3 KEYS TO CREATING TRANSFORMATIVE SMALL GROUPS

WORKLIGHT

I press on toward the goal for the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:14)

WorkLight Small Groups are key to encouraging and supporting each other in living out our surrender to Jesus Christ in all areas, especially the workplace.

Effective small groups don't just happen. All members should embrace three key aspects that can transform their lives. They will be critical to enabling them to steward their responsibilities and impact their work environments.

ALL THREE ARE NEEDED

Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity. (Hebrews 6:1)

It's the mission of WorkLight to encourage and equip Christians to be God's presence in the workplace through the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith, integrity, and excellence.

To stay on task, a small group should work together to be **missional**, **formational**, and **relational**. All three elements are needed. When a group begins to fall apart, lose its effectiveness, or become less important to its members, it's usually because one of these aspects is being overlooked. Missional, Formational, Relational.

Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

Christianity is missional. It is the personal application of God's call brought to life in each individual's particular situations and circumstances. As coworkers in Christ, together we bring the Gospel into a culture that is increasingly individualistic and self-centered, even hostile to Christianity.

How can we radiate Christ in a way that does not compromise but is still visible, attractive, and admirable? We want to be used by God as positive and effective influences on our coworkers and in our workplaces.

Christianity is formational. We want to grow our ability to fully participate in the life of the Spirit; to experience freedom from sin and the victory that Christ has gained for us. We recognize that we are vulnerable to our fallen nature. We support, encourage, and strengthen one another. That is where God is at work and where we learn what is *"his good, pleasing, and perfect will." (Romans 12:1-2)*

Christianity is relational. We become friends. We build brotherhood and sisterhood. We may sometimes be an odd mix of people and often can be people we wouldn't normally choose. In Christ, we learn how to embrace the other, letting go of preconceived judgments and stereotypes. We learn to seek the good of others. We learn to love the purposeful friendships found in WorkLight Small Groups, which help sustain our ability to be coworkers in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit and always working for our Father.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SMALL GROUPS

Small Groups are ideally meant to support and accompany each member in the long-term with deep and personal application of and growth in our Christian commitment. We want to challenge ourselves in living out our faith 24/7, especially in our workplaces.

Our experience tells us that WorkLight Small Groups work best when they cross traditions, occupations, ages, and positions. The best groups are designed for deeper personal support in our walk with Christ. They should foster openness, transparency and intimacy and therefore are encouraged to be gender specific.

WorkLight organizes Small Groups by gender to provide good and safe soil for trust, accountability, honesty, and openness to flourish. This is what will help us grow as coworkers in Christ.

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Much of what impacts our lives has to do with being in a world that is busy resisting God. We want to be different. We want to be fully surrendered to him. We need his grace; we need each other; so, we join together. We know from experience, growth in holiness is less painful when we are not alone.

In Small Groups, we talk about our mission to be Christ in the workplace; we share accounts about where it's going well and where it could be better.

We solve problems, share friendship, tell and hear each other's stories, learn from one another's experiences, gain new perspectives and confidence; walking together through the storms and victories. We talk about what really matters, what we love, our accomplishments and struggles, and especially what God is doing in our lives.

We grow in our ability to be transparent because we've found a safe and secure place. We're not trying to impress anyone, and no one's trying to impress us. We are here because of God's love and grace.

"Wherever two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)

Small Groups are not the only reason Christians come together in the workplace. This is especially true if we're going to promote the Gospel, influence our coworkers, and impact our culture.

There are many good reasons to form groups including accomplishing specific tasks and projects, growing in experiences, expertise with skills, socializing together around shared interests or occupations, and networking and addressing challenges and problems in the workplace.

UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does it work. (Ephesians 4:16)

Central to WorkLight's purpose is to practice and experience true CommUnity, especially when there's a need to address real challenges at work.

We need his direction, grace, and strength. And, we need the gifts, talents, experiences, perspectives, and diversity that the Spirit draws together in the body of Christ.

In voluntary groups, participants are free to choose what their purpose, duration, and configuration will be. In the end, it's up to them.

We have created a wide variety of materials, including video series, a monthly newsletter, workday reflections, blogs, and podcasts. All can be used in a variety of ways and with different groupings of people.

Our hope is these materials will unite Christians for the building of the kingdom of God in their workplace. This means proclaiming the call to align our occupations with God's mission.

RESTORING ALL THINGS

God calls us to restore all things. What needs to be restored in our industry or where we work?

- What is good that we can encourage and build on?
- What is evil that we can eliminate?
- What is not working that we can fix?
- What is missing that we can help bring about?

The work begun by the disciples continues in our day. Over the centuries it has been done well; it has been done poorly. Doing what is right is a long and unfinished process.

What if we joined together with the Christians we work with to support each other in working for our Father and living a life of faith, integrity, and excellence? We would take a constructive, serving, humble, and shared approach—one that emphasizes the dignity of work and the dignity of the worker.

Would we not hear our Lord say, "Well done good and faithful servant... Come and share your master's happiness!"? (Matthew 25:23)

To learn more about WorkLight and receive resources to support you on your walk with bringing Christ into the workplace, please visit **worklight.org**.