

Video Facilitator Tips

Your role:

- Your main responsibility is to encourage discussion among the group. Not everyone may talk. That is fine. No one (including you!) should dominate the discussion. Your role is to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable to add to the discussion. A good facilitator should strive to help all of the participants consider the presented material in a deeper way.

Not your role:

- You are not expected to be the “expert” and to know the answer to every question! Never “guess” at an answer. Unless you are absolutely sure of your answer, it is better to say something like, “That’s a terrific question. I promise to have a terrific answer for you the next time we meet!” It is always better to give no answer than to give an incorrect answer. Before the next meeting, ask your pastor to help you with the answer.

Facilitator hints:

- Begin and end with prayer!
- Ensure that the participants understand that everyone’s input is important and respected. Remind the group that what is said in the group stays with the group and that we’re here to learn from each other. We listen and share. We don’t advise (unless requested from the group) and we don’t judge.
- Ask open-ended questions
 - o Avoid yes/no or one-word-answer questions.
 - o Your first question may be along the lines of, “Was there anything from this video which you found especially interesting? If so, what?”
- When needed, offer follow-up questions that encourage deeper thought, such as:
 - o What makes you say that?
 - o How do you feel about that?
 - o How would you explain your answer to a non-Catholic friend or neighbor?
- Encourage those with differing experiences to share their stories.
 - o Remind your group that if we all agree on everything, we won’t necessarily break open any “aha” moments
 - o Be mindful of differences in temperaments and don’t allow disagreements to escalate and become personal.
- Allow the discussion to take its natural course while ensuring that the group doesn’t get too far off topic.
 - o Remember that folks came to discuss a specific topic and strive to remain on that topic.
 - o If one person continually steers the conversation off topic, speak to them privately after the session. Affirm them in what they do contribute, and let them know about the challenge you have in trying to facilitate a good group and bring across certain points each session, and how the tangents make your job harder. Ask them how they can help you.
- Allow the “talkers” the opportunity to speak once (for a limited time) but don’t allow a total takeover.
 - o Suggested break in - “Joe, I appreciate your comments, but there are a few people who we haven’t heard from yet” and then immediately look for another response.
- Allow “non-talkers” an opportunity to formulate their thoughts.
 - o Don’t be afraid of silence. Quiet people need time to sort things out.
 - o Avoid calling directly upon quiet people, but rather invite them to speak with eye contact and a smile.

Remember that we are merely tools in the Master’s toolbox. Allow His work to come to fruition through us.