

# LEADER MANUAL





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### **WELCOME TO THE FOREFRONT.**

You are stepping into a role that will not only help you grow in your walk with Christ, but will put you in a position to see the people you lead grow too. As a leader at Elevation Church, you already know that our church exists **so that people far from God will be raised to life in Christ**. As an eGroup leader, your role exists to connect people and help them grow in their faith.

At Elevation, we focus on participation over church membership. Our eGroup leaders help people who attend our church become active participants, first by helping to build a community of believers, and second, by showing how to “be a bringer” and encouraging participation in the 4G’s – **Gifts, Giving, Groups and Growth**.

As an eGroup leader, you can do this by continuing to serve in any roles you may already have, by bringing your tithes and offerings to the church, and by using your leadership role to help raise up more leaders within our church. One of the deepest, most fulfilling and spiritual things a believer can do is use their gifts to bring someone else closer to Christ.

This eGroup leader manual is designed to give you the resources you need to maximize the gifts and passions that God has already placed inside you. We’re praying that God will move mightily on your behalf as you begin your new role at Elevation Church.

It’s exciting to welcome you as an eGroup Leader, and it is our privilege to give you the opportunity to help reach people for Christ.

### **The eGroups Staff**

# OUR CODE

## 1. JESUS IS THE CENTER.

Integrated Priorities

## 2. WE BELIEVE BIG AND START SMALL.

Active Faith

## 3. WE HONOR ONE ANOTHER TO GLORIFY GOD.

Valuing People

## 4. WE ARE CONTRIBUTORS, NOT CONSUMERS.

Taking Action

## 5. WE THINK INSIDE THE BOX.

Embracing Limitation

## 6. WE CAN DO MORE BY DOING LESS.

Focused Excellence

## 7. WE DON'T MAINTAIN, WE MULTIPLY.

Ongoing Growth

## 8. WE EAT THE FISH AND LEAVE THE BONES.

Teachable Attitudes

## 9. WE WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR WHAT WE ARE FOR.

Promoting Unity

## 10. WE WILL NOT TAKE THIS FOR GRANTED.

Expressing Gratitude





# P.I.C.K.

PRAY, INVEST, CARE, KEEP US INFORMED

## PRAY

*What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to Him?*

**Deuteronomy 4:7**

As believers in Christ, we have the distinct privilege of tapping into the unlimited resources of our Heavenly Father at any time. Prayer is our direct access to God.

### PRAY WITH YOUR EGROUP

- Make a habit of praying consistently with your group each time you meet.
- Alternate your prayer strategies and give group members an opportunity to lead as well.
- Pray for your eGroup members during the week. Text or email them to let them know that you are praying for them.

### PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP

- Pray before your group meets.
- Pray for yourself as the leader, for discernment and wisdom for your leadership.

### TAKE PRAYER REQUESTS

- Let your group members know their requests are not shared outside of the group. Remember, it takes a lot of courage for people to share their requests.
- Pray for the requests together as a group, or send the requests out for group members to lift up members throughout the week.
- Consider sharing prayer requests through group texting or private Facebook groups.

# INVEST

*The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep..."*

**John 21:17**

Just before Jesus left this earth, He instructed Simon Peter to care for the dearest object of His love—His sheep.

How could anyone care for them as Jesus cares? It is our love for Christ that enables us to love and invest in His people in the way Jesus talked about in John 21:17.

You are a leader now, and just as Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep, we're asking you to feed the people God has entrusted to you. This may look different in every eGroup, but regardless, we want you to invest in the people God has called you to lead.

## INVEST RELATIONALLY

- Get to know them individually and build relationships accordingly.
- Engage in social activities with group members outside of the eGroup setting.
- Remember the special days in their lives.
- Exchange contact information.

## INVEST SPIRITUALLY

- Challenge them to take steps in the 4G's at Elevation Church. (volunteer, lead an eGroup, give financially, invite others to church)
- Encourage them to develop a consistent and regular time with God through prayer and reading their Bibles.
- Memorize scripture together.
- Invite them to share their faith testimony.
- Serve an Outreach partner together.

## INVEST CONSISTENTLY

- Host your eGroup on a regular basis and on a set schedule. If you are constantly canceling your eGroup, you are going to lose momentum.
- Send encouraging text and emails. Be intentional. Express what you expect.

Remember, most of the time, discipleship follows fellowship. In order to build up someone spiritually, start by building friendship first.

# CARE

*Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.*

**1 Peter 5:2-3**

As an eGroup leader, we are entrusting you with being the first line of care for your eGroup members. Just as Peter wrote, this is the flock that God has entrusted to your care. We hope you're excited to care for them.

**CARE SPIRITUALLY:** You are their shepherd, and we expect you to provide the spiritual care that they need.

- Listen to them.
- Pray with them.
- Share scripture with them.
- Share resource ideas with them.

**CARE PRACTICALLY:** As an eGroup Leader, you are expected to both celebrate the great events of life, as well as support in the hard times.

- Support or celebrate with them.
- Connect them to available resources.

**CARE PROFESSIONALLY:** As an eGroup Leader, you are going to face some major situations in the lives of your people. Some you might be able to handle, while others might be more than you can handle. We are not expecting you to be counselors.

- Listen to them.
- Pray with them.
- Connect them with campus leadership.

# KEEP US INFORMED

*In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.* **Luke 15:10**

We do everything at Elevation Church “so that people far from God will be raised to life in Christ.” This is truly the vision and heart behind our church.

## CONNECT WITH YOUR CAMPUS LEADERSHIP (MENTOR AND EGROUPOUS DIRECTOR)

- Rely on your mentor, whose focus is to help you grow and develop as a leader.
- Contact staff or mentors with any concerns. We’re here to help.

## RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE WHAT’S HAPPENING WITHIN YOUR EGROUPOUS

- Celebrate the victories. As your eGroup grows together, relationships will form, transparency will become easier, and bonds will be built. Recognize and honor these important milestones.

## SHARE WITH YOUR EGROUPOUS AND EGROUPOUS LEADERSHIP

- Share how Jesus is moving in you and in the lives of your group with your eGroup, mentor, and campus staff. The stories of God’s unfailing love are the one of the greatest rewards for our Elevation Church staff.

Tell us how God has changed your life and the lives of the people in your group. Send your stories to [amen@elevationchurch.org](mailto:amen@elevationchurch.org).



LEADING  
YOUR  
FIRST  
EGROUPOUS

# ATMOSPHERE

Pastor Steven once said, “Atmosphere is often the last ten percent that a leader plans for, but often the first ten percent that people notice.” This quote speaks to the setting that you create for your eGroup each and every week. The details of the atmosphere that you create have a direct impact on the energy and engagement of your eGroup members.

## IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT GO A LONG WAY.

**Control the atmosphere** – First impressions are important in the eGroup setting. Here are some sample things to consider doing to set the right atmosphere:

- Adjust the thermostat and establish the right lighting to make the room feel comfortable.
- Add a pleasant scent, such as a lightly scented candle or coffee, to make people feel at ease whenever they arrive.
- Make sure that you have comfortable chairs that are in a circle. It is important for your eGroup members to see each other when talking to each other.
- Make sure the meeting area is clean and free of clutter. Show your eGroup members that you care for them by the way that you prepare for their arrival.
- Have some snacks or light food available for your guests. This is always a great way to start off an eGroup meeting.
- Play some soft music in the background as people arrive, such as Elevation worship or other music to set the right energy and tone for the night.
- If providing childcare for the eGroup, make arrangements for it to be as distraction-free to the adults as possible. Whether this means being outside, playing a kid-friendly movie, or using a room at the other end of the house, do all that you can do to protect your discussion time.
- Put new members at ease. When you start a new group, or add new group members, provide nametags to help take the stress out of remembering everyone’s name for those first few weeks.

# ICEBREAKERS

Every eGroup has to start somewhere.

Before your eGroup can really dive into meaningful discussion, you have to break the ice and get people to participate with each other. Below are a few sample icebreakers that will help you start your eGroup meeting the right way. Feel free to use whichever examples would be the most appropriate for your eGroup.

## HAVE SOME FUN.

- What’s the strangest food you’ve ever eaten?
- What is your favorite band of all time? Book? Author? Song?
- What did you want to be when you were growing up?
- Two truths and a lie: Each person has to tell two truths and one lie about him or herself. Then the group has to guess which statement was a lie.
- Pass a bag of M&Ms around and ask your group members to take some. Don’t tell them how many or why. Simply ask them to take as many as they want and that everyone should take at least one. When everyone has chosen their M&Ms, have them share as many facts about themselves as they have M&Ms. They can eat the M&Ms, too!

## TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER.

- What comes to your mind when you think of the word ‘excellence’?
- If you had to name one person who has influenced you the most, what person would you name?
- After you die, what is one thing you’d like to be remembered for?
- If you had your dream job 10 years from now, what would it be?
- Who would you invite to your group if you knew that they would say yes?
- What would the title be to this chapter of your life?

# LEADING DYNAMIC DISCUSSIONS

Whether you are leading a Bible study eGroup, sermon series eGroup, or an activity-based eGroup, we are asking you to lead your eGroup in some sort of discussion time. This time will go a long way towards the success (or failure) of the group. And while we don't expect you to have all the answers, we do want to equip you with the essentials of managing and leading a dynamic eGroup discussion.

**BE PREPARED TO TALK.** In any group setting, talking is contagious. Silence is also contagious. Create some inertia for your eGroup, and keep it moving in the right direction.

**KEEP IT OPEN-ENDED.** Stay away from "Yes" or "No" questions. Push your group to dig past the surface by asking, "Why or why not?" Or, "What makes you feel that way?" Or, "How would you respond to that?"

**USE THE FUNNEL.** Ask broad questions first, and then work your way to a more narrow scope, just like the shape of a funnel. Ask questions that believers and non-believers would relate to. Then, drive home your application points by asking more specific questions that apply to your walk with Christ.

**SHOW PEOPLE WHAT THEY'RE LEARNING.** Many of your eGroup members may be visual learners, so use plenty of visual aids to assist them. Get creative. Use white boards, index cards, or find an object that your eGroup members must hold in order to speak. Visual aides will make the discussion stick with your eGroup members.

**FOLLOW THE 3 B'S.** Tell your eGroup members to keep their answers brief, Biblical, and beneficial. This will keep your group on track, give the talkative person a limit, and give the quiet person confidence in their brevity.

**FIND A LANDING POINT.** Establish a goal for each discussion with your eGroup. Steer the conversation to land there at the end of the meeting. Even if your eGroup lands somewhere else, it's always beneficial to achieve something in your discussion.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## HOW BIG SHOULD MY EGROUPE BE?

The average eGroup size is 8-12 people, but every eGroup is different. If you lead a married couples' eGroup and have the space to hold 15 couples, great. If you lead a single women's eGroup in your studio apartment, you may only be able to hold six people. Your eGroup should be the maximum number of people that you can accommodate and lead effectively.

## WHERE AND WHEN SHOULD MY EGROUPE MEET?

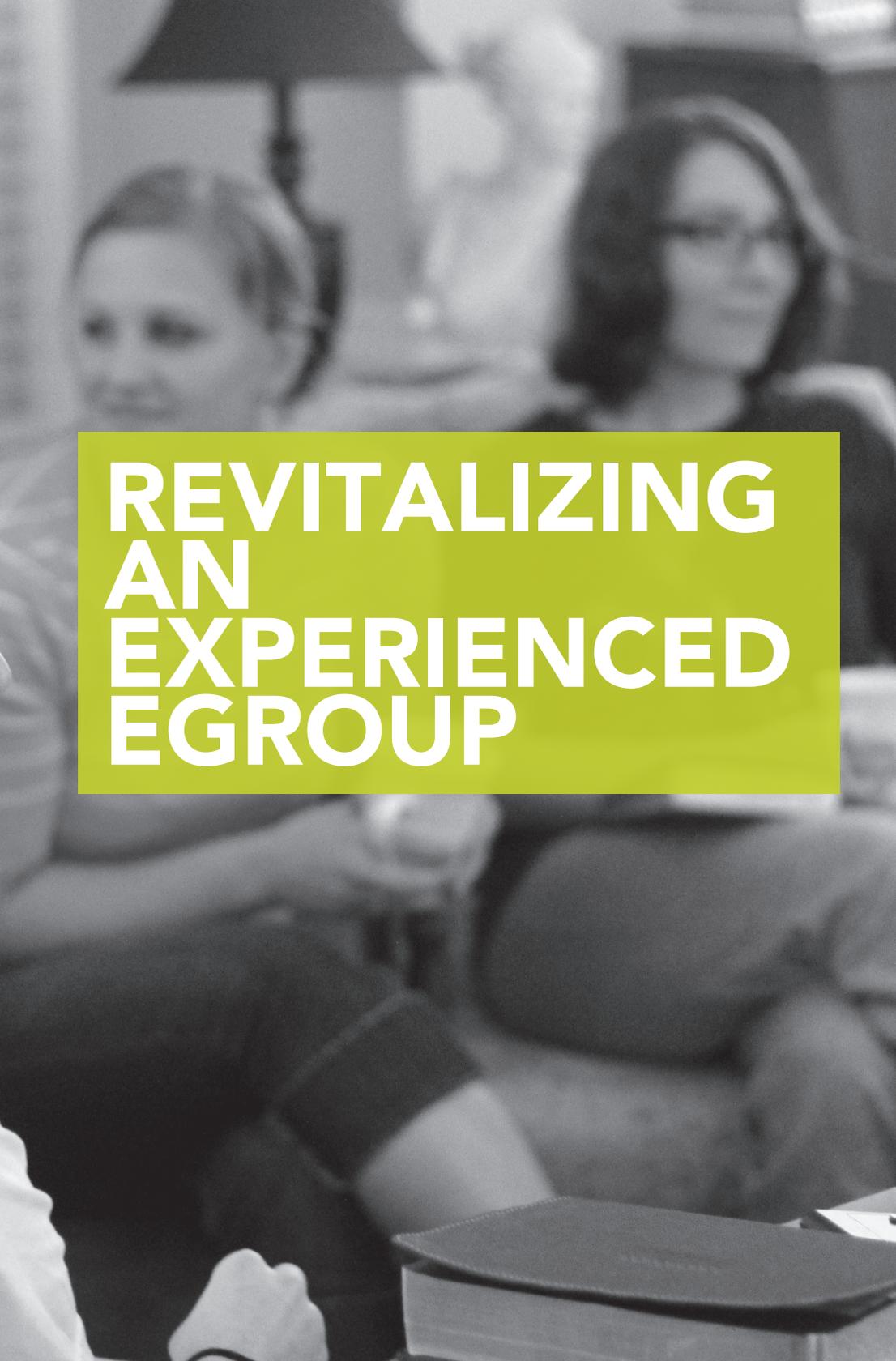
This is entirely dependent on what you want to accomplish with your eGroup, and what environment will best set your eGroup up for success. Whether you met at Chick-fil-A, the basketball court, or in your living room, you will need to take the necessary steps to secure the appropriate seating and create the atmosphere your eGroup will need.

## HOW LONG SHOULD MY EGROUPE MEET?

There is no set formula for what every eGroup meeting should look like. Your leadership will dictate how long your eGroup meets. You may be able to keep your people engaged for two hours, but if you're leading an eGroup of middle school guys, an hour may be their limit.

## WHAT IF I CAN'T ANSWER A QUESTION IN MY EGROUPE?

As a leader, we expect you to represent Elevation at a very high level, but we don't expect you to know everything. In instances where you are not sure of the answer, work with your eGroup members towards finding one. For example, if someone asks, "Why doesn't Elevation have a youth group?" your answer could be, "Pastor Steven's sermons apply to students just as much as adults, so we want students to volunteer and participate just like everyone else." But if that answer doesn't come to mind, we expect you to at least respond with, "That's a great question. I'm actually not sure why that is, but I can ask a staff member and find out for you."



# REVITALIZING AN EXPERIENCED EGROUP

## KEEPING THE ATMOSPHERE FRESH

If you've been leading your eGroup for a while, you may not need to hear about the importance of setting the atmosphere for your eGroup. You know exactly how important it is because you've seen the atmosphere grow stale in your group, and you've seen the painful results.

Here are a few tips for how to revitalize the atmosphere in your eGroup and keep it fresh:

**CHANGE THINGS UP.** Get out and do something different with your eGroup. Meet somewhere new. People value consistency, but don't be afraid to make a change of scenery if you sense that your eGroup needs it. This simple practice of removing people from their comfort zone will push them and challenge them to grow.

**DO SOMETHING FUN.** We've empowered you to lead an eGroup in order to build community in our church. And groups that have fun together will grow together. Make it a habit to break from routine occasionally and do something fun as a group. You'll be refreshed, your eGroup will grow closer together, and you'll be ready to come back and take your eGroup to the next level.

**THINK INSIDE THE BOX.** We believe that our limitations shouldn't hinder us, but rather inspire our greatest creativity and innovation. Find new ways to use what your eGroup already has. Try new seating arrangements. Have a meal together. Change up your discussion and prayer format. Meet at another eGroup member's house. Play a game. Have a theme night.

**CHALLENGE YOUR COMFORT ZONE.** By now, you should know your strengths, weaknesses, what generally works in your group, and what typically falls flat on its face. Play to your group's strengths, but don't settle for what's comfortable. Challenge your eGroup. If they're quiet, make them do something interactive. If they are hyperactive, make them slow down. Your sweet spot will always exist just outside of your comfort zone.

# TAKING ICEBREAKERS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

These icebreakers are specifically designed for the long-term eGroup members who have spent some time together. They are fun but will also help drive discussion in your eGroup.

- Go around the room and have your eGroup members share one encouraging word or phrase about the person seated to their left.
- On a white board, poster board or large piece of paper, write out one characteristic or funny thing describing each person in your eGroup. Have your eGroup members try to name the correct person.
- Go around the room and have your eGroup finish the following sentence...“When I was in high school I wanted to be most like (blank). After everyone has given a name, go back around and ask why? Instead of comparing ourselves to others, how can we contemplate God more frequently to continue to grow in faith?”
- Give each person a piece of paper. Ask them to write as many sermon series titles as they can in one minute. Next, ask them to write down as many names of people who have been instrumental in their lives in one minute. Most likely, it'll be easier for everyone to remember the names of the people who have invested in him or her than the titles of the sermons that spoke to him or her. Relationships are key in our spiritual development. Who are we pouring into?
- Go around the room and ask everyone to list their favorite song from their childhood and why? Things in our past can define who we are today. How did the music, movies or activities shape you into who you are today?

## GOING DEEPER:

- Where do you feel you need God's direction the most? In what areas of your life are you struggling?
- If you found out the person you were dating had a drug or alcohol problem what would you do?
- How is God speaking into your life today? In what areas of your life is He growing you the most right now?

# KEEPING DISCUSSION ENGAGING

Over time, your eGroup will find its groove during discussion. As the leader, don't tiptoe the line of your eGroup's comfort zone. Doing so may cause your eGroup's discussion time to become redundant and predictable. Here are a few tips to help you push your eGroup to maintain an engaging discussion time:

**CHANGE UP THE ATMOSPHERE.** Referring back to the importance of atmosphere in your eGroup, simply providing a different environment will result in a refreshingly different discussion.

**EMPOWER YOUR CO-LEADER.** If you feel comfortable, challenge your co-leader to lead the eGroup in discussion for a meeting. This will allow your eGroup to hear a new voice leading the discussion and will also free you up to contribute to the group from another perspective. Read more about selecting a co-leader later in this booklet.

**SPLIT INTO GROUPS.** You can divide your eGroup up in a number of ways, from men and women to a random count-off. By creating several small groups within your eGroup, you will challenge new voices to speak up that might have otherwise disappeared in the larger group setting.

**USE ACTIVITIES.** Finding creative ways to apply the discussion will make the application personal to each eGroup member. This should push people to engage with the discussion beyond mere listening. Have people come up with individual takeaways from the discussion. Ask them to bring a verse or passage pertaining to your discussion topic that has affected them personally.

**BE A BETTER LISTENER.** Perhaps the key to your improving your eGroup's discussion doesn't involve talking at all. By actively listening to your eGroup members, your people will be able to dig deeper into their thoughts, struggles, and victories. This will also open the door for greater follow up questions that will take the discussion to a deeper level.



# HOW TO LEAD YOUR EGROUP

WHAT YOU NEED TO LEAD AROUND  
YOUR PASSIONS

## STUDENT EGROUPS

Pastor Steven's sermons apply just as much to a 16-year-old as they do to a 47-year-old. Students are encouraged to get involved in the same way that adults would. Our Student eGroups are an essential part of reaching, growing, and developing the next generation within our church. Here are a few ways to help you lead your Student eGroup:

### KEEP THEM COMING BACK:

- Choose topics that are socially and culturally relevant. Even small talk around culturally relevant topics can pave the way for deeper conversations about your students' faith.
- Encourage your students to feel free to be themselves. When you are genuine with them, it allows them to be the same with you in return.

### HAVE FUN:

- Begin each meeting with something they like to do. A game of foursquare, a Pinterest craft, Chick-fil-A? Find out what they like to do and do it with them.
- Take a break from discussion every couple weeks and plan a special event. Consider taking your eGroup to a movie, meeting to go hiking together, or arranging a game of Frisbee golf. Creating a shared experience for your eGroup will make a lasting impact on your students' lives.

### COMMUNICATE:

- Cover all avenues of communication: texting, Facebook, Twitter, phone calls, and e-mails. No student or parent should feel as though they didn't know what was planned or expected.
- Use consistent communication to create consistent attendance. Send a reminder or two to members about the date and time of the next meeting.

# SERMON SERIES AND BIBLE STUDY EGROUUPS

One of the best ways to invest in the spiritual growth of your eGroup members is to go directly to God's word. Whether you're keeping up with Pastor Steven's weekly sermons, diving into a study of James, or exploring different topics throughout the Bible, you will need to focus on the following areas in order to effectively lead your Sermon Series or Bible Study eGroup:

## SET THE TONE:

- Create an atmosphere that is conducive to discussion. Set your eGroup up for success by eliminating distractions and opening the floor for solid discussion.
- Be the most prepared person in the room. As the leader, make sure you know the material and have prayed over your eGroup before you meet.

## OFFER DISTINCT GOALS AND CLEAR COMMUNICATION:

- Set a distinct goal for each eGroup meeting. Steer the discussion and help your eGroup land at an appropriate goal that challenges them to grow with each meeting. Even if you don't reach the goals you originally set out to accomplish, make sure you communicate a clear goal for your next eGroup meeting.
- Clearly communicate your expectations for the entire group. If you can't communicate your standards to your eGroup, you can't expect anyone to follow them. If you want your eGroup to read or do homework before your next meeting, make sure everyone knows exactly what you want him or her to do. A simple question like, "Does everyone know what we need to read?" will make sure that your eGroup is on the right track.

## DRIVE IT HOME:

- Recap what you talked about during your last meeting and connect it to what you're discussing during your current meeting.
- Find a good landing point. If you've done a good job setting the tone, being clear with your eGroup, and steering the discussion towards your goals, your eGroup should naturally land on a solid ending point. Use this to determine where your eGroup will pick up from during your next meeting.

# BOOK STUDY EGROUUPS

For the people that love nothing more than to lose themselves in a bookstore for hours at a time, leading a Book Study eGroup probably falls directly in your sweet spot. Here are a few key things to keep in mind as you lead your eGroup:

## HAVE A PURPOSE:

- Select the right book. Prayerfully consider what your eGroup can get out of each book you consider reading and select one that will accomplish the goals you set for your eGroup.
- Establish a clear goal that you want to accomplish with your eGroup members. You're not just reading for the sake of reading—how do you want your eGroup members to grow spiritually?

## ESTABLISH COMMITMENT:

- Set realistic expectations for your eGroup that will also challenge them to grow throughout the course of your book study. Don't ask too much of your eGroup, but don't set the bar so low that people lose interest.
- Hold each other accountable. Clearly communicate what each member needs to read and prepare before each eGroup meeting and hold each other to that standard.

## MAKE IT PRACTICAL:

- Always stay a step ahead of your eGroup. By reading ahead, you will be able to break down the discussion in such a way that maximizes your current discussion and transitions seamlessly into the next section of the book.
- Challenge your eGroup members to find at least one solid takeaway from each eGroup meeting. Always leave your eGroup with something to process, apply, and work on until your next meeting.

# COMMON INTEREST EGROUUPS

God has blessed you with a certain set of passions, gifts, and abilities. Now, it's your turn to use what God has given you to see people raised to life in Christ. Whether you're into running, playing frisbee golf, or even couponing, your leadership will be what connects your eGroup members closer to God. Here's what you need to know to lead a common interest eGroup:

## MAKE IT AN EGROUUP:

- No matter what platform you are using to gather people together, you need to pray for, invest in, and care for the spiritual growth of your eGroup members. This is what separates a group of people playing basketball from a basketball eGroup.
- Ultimately, the activity portion of your eGroup is a vehicle for you to grow your eGroup members in their walk with Christ. God is going to use your eGroup to reach people that may not have been able to be reached in a traditional group setting.

## GET CREATIVE:

- As a leader, you are prepared and encouraged to help people grow stronger in their walk with Christ. So, get creative with how you do just that. Pray with your group. Talk about what Jesus is doing in your lives.
- Think inside the box. You don't need to do anything over-the-top. Embrace your limitations, and focus on maximizing the ability and talent God has already given you, to inspire your eGroup to have a growing, authentic walk with Christ.

## BE PRACTICAL:

- Start small. Something as simple as gathering for prayer or sharing one takeaway from the past week's sermon can go a long way towards the growth of your eGroup.
- Your eGroup may never be a traditional, sit-down Bible study. So as you attempt to invest in and care for your eGroup members and challenge them to grow spiritually, don't force them into something they don't want to do. God gave you your passions for a reason. Operate through the lens of using the common interests of your eGroup to fulfill God's common purpose for your lives.

# OUTREACH EGROUUPS

We encourage all of our eGroups to find ways to serve our city, but we also have a select few groups built around their passion to meet the needs of the world around them.

At Elevation, we develop partnerships with various organizations who are already working in the city, caring for families struggling with homelessness, people who are in drug and alcohol rehab, local schools, teen mothers and much more. A full listing of our Outreach Partners can be found at <http://elevationoutreach.com/about/>.

## BUILD A SYSTEM OF SERVING:

- Your outreach eGroup should have a schedule for how you plan to serve throughout the semester. Remember, consistency will lend itself to the continued growth of your eGroup.
- You can choose one organization to serve throughout the course of a semester or you can serve multiple organizations. Get to know your eGroup and choose the outreach partners that will both highlight your members' strengths, as well as push them to grow outside their comfort zones.

## RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY:

- Don't serve together without taking the initiative to get to know everyone in your eGroup. Praying for, investing in, and caring for the people in your eGroup may mean that you meet together before or after an outreach event, serve one week and meet for a Bible study the next, or read a book together and discuss it whenever you meet.
- While the main focus of your eGroup is to serve others, don't forget that the overall vision of our eGroups is to care for and invest in the spiritual growth of your members.

You can find opportunities to serve online at [elevationoutreach.com](http://elevationoutreach.com). If you have additional questions about opportunities to serve you can e-mail [outreach@elevationchurch.org](mailto:outreach@elevationchurch.org).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Regardless of the type of eGroup you lead, there are several questions that are essential to your eGroup's success.

## **CAN I BE A PART OF ANOTHER EGROUPE AS WELL AS LEADING MY EGROUPE?**

While we do not require it, we certainly encourage you to find an eGroup to be a part of in addition to the one that you lead. It will be good for you to find an eGroup where you can be invested in and cared for. This might be the encouragement that you need to take your leadership to the next level.

## **WHAT DO I DO IF I DON'T KNOW HOW TO HELP CARE FOR AN EGROUPE MEMBER?**

If and when you do not know how to care for an eGroup member, reach out to your assigned mentor and/or your eGroups Campus Staff. We as a leadership team will be able to point you and the eGroup member in the right direction.

## **HOW DO I FILL MY EGROUPE?**

You are the primary salesperson for your eGroup. Connect with the people that God has put around you. Invite the people on your eTeam. Invite the people that you sit next to during the worship experience. There will still be people that find your eGroup online, but your personal connections will fill the majority of your eGroup. Also, believe it or not, people will leave your eGroup. Account for this by always aiming to overfill your eGroup.

## **CAN I INVITE MY FRIENDS THAT DON'T ATTEND ELEVATION TO JOIN MY EGROUPE?**

Absolutely. Elevation Church exists so that people far from God will be raised to life in Christ. Use your eGroup as a vehicle to reach the people closest to you and get them involved with what God is doing at Elevation.

## **CAN I BE REIMBURSED FOR THE BOOKS THAT MY EGROUPE BUYS FOR OUR BOOK STUDIES?**

We are only able to reimburse you for a leader guide. If you find a study you want to do with your eGroup, purchase the leader guide, send us the receipt, and we will reimburse you. Your eGroup members are responsible for buying their own materials. However, if a \$15 book is truly a burden for one of your eGroup members, contact us and we'll make special arrangements for them.



# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

# THE MINISTRY STARTS WITH YOU

In May of 2010, Pastor Steven preached a series titled, “e.” This series was all about empowering the people of God for the mission of God to accomplish the purposes of God. It provided the empowerment model that we use for our eGroups at Elevation Church.

In accordance with Ephesians 4:11-13, we believe that you are empowered with a God-given set of gifts, abilities, and passions. And, we want to help you maximize those gifts as you come alive in your new role as an eGroup leader. This role is your opportunity to take part in the vision of Elevation Church.

## CONSUME AND CONTRIBUTE:

- As a leader, you are making a commitment to contribute to the lives of the people around you, but you need to make a greater commitment to continue your personal spiritual growth.
- If you are pouring yourself out without being spiritually fed, you will burn out quickly.

## GROW WITH YOUR MINISTRY:

- Never stop searching for ways to grow in Christ. Listen to Pastor Steven’s sermons, prioritize your prayer life, love and grow in God’s word, and, if you can, get involved as a member of another eGroup.
- As an eGroup leader, you may develop exceptional leadership skills, but if you aren’t growing in your walk with Christ, your leadership will stall out and potentially crumble over time.

## WE ARE A PART OF SOMETHING GREATER:

- We operate under one vision, and your role is essential in seeing people far from God raised to life in Christ. We believe we are a part of something bigger than us, and that we are investing in something that is guaranteed to outlast us.
- As you lead under this greater purpose, we are going to hold you to a higher standard. You are the example for the rest of your eGroup. If you cannot uphold an authentic, Christ-centered lifestyle, you have no reason to expect your eGroup members to do so.

# PERSONAL GROWTH RESOURCES

The purpose of this eGroup Leader Manual is not just to tell you how to grow in your leadership, but to provide you with the resources you need to live out God’s calling in your life.

Here are some helpful resources to help you grow personally and spiritually:

## ONLINE RESOURCES:

- **Elevationchurch.org/essentials/egroups:** Leader resources, including leadership development videos.
- **BibleGateway.com:** An online, searchable Bible, great for finding scripture related to specific topics.
- **ElevationNetwork.com:** A 24/7 online network, live streaming weekend worship experiences, sermons, and other creative elements.

## ELEVATION CHURCH SERMON ARCHIVE:

- **Elevationchurch.org/archive:** This is where you can find every sermon series we’ve ever done, available for free on our website.

## BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

- **Sun Stand Still** by Pastor Steven Furtick: Daring to Believe God for the Impossible.
- **Greater** by Pastor Steven Furtick: Igniting God’s Vision for Your Life by Dreaming Big and Starting Small.
- **Crash the Chatterbox** by Pastor Steven Furtick: Hearing God’s Voice Above All Others.
- **Axiom** by Bill Hybels: Powerful Leadership Proverbs.
- **Soul Detox** by Pastor Craig Groeschel: Clean Living in a Contaminated World.

## ON-THE-GO GROWTH:

- **The Bible App:** YouVersion: The entire Bible (in multiple languages and translations) for your mobile device. Includes reading plans and user resources.
- **The Elevation App:** Mobile access to the entire sermon database, in audio and video format. Also provides quick access to the Elevation Network, StevenFurtick.com, and other resources.
- **iTunes Store:** Free downloads of weekly Elevation Church podcasts.



# MANAGING AND DEVELOPING YOUR EGROUP

## INFELLOWSHIP: MAXIMIZING YOUR EGROUP'S COMMUNICATION

We use an online platform called InFellowship to effectively manage our eGroups. InFellowship allows you to easily manage your roster, respond to inquiries about your eGroup, and communicate with your eGroup members.

### MANAGING YOUR ROSTER:

- As a leader, we are depending on you to maintain an accurate eGroup roster in InFellowship. Decisions and strategies are implemented based on the engagement of our people in eGroups. When your roster is updated regularly, the staff has a true picture of eGroup involvement both at the church and the campus level.

### RESPONDING TO NEW MEMBERS:

- As the eGroup Leader, it is your responsibility to respond to those who express interest in your eGroup. We want to ensure that that no one falls through the cracks and misses out on finding the right eGroup.
- If your eGroup has reached its capacity, you will be able to check a box to make your eGroup unsearchable. However, we advise you to do so only after you have overfilled your eGroup.

### COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR EGROUP:

- You are able to quickly and easily send e-mails to your entire eGroup, or to individual members via the InFellowship database. Any replies to the group email will return to your personal e-mail account, but they will not go to the rest of the eGroup members.
- You're not required to use this feature. If your eGroup prefers phone calls or text messages, that's fine. Our end goal is to see you communicating regularly with your eGroup members.

# CHANGED LIVES: TRACK AND CELEBRATE WHEN GOD MOVES IN YOUR EGROUP

The vision of Elevation Church extends far beyond what you see during one of our weekend worship experiences. It is the driving force behind every decision we make, every location we launch, and every eGroup leader we approve.

We're empowering you to lead the way for us at Elevation. Outside of Pastor Steven's sermons and our weekend worship experiences, eGroups are the primary vehicle God uses to transform the lives of our people at Elevation.

## TRACKING GROWTH LEADS TO THE NEXT GENERATION:

- We use numbers to track the ongoing growth of our church. Every number represents a life that God has changed. It's important to us that you manage your roster, invite new people, and empower your eGroup members to step up and lead a group of their own.
- As your eGroup grows and as your leadership grows, you will see the lives of your eGroup members change in ways you could never have imagined. God multiplies His transformative work through our eGroups, and we will always celebrate the lives that Jesus has changed at Elevation.

## JESUS IS AT THE CENTER:

- No matter how strong your leadership skills are, you do not have the power to change a life. Only Jesus has the power to change a life. Yet it is your responsibility to lead the way for your eGroup. You must make every effort to allow them to connect with Jesus during each eGroup meeting.
- As the leader, you should want nothing more than to see Christ impact the lives of your eGroup members. Everything you do—from setting atmosphere to selecting a book study—should be directed by this vision.

## CELEBRATE A CHANGED LIFE:

- Don't be ashamed to celebrate what Jesus is doing in your eGroup. No story is ever too small. Praise God and let us celebrate with you for the progress that your eGroup members are making. Email us, post an update on Facebook, or mention it on Twitter or Instagram with #eGroups.
- If you see someone in your eGroup making progress, focus your investment on him or her for a season. Take them out to lunch. Invite their family to spend time with yours. By making the extra effort for this period of time, their small steps of spiritual growth may turn into a lifestyle of bold and active faith.

# BUILDING ACCOUNTABILITY: GROWTH FOSTERS GROWTH

*Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. - James 5:16*

Accountability has always been a key ingredient to a deeper walk with Christ. When we trust those close to us, we are more likely to share with them our greatest struggles and greatest victories. When we trust others, we are more likely to share the things that drive us closer to God or away from God.

When you are able to lead your eGroup to a point of this type of sharing, you are growing your group; you are living out James 5:16.

## DEFINE THE GOAL AND BE PATIENT:

- Realize that most of the members of your eGroup have never been in a community where they felt comfortable to share their greatest struggles. Pray for God to move in this area of your eGroup, but do not tie yourself to a timetable.

## CONSTANTLY REITERATE THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE EGROUPE:

- Remind your members that this eGroup is a safe place to share personal feelings and reflections. You do not have to make an announcement out of it, but rather just mention it in passing. Your members will pick up on your leadership.

## SET THE EXAMPLE:

- Your eGroup members are going to follow your lead. If you are comfortable, they will be comfortable.
- Your personal and spiritual growth will foster the growth of the rest of your eGroup.

## GET PRACTICAL:

- Divide into smaller groups within your eGroup for a more intimate, comfortable setting.
- Suggest using an Internet accountability software program.
- Have a "Hot Seat" where each member takes a turn being asked challenging questions by the eGroup about pertinent topics and subjects. eGroup members can be as open as they choose to be. The goal is to simply encourage an open and honest conversation.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVING

At Elevation, we partner with various organizations in order to serve the city of Charlotte. Serving one of our Outreach Partners is one of the best ways that your eGroup can share meaningful experiences and deepen the relationships with the group.

## MEETING A NEED:

- Leadership happens when people bridge the gap between problems and solutions by meeting the needs that they identify.
- Meeting the needs of others is a great way to inspire spiritual growth in your eGroup. Serving provides an opportunity for your eGroup to display the love of Christ while simultaneously creating an experience that your members will always remember.

## THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP:

- At Elevation, we concentrate all of our efforts on strategic Outreach Partners who are already having tremendous impact in our city and across the world. Our goal is to continue to reach out through partnerships that are making a difference in our community and beyond.
- You can view a list of our Outreach Partners and get an idea of the kinds of volunteer opportunities that are available for your eGroup by visiting [elevationoutreach.com/about](http://elevationoutreach.com/about).

## SIGNING UP TO SERVE:

- There are a number of ways that you can serve with your eGroup. For example, you can serve a meal at a homeless shelter, clean up a local park, or help to build a house. All you have to do to sign up is visit [www.events.elevationoutreach.com](http://www.events.elevationoutreach.com).
- If you have additional questions about how to get your eGroup involved through Elevation Outreach you can e-mail [outreach@elevationchurch.org](mailto:outreach@elevationchurch.org).

# BRING THEM UP TO SPEED: WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

As your eGroup continues to meet, you will get used to seeing the familiar faces of your eGroup members. But, you should always be prepared to welcome and incorporate anyone that decides to join your eGroup.

## PEOPLE WILL COME & GO:

- No matter how strong you are as a leader, people will leave your eGroup. It's not always going to be a reflection of your leadership. Things happen—works schedules change, children have ball games on Wednesdays; there are many reasons for turnover. Attrition is inevitable.
- Your responsibility is to remain faithful to the people that God has entrusted to your care. Lead your eGroup with the same passion and energy, whether you have one member or fifteen.

## ALWAYS BE WELCOMING:

- Remember that your new eGroup member is walking into a brand new setting for the very first time. It may even be their first experience with a small group of any kind. Make every effort to bridge the gap and make them feel comfortable in their new surroundings.
- Have the entire eGroup participate in some sort of icebreaker. Engage the new members in the discussion. If there's something that they need to be caught up on, do so quickly and politely. Don't leave them feeling awkward—the less time the group is staring silently at the new member, the better.

## GIVE THEM A REASON TO RETURN:

- If this is someone's first experience with an eGroup, your goal should be to have him or her come back a second time.
- Don't just invite them back. Assign someone in your eGroup to specifically follow-up with the new member over the course of the week. Genuine connections will go a long way towards the retention of your eGroup members.

# THOSE PEOPLE:

## HOW TO HANDLE THEM BEFORE THEY HANDLE YOU

“Those people” are impossible to avoid. Every eGroup is going to have troublesome members. Some are naturally going to be more destructive than others, but we want you to be prepared to deal with them accordingly.

### THE TALKER:

- Set clear expectations. Remind your eGroup to keep their answers brief, Biblical, and beneficial. Or, if you need to, tell them you’re looking for a tweet, not a novel. Or, use a timer to give each person 60 seconds to answer. Keep it lighthearted. This will also help you keep your eGroup from running on a tangent.
- Be assertive. Don’t be afraid to address your eGroup during the discussion by reminding them that this topic should be important to more than just one or two people. Even if you have to address the talkative members individually after the discussion time, your assertiveness will set the tone for the rest of the eGroup.

### THE QUIET ONE:

- Ease them into the discussion. Be patient—don’t jump straight to calling them out. Start by having the entire eGroup answer an introductory question, forcing them to participate. Easier questions will allow for them to progress slowly into the deeper times of discussion.
- Connect with them individually. Whether it’s making eye contact, or giving them a preview of the lesson, you should be able to build enough of a rapport that you will soon be able to call on them directly.
- Affirm their contributions when they do talk. Reinforcing the value of their participation will naturally encourage greater involvement in the future.

### THE TROUBLEMAKERS:

- Don’t assume that everything will work itself out over time. Address conflict before it has a chance to affect the rest of your eGroup. Conflict is rarely addressed too early, but is usually addressed too late.
- Always lead with grace. Condemnation will always paint people into a corner of defensiveness. Ask questions aimed toward finding the right solution, not pin-pointing who to blame.
- You’re not in this by yourself. If you ever need guidance on how to handle a situation, let us know. The health of your eGroup is very important to us.

# THE NEXT GENERATION:

## FINDING A CO-LEADER

As an eGroup Leader who embodies the vision of Elevation Church and where we are going as a church, it’s our expectation that you are thinking of the next generation of eGroup Leaders. You are thinking about those in your eGroup that can take the mantle of leadership and step into their own eGroup. Thus, we are introducing the role of a ‘Co-Leader’ within our eGroups.

### DEFINING WHAT A CO-LEADER:

A ‘co-leader’ is someone who is learning to lead an eGroup by observing and helping with a current eGroup.

- They learn by doing, under the supervision of a seasoned (mature and skilled) leader. Co-leading is closely related to mentoring – a developmental relationship in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced person.
- They grow in maturity along with the rest of the eGroup, but he or she receives special attention and more pointed direction from the mentoring leader.

### HOW TO SELECT A CO-LEADER:

An eGroup Co-Leader is an emerging leader. This person is someone who has been identified by you, the eGroup leader, as a good candidate for leading a future eGroup, based on a variety of observations. They include, but are not limited to:

- A growing and vibrant relationship with Christ and passion for the vision of Elevation Church and our eGroups.
- An understanding of the role and the ability to live out the role as defined in the ‘Expectations of an eGroup Leader’ section earlier in this manual.
- A person that you would least like to lose from your eGroup. It’s true that the person you would least like to lose is probably the person that you need to raise up and send out the most.







[WWW.ELEVATIONCHURCH.ORG](http://WWW.ELEVATIONCHURCH.ORG)