



FACILITATING GROUPS

FOR SELF-RELIANCE



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CONTENTS

Instructions.....	ii
Facilitating Groups.....	1
Appendix.....	12
Notes.....	17

INSTRUCTIONS

Facilitator Specific instructions for the person facilitating this training will always appear in the blue boxes under the prompt “Facilitator.”

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Facilitator This manual is designed to be used as a group to train facilitators. Since facilitating groups is different from teaching, some have found it helpful to let each individual practice facilitating a section of the materials for this training. If you would like to use this method, look for the prompt below. It will be a reminder to allow someone else in the group to facilitate the next section.



Change Facilitators

If you assign a timekeeper and stay with the time amounts that are listed, this facilitator training should last less than two hours.

Plan to bring several of the self-reliance course manuals to help you complete one of the group activities later in this training.

FACILITATING GROUPS

GETTING STARTED (10 MINUTES OR LESS)

Facilitator Begin the facilitator training meeting as follows:

1. Begin with a prayer (and a hymn, if desired).
2. A self-reliance specialist or other member of a self-reliance committee may provide a three- to five-minute introduction and testimony.
3. Have each person briefly introduce himself or herself (no more than 30 seconds each).
4. Invite the entire group to open their manuals and follow along.

WELCOME

Read Thank you for being willing to serve as a facilitator. You will help lead a small group of individuals to become more self-reliant by helping them learn new practical skills and live gospel principles. You are going to be part of something wonderful. Self-reliance groups can change lives. You don't need to be an expert. Just follow the materials and rely on inspiration from the group and the Spirit.

Because self-reliance groups are a little different from other groups we have been in, this training will help us learn and practice what is unique about these groups. Today we will answer some common questions that facilitators have before starting a group:

- What does it mean to be self-reliant?
- How do self-reliance groups work?
- What can I do to be a great facilitator?

In addition to this training, be sure to read the Appendix on your own and check out the resources at srs.lds.org before your first meeting.

Read Today’s training will look and feel like the self-reliance group meetings we will be facilitating. In this training and in our self-reliance groups, we will follow the material as it is written. All self-reliance manuals come with prompts to help us know what to do. When we see the following prompts, we will follow these directions:

Read	Watch	Discuss	Ponder	Activity
One person reads aloud for the whole group.	The whole group watches the video.	Group members share thoughts for up to three minutes.	Individuals quietly consider, meditate, and write.	Group members work individually or with others for the specified time.

Read This training and the manuals we will use in our groups include time recommendations for sections, discussions, and activities. This helps us manage the time and cover the material. Always assign a timekeeper for each group meeting to keep the group on track.

Facilitator Ask someone if he or she would like to be the timekeeper for the rest of the training.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SELF-RELIANT?

Read “Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 6.1.1). Being self-reliant does not mean that we can do or have anything we want. If we are self-reliant, we know that through the grace and power of Jesus Christ, combined with our faith, we can work for the spiritual and practical necessities of life we need for ourselves and our families. Self-reliance groups have been designed to help us change the way we live, working with the Lord to become more temporally and spiritually self-reliant.

We are going to watch a video of group members and leaders talking about their experiences with self-reliance groups. As you watch the video, listen for how self-reliance groups affect people both temporally and spiritually.

Watch “Self-Reliance: Tools to Become Better,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Keep reading.)

Discuss What experiences have you had that helped you learn that the spiritual and the temporal are related?
(2 minutes)

HOW DO SELF-RELIANCE GROUPS WORK?

Read Self-reliance groups are small councils focused on helping each group member grow. There are four self-reliance groups to choose from:

- Find a Better Job
- Starting and Growing My Business
- Personal Finances
- Education for Better Work

People may learn about the groups on their own, at a devotional, or through a direct invitation. People choose which group they want to join.

Groups are usually small, with fewer than 12 people. The group meets every week for 12 weeks, and each meeting takes about two hours.

Every self-reliance group is directed by a facilitator (us). Self-reliance groups are facilitated, not taught by a teacher. As facilitators, we aren't expected to be experts on the subject. Instead, we help the group follow the materials as they are written and invite each group member to participate.

Each group meeting follows a chapter in the manual. Each chapter has five sections with a recommended time. These five sections are the core of a self-reliance group meeting. To run a group meeting, simply follow the materials and the suggested times—never skip a section.

ACTIVITY (8 minutes)

Let's take a few minutes and look at a self-reliance manual. This will help us see that to run a group meeting, we simply follow the materials. We will do this activity as a group.

Step 1: The facilitator will hand out copies of self-reliance manuals. People can share with those around them.

Step 2: As a group, everyone turn to the second chapter of the manual. Together, we are going to look through the chapter and find the five sections of a self-reliance group meeting. As we find

each section in the chapter, we will stop and the facilitator will read the section’s description out loud from the following table.

Report (15–25 minutes)	My Foundation (20 minutes)	Learn (45 minutes)	Ponder (5 minutes)	Commit (5–10 minutes)
Group members report their progress on the commitments they made in the previous meeting.	Group members have a gospel-centered conversation about a basic doctrinal principle of self-reliance.	Group members learn practical skills related to the course.	This is a quiet time for personal reflection as group members seek help from the Holy Ghost. This is not a time for group discussion and should not be skipped.	Group members make and share specific commitments related to what they learned. They also choose an action partner for support and accountability during the week.



Change Facilitators

Read At the end of each meeting, we can help our group members select an action partner for help and support during the week. Action partners can change each week. They are typically of the same gender but are not family members.

The combination of spiritual principles, practical skills, and the power of the group creates a unique learning environment that helps people improve their lives. As you will see in the following video, in our self-reliance groups we learn from three sources: the materials, one another, and the Spirit.

Watch “The Power of the Group,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Keep reading.)

Discuss How do you think your self-reliance groups will be different from other classes or workshops you’ve attended? How will they be similar?
(2 minutes)



Change Facilitators

WHAT CAN I DO TO BE A GREAT FACILITATOR?

Read Being a facilitator can be a wonderful experience. The most effective facilitators do three very important things:

- Facilitate, don't teach.
- Take care of a few other responsibilities.
- Serve as a shepherd for the group.

Facilitate, Don't Teach

Read Self-reliance groups are purposefully designed to be facilitated and not taught by a teacher. Facilitators do not prepare lessons, lecture the group, or speak more than any other group member. They follow the course materials and invite each group member to participate equally. Facilitators help create an environment where the Spirit can teach the group.

In the next video, watch for the ways one facilitator changed from teaching to facilitating, and how it impacted the group.

Watch "How to Facilitate a Group," available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Keep reading.)

Discuss How is facilitating different than teaching?
(2 minutes)



Change Facilitators

Read As a facilitator, we are responsible for creating a positive, respectful, and enjoyable learning environment. We help our group members to care about each other and to show love and support.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

The following are lists of things we as facilitators might do that either help or hurt our group’s learning environment. Have one person read the lists out loud, then as a group talk about why these things might help or hurt.

THINGS THAT HELP	THINGS THAT HURT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trusting and following the materials ○ Keeping comments relevant and positive ○ Starting and ending on time ○ Redirecting questions to the group ○ Smiling and being friendly ○ Knowing everyone’s name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparing and teaching a lesson ○ Making or allowing discouraging or critical comments ○ Starting or ending the meeting late ○ Commenting on every question or trying to have the last word ○ Talking more than others in the group ○ Skipping sections or changing the content



Change Facilitators

Read As facilitators, we set the example. We can help our group members create a positive and caring learning environment. Things won't always go perfectly, and at times we might need to help group members see how their actions are affecting the group and how to change them. We will talk more about this in our next activity.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1 (5 minutes): Pair up with the person next to you, pick one of the following scenarios, and discuss how you would handle it.

Step 2 (5 minutes): Come back together as a group and share what you talked about.

Scenarios

- One or two group members comment more than the rest of the group, and other group members are holding back and not sharing their ideas and thoughts.
 - One of your group members hasn't been participating in discussions or group activities.
 - One of your group members consistently talks about things that are off topic. His comments are making it hard to stay on track and cover the materials within the allotted time.
 - A group member has a hard time reading out loud. You wonder if she is uncomfortable or possibly embarrassed.
 - The group keeps starting late because a few group members aren't arriving on time and you feel bad starting without them.
-

Facilitator For the following discussion on facilitator responsibilities, it might be helpful to switch facilitation back to the primary facilitator.

Take Care of a Few Other Responsibilities

Read As facilitators, we also have a few responsibilities outside of our group meetings. The next activity will give us a chance to talk about these responsibilities.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

The following list of questions will guide us through a discussion about some other responsibilities we have as facilitators. The self-reliance specialist or another local leader will facilitate this discussion and give us specific direction for each item. Feel free to ask questions as we go.

Who is my self-reliance specialist, and what do they do?

- Contact information: _____

When is the devotional, and what is my role?

- When: _____
- Where: _____
- My role: _____

How does the group I facilitate form, and how am I paired with them?

How and when do I register my group and report its progress?

- How: _____
- When: _____

How should I prepare for my first meeting?

- When and where it will be held: _____
- How I will get access to the building: _____
- How I will get manuals: _____
- How I will play the videos: _____
- How I will set up the room: _____

What other questions do we have?



Serve as a Shepherd for Your Group

Read Now that we have covered how to facilitate and walked through some of our other responsibilities, it is time to talk about the key to great facilitation. The best facilitators love and care for their group members. They serve their group almost like a shepherd would care for a flock. Christ used the example of shepherds because shepherds knew each of their sheep by name, personality, and needs. Great facilitators get to know their group members, care about their success, and help them participate and be successful. It might take a few weeks for your group to come together, but most self-reliance group graduates talk about how close they became with their group and how much they cared for each other. As a facilitator, we can help create an environment that encourages this.

Take turns reading the following suggestions on being a shepherd for your group.

Being a Shepherd for Your Group

- Call or text group members. You can check in with them and remind them of the date, time, and place of the meeting.
- As people arrive, greet them warmly and get to know them.
- Recognize and show excitement for the progress of your group members.
- Remind group members to respect confidential information.
- Between meetings, encourage group members who are struggling. Help their action partners to contact and support them as well.
- Together with others in the group, reach out to group members who may have missed a meeting.
- Pray for your group members by name.
- Prayerfully look through the materials for your next group meeting.
- Stay close to the Spirit, and act on ideas and inspiration.

Discuss How will doing these things help us be a shepherd for our self-reliance groups?
(2 minutes)



Change Facilitators

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1 (5 minutes): Pair up with the person next to you, pick one of the following scenarios, and discuss how you would handle it.

Step 2 (5 minutes): Come back together as a group and share what you talked about.

Scenarios

- In your second group meeting, you sense that people are a little hesitant to report that they didn't keep all of their commitments. Some want to pass on their turn to share.
 - During the fourth meeting, you notice that one of your group members isn't there. Her action partner says she couldn't get in touch with her all week.
 - Two of your group members are of different faiths. You want to be sure your group is welcoming and sensitive to their perspectives.
 - One of the group members had a family emergency and couldn't make it to the meeting this week. He is thinking about dropping out of the group because he missed a class.
 - One group member is struggling. He seems discouraged that he hasn't seen some of the same success as other group members.
-



Change Facilitators

CONCLUSION

Read Hopefully this training has helped us understand a little more about self-reliance, how self-reliance groups work, and what we can do to be great facilitators. Being part of a self-reliance group might be a different and new experience for us and our group members. It might even take a little time to feel comfortable with the process and with one another. Refer back to this manual often, check out the additional information in the Appendix—especially the assessments—and visit srs.lds.org for more information and helpful videos. With time and trust in the Lord we will have a great experience.

Watch “Self-Reliance Facilitators: Bringing About Change,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Keep reading.)

Discuss What are the most important things we learned from this training?
(3 minutes)

Ponder Individually think about what you have learned from this training, and consider what the Lord would have you do. Write your response below.
(3 minutes)

Based on the experience I had today, I would like to:

Prayer Invite someone to say the closing prayer.

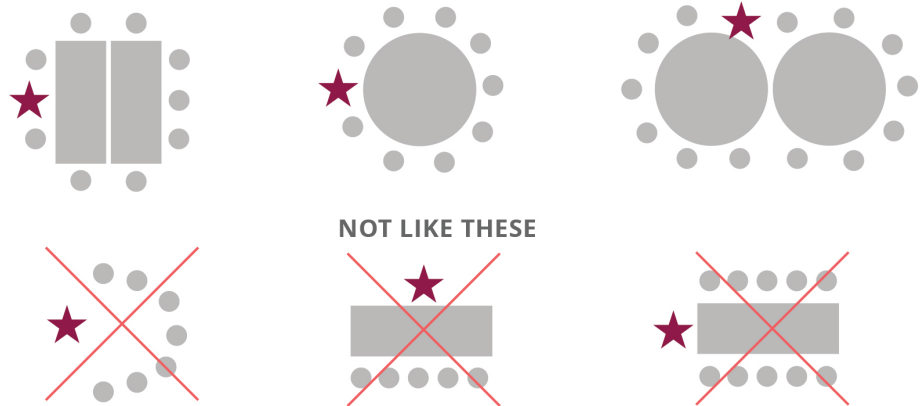
APPENDIX

SELF-RELIANCE WEBSITE RESOURCES

Go to srs.lds.org to find more information and helpful videos about facilitating a group.

WHAT YOU DO BEFORE A GROUP MEETING

- Go to srs.lds.org to download the videos for the *My Foundation* principle and the lesson.
- For your first meeting, ask the self-reliance specialist to give you enough manuals for everyone who signed up plus two additional copies.
- Review the material to prepare to facilitate, but do not prepare to teach it as a lesson.
- After your first meeting, work with your specialists to register your group (see srs.lds.org/report).
- Call or text group members to remind them of the date, time, and place for the group meeting.
- Encourage action partners to contact and help each other during the week.
- Prepare spiritually and act upon promptings you receive.
- Arrive early to set up the chairs, tables, and videos, as appropriate. Set up your tables as follows (the stars indicate where the facilitator sits).



WHAT YOU DO DURING A GROUP MEETING

- Greet group members as they arrive, and get to know them.
- Recognize and applaud their accomplishments and progress.
- Assign a timekeeper to manage the suggested times.
- Encourage discussion among group members.
- Emphasize acting on commitments between meetings.
- Remind group members to respect confidential information.

AS PART OF YOUR LAST GROUP MEETING

- Group members complete a self-assessment.
- You collect assessments, complete the end-of-group report, and request certificates (see srs.lds.org/report).
- Celebrate together!

FACILITATOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

After each group meeting, review the following statements. How well are you doing?

HOW AM I DOING AS A FACILITATOR?	Never	Some-times	Often	Always
1. I contact group members during the week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I share my excitement and love for each group member.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I help ensure that every group member reports on his or her commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I talk less than other group members. Everyone participates equally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I let group members answer questions instead of answering them myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I stay within the recommended time for each section and activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I make time for the "Ponder" section so the Holy Ghost can guide group members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I follow the manual as written and complete all sections and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOW IS MY GROUP DOING?	Never	Some-times	Often	Always
1. Group members love, encourage, and serve each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Group members keep their commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Group members are achieving both temporal and spiritual results.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Action partners regularly contact and encourage each other during the week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GROUP ASSESSMENT

It might be helpful to use this group self-assessment as a part of some of your self-reliance group meetings to check in with your group and see how they're experiencing the course. You can invite each group member to complete the form and then talk about it as a group. You could do this at the start of a group meeting or at the end of the "Learn" section. This activity takes about 10 minutes.

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE?	Never	Some- times	Often	Always
1. Every group member reports on his or her commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Our group starts and ends on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I feel a bond with my group members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I feel the Spirit at our group meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Everyone in the group participates equally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I feel that I'm making progress toward self-reliance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I feel loved by my group members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DIFFERENT MEETING OPTIONS FOR *FIND A BETTER JOB*

If you facilitate the *Find a Better Job* group, you might have group members who need a job right away and can't wait 12 weeks to complete all of the course materials. If you look in the first few pages of the manual, you will find additional meeting options that might better meet these group members' needs. You can also talk with your self-reliance specialist to learn more.

GROUP MEMBERS OF DIFFERENT FAITHS

All individuals, regardless of faith background, are welcome to attend self-reliance courses. The following are a few simple suggestions that can help create a positive and welcoming experience for all members of the group.

- Be sensitive and open to questions.
- It may help to explain scriptures or quotations that are specific to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- It may be necessary to adjust some of the commitments.
- Your self-reliance specialist can help with any questions about registration to ensure all group participants receive a course certificate.

ADDITIONAL HELP

If you experience issues or concerns or otherwise need help connecting group members back to their ward or branch units, work with your specialist for guidance and help.

NOTES



Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Self-Reliance Services
PERPETUAL EDUCATION FUND

