



# I have questions about starting a WorkPlace Small Group

**Q1:** Is it legal to do this in the work place?

**A1:** You don't have to leave your religion at the door when arriving at work. But keep in mind that *your freedom of religion is limited by other people's freedom not to participate* in your practices, and to hold beliefs different than yours. "Freedom of religion" does not mean that you can practice your religion *during* work hours without your employer's informed permission. When you are at work, your time is not your own, but belongs to your employer for your employer's business purposes.

To be "legal" you must obtain your employer's consent to use the employer's premises and facilities for anything other than work purposes. You must also strictly follow management's expectations that workers to be at their jobs during specific hours. Your meeting times and activities must avoid interfering with work operations. Finally, for these meetings to be legal, they must not be used to coerce attendance or to exclude attendance of any person with the actual or subtle threat of reprisal. Co-workers must never be treated differently because they choose not to attend, cease attending, or even if they openly criticize those who attend. Management especially must avoid any harassment or criticism of employees who choose either to attend or not to attend.

**Q2:** How do I get my company or supervisor to approve this?

**A2:** Take the initiative of requesting permission in writing with a specific proposal. Make some alternative suggestions concerning time, place, and facilities so that management can select an option that is least disruptive of business operations. Be flexible in considering other possibilities management may propose. Make your proposal specific simple and clear, stating the time, location, purpose, and likely numbers of persons who will attend. State in your proposal that no one will be excluded from the meeting who wants to attend, and no one will be forced to attend or criticized for non-attendance. Make it clear that persons attending will be attending only during their non-work hours, and will be back to work when expected. Do not use company DVD, computer, photocopy or internet resources unless you request and receive permission in writing. One proactive step is to suggest to management that each person attending your WorkPlace small group will sign an acknowledgement that he or she has read and understands the company's non-discrimination policy, and will follow it. Finally, your proposal may state that one of the purposes of the meeting is to encourage members to deliver better work in conformity with Christ's teachings.

**Q3:** My employer won't allow us to meet at my place of business.

**A3:** You can meet offsite. We have groups meeting at restaurants and coffee shops.

**Q4:** Can I have a productive group if we have only 30 minutes to an hour to meet?

**A4:** We will show you how to do this and we will provide materials that will fit in the time that you have.

**Q5:** Are there study materials available?

**A5:** Yes, we have a Purpose Driven Life small group study, the weekly Message Applications Guide, a weekly devotional (Weekly WorkPlace Wisdom), and suggested WorkPlace books at studies that you can purchase online or at Christian bookstores. The following are recommended studies:

1. The Purpose Driven Life, Rick Warren
2. 40 Days of Purpose Small Group Study
3. What on Earth Am I Here For?
4. Business by the Book, Larry Burkett
5. Lead Like Jesus, Ken Blanchard

Items 1 thru 3 are available for purchase at our Pavilion Bookstore on the main patio after weekend services. Items 4 and 5 can be purchased at a Christian bookstore or online.

**Q6:** I'm not a natural leader.

**A6:** You don't need to be a leader at all; you just have to have a heart for people and for God. We will provide curriculum, ideas, and the leadership training. The Holy Spirit will provide what you need to lead the group.

**Q7:** I am not a leader in the organization; I am just a worker.

**A7:** Every position in an organization is important. God calls you to minister to those who will receive you. You can lead a group regardless of your position in your organization.

**Q8:** I don't know how to lead a group.

**A8:** You are more of a host than a leader. We will provide small group/leader training to give you the tools and resources you will need.

**Q9:** I don't know the Bible well enough.

**A9:** It's not necessary to be a Bible expert in order to lead a small group. You just have to want to serve others as you facilitate the gatherings.

**Q10:** I am afraid of being seen as a "religious nut".

**A10:** Focus on learning about proven ethical behaviors and how to be a better employee and practicing that in your work life.

**Q11:** I am not that strong in my faith.

**A11:** Participating in a Workplace study will strengthen your faith. God equips those he calls.

**Q12:** How do I recruit people to be members?

**A12:** We will show you, but it is a combination of the church sending people to you and you talking to people who you know that work in your company or nearby.

**Q13:** Do I invite non-Church members who are Christians?

**A13:** Yes, unless it is inappropriate for a particular study. We are all part of the body of Christ.

**Q14:** Do I invite non-believers?

**A14:** Yes, unless it is inappropriate for a particular study. Some studies actually are made for Christians and non-Christians.

**Q15:** Is the study material seeker friendly?

**A15:** A variety of study material is available that you can select from depending on the mix of your group. Anyone interested in learning more about Purpose Driven Workplace principles be welcome. As we increase in discipleship in the work place, others may be attracted and interested in learning more about employing good principles into business practices. God will bring the people to you if you are open and inviting.

**Q16:** How do I go about inviting people?

**A16:** First pray for God's wisdom, direction and that he will bring other willing participants. It is important to make the first invitation in person. If the person wants to attend, you can then send an email or letter to confirm.

**Q17:** How do I get momentum?

**A17:** If you can get 2 or 3 people to join you, it will be easier to recruit more members. If you know of at least one other person who would like to do this with you, you may consider inviting people as a team or a growing small group. People have a tendency to flock to the action.

**Q18:** What if I am the only believer in my work place?

**A18:** Pray that God will provide the direction and the wisdom and send you another person. The Purpose Driven Life is a good study for non-believers. Many people want to better understand their purpose in life.

**Q19:** Do I need my supervisor's approval?

**A19:** If you want to meet on company property you should obtain approval from your supervisor. If you are meeting off-site this is not necessary.

**Q20:** When should we meet?

**Q20:** The important thing is that your gatherings do not disrupt normal company operations nor interfere with your job. It is best to meet outside of company time which would include before and after work, during the lunch hour or during breaks.

If you have additional questions, please **call our Workplace Leadership Team at 949-609-8180 or email us at [wpgeneral@saddleback.net](mailto:wpgeneral@saddleback.net)**.