

# Google

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## Casey's Blog...

Title: Trust Me

I don't trust my group very much right now. Why? We just met last April. Actually, on a scale of one to ten, my trust level is about a two. So am I a failure as a group leader? NO. Different groups have different trust levels. However, your role as a leader is to move your group through each phase of group life so that you or someone else from your group can replicate what happens in your group in the lives of others by MULTIPLYING your group. This is God's plan for the earth. There are several phases of group life, and I've listed and described each one below. Consider what your members are doing and what you are doing and try to determine two things from the chart below. Identify where your group is in trusting one another. Then, write what you think you can do as a leader to move your entire group to the next phase.

1. Get to know you phase: trust level is very low and is about GATHERING INFORMATION. Example of sharing level is, "I like to go skiing."

| Member's Feelings                         | Member's Role                      | Leader's Response   | Leader's Role                   |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Excitement<br>Anticipation<br>Awkwardness | Gather information<br>about others | Caring<br>Accepting | Share vision<br>Promote sharing |

Does this describe you and your group? \_\_\_\_\_

What intentional step can you take to move your group to the next phase of trusting one another?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Nice Phase: trust level is starting to go up and members are sharing information about each other and starting to accept one another for who they are. Example of sharing level is, "My parents divorced when I was growing up."

| Member's Feelings              | Member's Role                     | Leader's Response                             | Leader's Role   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Comfortable<br>Relaxed<br>Open | Give Information<br>Accept others | Affirmation<br>Feedback<br>Warmth<br>Modeling | Generate trust<br>Discuss values<br>Facilitate<br>relationships |

Does this describe you and your group? \_\_\_\_\_

What intentional step can you take to move your group to the next phase of trusting one another?

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**3. Mature Phase: trust level is very high and the group can share life issues that are very personal.**

Example of sharing, "I was sexually abused growing up."

| Member's Feelings                         | Member's Role                                      | Leader's Response                         | Leader's Role   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Eager<br>Open<br>Vulnerable<br>Supportive | Express feelings<br>Use my gifts<br>Take ownership | Challenge<br>Encourage<br>Affirm<br>Guide | Provide self-disclosure<br>Prepare group for multiplication |

Does this describe you and your group? \_\_\_\_\_

What intentional step can you take to move your group to the next phase of trusting one another?

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**4. Multiplication Phase: trust level is at the highest point and group wants others to have what they have.**

Example of sharing, "I want others to experience what we have experienced."

| Member's Feelings                           | Member's Role  | Leader's Response   | Leader's Role  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Grief<br>Enthusiasm<br>Loss<br>Anticipation | Express concerns<br>Accept reality<br>Discuss changes<br>Give blessing | Listen actively<br>Acknowledge feelings<br>Affirm members | Cast vision<br>Create plan<br>Pray for groups<br>Celebrate |

Does this describe you and your group? \_\_\_\_\_

What intentional step can you take to move your group to the next phase of trusting one another?

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## The Search for Real Relationships

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

Transferring data...64% complete  
16 out of 25 leaders committed

## Objectives

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- To determine individual trust levels within the group
- To identify the fears that keep us from opening up more
- To help the group determine ways to remove barriers to transparency

## Facilitators' Guide

- After fifteen minutes, gather your group together to go through these questions. Open with prayer and move into the questions quickly.
  - The questions this week are geared toward helping you move your group another step along the path of the Great Revolution. Where your group is at this point will determine your starting point. You should not expect to jump a group from the *Get to Know You* phase to *Maturity* in this meeting. After working through last week's questions, you should have a better view of where your group is. As always, be sure your group members understand that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these questions.
  - As you prepare for your group meeting, choose which of these questions you want to be sure to address, understanding that you may not be able to complete them all in the time allotted.
1. What did you enjoy most about this past weekend's worship service?
- You may have noticed that the first question each week is usually an "ice breaker". It is intended to give everyone an opportunity to share some fact about themselves regardless of the established trust level in the group. Ice breakers are especially important when you have visitors or new members but continue to be effective as the group matures. For the groups who have grown to a deeper level of trust, you may want to encourage openness with the follow-up question of "why?"

2. We can often judge how much we trust other people by how transparent we are with them. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being a closed book (I don't share *anything* with anyone) and 10 being an open book (I share *everything*, good and bad, about myself with others), how would you rate yourself? Why?
  - The two parts of this question serve to let you, as the leader, hear where each member of your group sees themselves. As you listen, be sensitive not only to their self-assessed rating but also to why they see themselves at this point. Answering the "why" part of this question may prove to be the answer to question 3, too.
  - This question will be answered on different comfort levels, depending on where your group is now. Don't be discouraged if some people are closer to a "closed book". The rest of the questions will help identify steps to opening each person's "book". Since we are pursuing the concept of community in this message series, the goal in our groups is to make use of the time in-group to further our group's experience of community.
3. Which of the following fears keeps you from opening up to others during your group time and why: rejection, failure, fear of looking stupid, it's too personal, it will make me look less spiritual, no one will understand, no one really cares, we just met, etc.
  - There can be NO wrong answer to this question. A person's fear is their reality! How the group responds to a person's sharing has a direct impact on how open they will be. This could become a time of group members wanting to "judge" answers or help "fix" the person giving their answer. Either of these responses will shut down discussion. Again, the "why" is the key to the answers here.
  - This is an opportunity for you to lead by modeling. You can set the tone by how transparent/honest you are in answering this question. You can also affirm people's responses or questions by repeating their response to make sure you heard them correctly.
4. Think about your group: What dynamics might be present that could prevent transparency (we are a new group; violation of confidentiality; judgmental statements; pre-mature advice-giving; distractions, etc...)? How can your group take steps to remove these barriers?
  - As a leader, you have the opportunity to prevent or minimize some of these potential situations by setting expectations early on with your group. However, if any of these dynamics are brought up in your group answers, be sure you are very practical, specific and intentional in developing a plan to correct the situation. For example: re-visiting and stressing the absolute necessity of confidentiality, discussing childcare needs within the group, talking about how to show respect for each other, etc.
5. One way to build trust in the group relationships is to be honest about what is going on in the different areas of our lives. Stretch yourself to share beneath the surface of what you would usually share during group time. Finish four of the following statements:

\*One success I have never shared about my marriage (dating relationship) is...

\*One struggle I have never shared about my marriage (dating relationship) is...

\*I want to enhance my relationship with my children by...

\*I want to improve my financial condition by...

\*I want the “visible” part of me that everyone sees to be consistent with the “real” me by...

\*I want to control my tongue in the following ways...

\*If I were being completely honest with the group about how I feel about myself most of the time, I would say...

\*One area of my life that I consistently do well in is...

\*One area of my life I consistently mess up in is...

- If you don't have time for everyone to share all four of their responses, that's okay. Just aim to make sure everyone shares something. Building trust requires *everyone* to show a willingness to be transparent.
- Note that transparency is not just sharing the negative side of oneself, but it can also be the sharing of a positive side as well. In working through these responses, your group can have the opportunity to accept negative revelation as well as affirm and celebrate the positive.
- Even if your group is in the *Get to Know You* phase, don't discount this question. You can encourage people to complete these sentences at a level with which they are comfortable (with a little stretch).
- Remind your group that what you have just discussed isn't anything that God doesn't already know. He will work through your leadership and each individual to move your group through the Great Revolution establishing a first century community of believers.