best not to interrupt.
- **Do ask people if they have questions-** Encourage them to deal with the material on their own terms. Create a climate where students feel the freedom to ask any question they may have.
- **Do clarify some responses to your questions-** If a student's answer or comment is long-winded or unclear, repeat it back (summarize it) for clarity. This proves you are listening, and it keeps the attention of the rest of the group.
- **Do keep the group focused and on purpose-** Don't go down a rabbit trail and leave the topic and scripture passage unless something "big" comes up (e.g., a personal or family crisis). You need to be sensitive to the Spirit, but that's not an excuse to let the group wander to other subjects.
- **Do require and maintain confidentiality-** Hold to the ground rules. This creates a safe environment and allows students to open up and share.
*However, do not keep potentially dangerous information to yourself (e.g., HARM, abuse, suicide, etc.). Groups must be a safe place for people to work out their faith.
- **Don't be discouraged-** When (not IF) you have a "bad morning"; don't let it get you down. There is not a group leader alive that has not had a bad session.
- **Be Sensitive to a person's comfort level-** Be wise in calling on students to answer a question or calling on students to pray.