

Dealing With Different Types of Group Members

The constant talker

1. Ask “what does someone else think?”
2. Use body language (turn toward) to address other people.
3. Direct other questions to people by name.
4. Privately talk with the person and ask them to help get others involved.

The non-talker

1. Ask easier questions
2. Direct easy questions to them.
3. Privately ask a few others in the group to help draw them out.
4. Express public and private appreciation for their involvement – but don’t overdo it.

A group member reaches an obviously wrong conclusion

1. Ask “what does anyone else think?”
2. Redirect them to a Biblical passage that leads to a correct conclusion.
3. Speak with them one-on-one if needed.
4. Don’t overreact.

The group drifts into tangents

1. Be flexible – maybe the issue needs to be discussed even if not relevant.
2. Don’t be afraid to directly bring the group back on topic.
3. Agree to discuss topic later.

A question is raised that you can’t answer

1. Be honest – tell the group you don’t know.
2. Research the question – call staff if necessary – and come back next week.

A controversial question is raised

1. Set ground rules before the discussion.
2. Acknowledge that Christians have differences on some issues.
3. Affirm that Scripture must substantiate viewpoints.
4. Recognize that you won’t settle the issue forever with one discussion.
5. Focus on common ground.