

# FACILITATOR GUIDE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in committing your time and talent to facilitate **The Strengths Workshop**. This is a great calling. We trust God will bless you through this experience. Indeed, you are likely to be the one that will gain the greatest blessing from your time investment. Remember, you cannot lead people where you are not going yourself. **Trust God to lead you as you lead others.**

**First you may ask, why small groups?** Over the past years we delivered this workshop to many groups large and small. The evaluation and feedback we received have been most affirming. Yet we feel that the greater impact will come through your leadership and the support and accountability of a small group of like-minded people. Please let me explain.

The teachings of Jesus Christ were profound and simple. Yet they were hard to apply because they were countercultural. For this reason He invested a lot of time in a small group of disciples where He focused more and more on the life application of His teaching. In a very practical way Jesus gave us a model of how you can have the greater impact. It is in small groups.

The principals in **The Strengths Workshop** are simple yet countercultural. We believe that the greater impact will be by following the Jesus model. For this reason we greatly value your role and leadership.

In this workshop, along with your team you will go through a process that can help you discover your God given strengths and live your life's calling. This is our objective and the experience of many who have used this and similar resources.

To help fulfill your role please go to <http://www.strengthministry.ca/wp/sm/sg/>. There, you and your team will find links to access to a list tools and free resources including:

- The workshop Book. **The Strengths Workshop, Know Your Strengths and Live Your Callings**
- Video clips that follow the same content and structure as the workshop book and small group members notes
- Promotional material to help you promote the workshop.
- Members notes. The notes will guide your members through every step of every session.
- Team info sheet
- Your group members must take the world renowned Gallup StrengthsFinder2.0 assessment tool <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase>. In large multinational corporations as well as small churches, this world renowned tool has helped millions around the world discover their strengths.

*Find a companion facilitator training video in the workshop video clips webpage.*

*If you are using this material in as a retreat, please see the Appendix for timing and Plan.*



**AGENDA**  
Steps to Living Your Callings

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The attached topical framework illustrates the content and the agenda of the workshop. The structure of this small group experience is designed in a way that requires little effort on your part as well as others who will support your ministry. While it can be used as a self-study tool, greater benefits are gained from the support and interaction of likeminded friends in your group.

## 2. WORKSHOP FORMAT

This workshop can be done in a variety of formats. You can use it in a series six weekly sessions, or you can deliver it as a set of 6, sessions in a weekend retreat, or a mix that in response to your group availability. In each session you are given two short video clips. After each video clip there will be time for one exercise. The exercises are best done in pairs but you may choose to do some of them as a group.

This guide is not a strait jacket; it is a tool. The following notes are to help you tailor this small group experience to your style and the needs of your group. While we recommend that you stay as close as possible to the proposed structure we realize that there are many factors that lead to a healthy group experience. So feel comfortable. Tailor this to your style and group needs.

## 3. YOUR ROLE:

We encourage you to see yourself as and communicate to your group that you are a **facilitator, NOT a teacher**. In so doing your success is measured by:

- **How well you ask questions, NOT give answers.** Use open-ended questions that start with how, why, when, who ... these tend to generate better discussions.
- **How each member applies what God is teaching.** Whenever appropriate, ask individuals:
  - **What** have you learned from ...?
  - **What** would you like to do about ...?
  - **When** will you do ...?
  - **How** can the group support you to make sure you do ...?
- **How you support your group members.** Commit to pray for each one at least once a week. When possible phone or send a note of encouragement and support.
- **How the group members support each other.** Encourage the group members to support each other by:
  - Sharing their strengths and contact information. (See Team information and Strengths list)
  - Committing to pray for one another
  - Lovingly holding each other accountable.
  - Agreeing to the group's covenant. (This is provided in the Member Notes).
- **To help you:**
  - **Take good notes** -- Have a separate sheet of paper as a record for each of your members. As soon as possible after each session or encounter, write your notes and observations about each member. Use this for appropriate follow up, support and accountability.
  - **Develop Partnerships** -- While being sensitive to personalities and male/female dynamics, we recommend that you pair each member with someone they do not know very well. This will be a sort of "buddy system" for the duration of all sessions. This will enhance the learning, support and accountability.

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## 4. PREPARATION:

- A. TEST DRIVE:** You cannot lead where you are not going. To make sure that this is a good fit for your personal needs, take time to do the video workshop alone or with just another partner.
- Download the resources from our web site
  - and go through all the video clips using the members notes
- B. PEOPLE:** People are the most important factor in your ministry. Ask God to lead you to:
- **Your Important People** who will **affirm** you in your calling and support you in your mission. **Do not take this responsibility alone.** Ensure that you have the support of the following important people:
    - **A key leader** who empowers you and holds you accountable as you play your role as facilitator
    - **Prayer partners** who commit to pray for you and your family as well as pray for everyone in the group at least once a week. Please read our paper **‘Lord is it warfare’** at <http://integrity-plus.com/EStore/WP/Lord-Is-It-Warfare.pdf>
    - **A host** or someone who can arrange the logistical details such as set up and clean up.
  - **Your teachable people** who are the beneficiaries of your calling. Long before you start your group ask God to send you the right teachable people. This workshop is best suited for those who are self-motivated and ready to make personal life changes.
    - **Group Size** should be 6 – 12 people. Fewer are better. Try to keep it at even numbers so it is easy to pair in partners of two or three.
    - While the material has significant Biblical content we do not believe that it is offensive for those of other faith.
- C. LOCATION:** With the help of your host, choose a home or office that is easy to find and that can accommodate the needed equipment and easy seating for discussion without a lot of distractions. Let your host decide what kind of refreshments would be least disruptive to the group activity keeping in mind the limited time allowed.
- **Seating:** You need to be sure that all members:
    - Can see the TV or projected video.
    - Can easily partner to discuss the exercises with minimal distractions.
  - **Equipment and Supplies:** Long before you start be sure to:
    - Download the video clips and back them up on a DVD or memory stick.
    - Test your video or projection equipment.
    - Make sure that each group member downloads his or her own exercise book to use for homework. They do not need to bring it to each session.
    - Ensure each member has a set of Member Notes that they can download for free.
    - Have some spare pens and blank paper for each session
- D. PROMOTION:** Ask your important people to help you in your promotion.
- Download, edit and print any of the promotion tools available in the media site at
  - Download the Member Notes. Print copies to hand out to those who register.
  - **Set realistic expectations.** For those who register or who are seriously interested, collect their contact information and provide them with copies of the Members Notes which should give them a good feel for what to expect. Follow up two days later to answer any questions and confirm their registration. Be sure to explain the need for commitment which is the purpose of the group covenant.

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## 5. REGISTRATION

- Confirm correct name, phone, and email
- Edit and email the following registration confirmation to each person.

**Subject: Confirmation, The Strengths Workshop**

Dear (First Name),

I am very pleased that you will be joining us in the Strengths Workshop. I will be praying for you as you seek to discover your strengths and apply them to live your most fulfilling life callings. In preparation, please:

- Remember that we will meet: **(add meetings dates, Time and Location)**
- Go to the Strengths Ministry web page at <http://www.strengthministry.ca/wp/sm/sgs/>. Follow the links to get the Workshop book and small group member's notes.
- Read through the members notes and follow the recommend steps
- Do the Gallup StrengthsFinder assessment at <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase>
- As soon as you do the Gallup assessment please send me your top five strengths in the order you receive them. This is very important for my preparation.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me at **(phone #)**

Sincerely

Signed.

- **Before your first session:**
  - Call each member to remind him or her and insure that they download the member notes and bring it to the first session
  - Download the Team Information and Strengths list at <http://www.strengthministry.ca/wp/sm/sg/>
  - Update this list by inserting each person's contact information and Strengths in order of priority. See sample below. Make copies for each team member.

<b>Name</b> Baha Habashy	<b>☎</b> 905.294.0380	<b>✉</b> bh@integirty-plus.com
<b>Strengths</b>	1. <b>Maximizer</b>	2. <b>Achiever</b>
3. <b>Analytical</b>	4. <b>Belief</b>	5. <b>Communication</b>
<b>His or Her one prayer request:</b> Leave this blank- to be filled in during the first session		

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## 6. FACILITATION

This material can be used in six separate sessions. This is how the time plan in the members note is provided. On the other hand you may improvise and use this material in other formats that are most suitable to your team. The following are some helpful tips:

- ✓ Always arrive at your host location at least 30 minutes before starting time to help with Video/Audio set up, seating and refreshments where applicable.
- ✓ The session format follows the outline in the participants Guide. Except for session **one and session six** each session should last about **100 minutes** and follow the following format:
  - **Welcome:** (Optional simple refreshments)
  - **Devotional and or Opening Prayer:** You may choose to read one of the short devotionals by Max Lucado provided in the Appendix and or offer a short prayer for God's blessing
  - **Sharing:** Members are encouraged to briefly share one experience from their previous week's homework.
    - For those who have a concern, question or issue, instead of providing your own answer or advice, try to have others in the group provide input. For those with challenging or delicate issues offer to deal with it on a one-to-one basis later.
    - **Watch the time.** While you need to be sensitive to individual needs, try to stay as close as possible to the time allowed. With courtesy, encourage brief answers.
  - **Watch the two video clips** planned for each session. Each video clip ends with a related exercise. Have your members do the exercise in pairs that follows each video. **It is preferable to keep the same partners for all sessions.** This will enhance interaction, support, follow up and accountability.
  - **Reference and highlight the homework** as indicated in the member notes.
  - **Prayer.** Have a time for round table prayer. Encourage each person in the group to pray for themselves and each other.
- ✓ **Special instructions for session one:** If you wish, feel free to use any light ice breakers. Do not start with an opening prayer. **Start with the first video which includes prayer.**
- ✓ **Special instructions for session six:** Have people share the best take away, the funniest story or the greatest impact. While you encourage sharing do not make it mandatory. Tell people that when their turn comes; if they do not ready to share just say "Pass". That is perfectly fine. The following are some suggested questions that you can use.
  - **Has God answered the prayer you made in the first session?**
  - **What are the most significant things you learned, and the resulting change if any?**
  - **What did you learn about your partner?**
  - **What opportunities did you have to share what you learned with others outside the group? Share what happened.**
- ✓ Be creative in making it fun. Consider inviting guests who could be interested in joining your next group.

## 7. LEADERSHIP PREPERATION

You cannot lead where you are not going. Two or three days before each group meeting, prepare:

- Review your notes from the last session
- Pray for yourself and for each of your members
- Do the homework assigned to your team members
- Phone your team or send a personalized note. Encourage them in doing their homework
- Review next session's videos and do the related exercises by yourself
- Write any notes that God may bring to your mind in preparation.
- Go over the agenda and time lines in the participants notes

## 8. WE MEASURE WHAT WE VALUE

A long time ago I was taught that **we measure what we value and we value what we measure**. This workshop is a highly valued investment of time on your part and the part of your team members. Gaining the participants evaluation and feedback is very important. This highlights the commitment you are making and the commitment you expect from your team members.

Good facilitators always seek improvement. I hope you always do. This evaluation and feedback sends a strong message to your team members that you value each of them and their opinions. The evaluation and feedback form provided is simple and takes just a few minutes. This can be confidential without any personal identification. All you need is ask each member to fill in the last sheet in the member's notes, fold it and leave it behind for you as they leave.

We value your input. For this reason, and to help us enhance this ministry, please tell us what you think. This will take only a few minutes. Please go to <http://www.strengthministry.ca/wp/sm/sg/input/>

**We are stewards of the people God gives us the privilege of leading.  
We are accountable to measure what we can and  
let God measure what we cannot.**

### RETREAT TIMING AND PLAN

Over the years we have presented the workshop in a one day or half day retreat or conference setting. We hope you can do the same. The content in this guide and related notes is structured to fit in a six week small group experience. Our hope is that, as a facilitator, you will use your creativity and adapt it to fit the needs of your people.

#### Here are a few thoughts that may help you:

- Your role is a facilitator not a teacher. Yet, feel free to use your own life example as you seek to support some of the video teaching or the exercises provided.
- Follow the same ideas for promotion and getting the right support team
- Before you use this material it as a retreat, go through the content by yourself several times so you can become familiar with its format. Better still use it in a small group setting.
- In your retreat format.
  - Start introducing the background of the material and the change in format to accommodate the retreat.. Highlight that the videos will refer to personal study, this will be omitted.
  - Explain to your team that they would be wise to do the personal study on their own at a later time. Indeed they can go back and do the full workshop videos on their own as well.
  - Use the same video and exercises as outlined in participants notes.
  - You will have 10 video clips of about 10 minutes each. Each video will have one 10 minute exercise. In total you will have less than 4 hours of video teaching and exercise.
  - This leaves you with lots of time for singing fellowship and other activities.
- Provide your participants to links to our eStore <http://estore.strengthsworkshop.ca/shop> so they can download their own book at a later date.

## DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FOR YOUR SESSIONS.

*This is extracted from The Strengths Workshop book.*

### YOU ARE YOU-UNIQUE

*Each of us is an original. Galatians 5:26 MSG*

God made you *you-nique*. Secular thinking, as a whole, doesn't buy this. Secular society sees no author behind the book, no architect behind the house, no purpose behind or beyond life. It simply says, "You can be anything you want to be." Be a butcher if you want to, a sales rep if you like. Be an ambassador if you really care. You can be anything you want to be. But can you? If God didn't pack within you the meat sense of a butcher, the people skills of a salesperson, or the world vision of an ambassador, can you be one? An unhappy, dissatisfied one perhaps. But a fulfilled one? No. Can an acorn become a rose, a whale fly like a bird, or lead become gold? Absolutely not. You cannot be anything you want to be. But you can be everything God wants you to be.<sup>1</sup>

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### TAKE RISKS FOR GOD

*"Well done good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things." Matthew 25:21 NKJV*

Use your uniqueness to take great risks for God!

If you're great with kids, volunteer at the orphanage. If you have a head for business, start a soup kitchen. If God bent you toward medicine, dedicate a day or a decade to AIDS patients. The only mistake is not to risk making one....

He lavished you with strengths in this life and a promise of the next. Go out on a limb; he won't let you fall. Take a big risk; he won't let you fail. He invites you to dream of the day you feel his hand on your shoulder and his eyes on your face. "Well done," he will say, "good and faithful servant."

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### EACH DAY MATTERS

*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: 1 peter 2.9*

*"Let's spend a lifetime making our Heavenly Father proud. Use your uniqueness to do so. You exited the womb called. Don't see yourself as a product of your parent's DNA, but rather as a brand-new idea from Heaven. Make a big deal out of God. Become who you are for Him! Has He not transferred you from a dull, death-destined life to a rich, Heaven-bound adventure? Remember, 'You were chosen to tell about the excellent qualities of God.' And do so every day of your life. With God, every day matters, every person counts. And that includes you."<sup>2</sup>*

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### KNOW YOUR KNACK

*But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. Galatians 6.4*

*“God never prefabs or mass-produces people. No slapdash shaping. ‘I make all things new,’ He declares (Rev. 21:5 NKJV). He didn’t hand you your granddad’s bag or your aunt’s life; He personally and deliberately packed you. . . . You can do something no one else can do in a fashion no one else can do it. Exploring and extracting your uniqueness excites you, honors God, and expands His kingdom. So ‘make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that.’ Discover and deploy your knacks. . . . When you do the most of what you do the best, you put a smile on God’s face. What could be better than that?”<sup>3</sup>*

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### LIVE YOUR LIFE

*“God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.”  
Philippians 4.9 Msg*

*“The Unseen Conductor prompts this orchestra we call living. When gifted teachers aid struggling students and skilled managers disentangle bureaucratic knots, when dog lovers love dogs and number crunchers zero balance the account, when you and I do the most what we do the best for the glory of God, we are ‘marvelously functioning parts in Christ’s body’ (Rom. 12:5 MSG). You play no small part, because there is no small part to be played. ‘All of you together are Christ’s body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it’ (1 Cor. 12:27 NLT). ‘Separate’ and ‘necessary.’ Unique and essential. No one else has been given your lines.... The Author of the human drama entrusted your part to you alone. Live your life, or it won’t be lived. We need you to be you. You need you to be you.”<sup>4</sup>*

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### **FACILITATION or COACHING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

The following are some coaching and facilitation questions that you may find helpful:

- What is your gut reaction to the results of your StrngthsFinder2.0 survey?
- What surprises you most about the results?
- Which of your strengths seem like the “real you,” – the core of who you are?
- When you use your top strengths, does it feel authentic?
- Which strengths seem to make you feel very happy when you use them?
- Which strengths come natural to you, and give you energy when you practice them?
- Which strengths leave you with sense of yearning to do more of what you are doing?
- When you think about a time when you were functioning at your best, which strengths did you use? Write this out as a story. Share it with someone.
- Which strengths give you a sense of excitement and enthusiasm as you think about using them? In other words, which strengths make you feel happy?
- Consider your past or current mentors (or personal role models, living or dead). What strengths did they embody? How did they express them?
- Which strengths are best for you to use in your family/relationship life, in your work life, and in your social life? Note that each domain the combination of strengths you use might be very different.
- Which strengths might you use in order to reach your goals and/or to create a better future for yourself?

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<sup>1</sup> Max Lucado, *Grace for the Moment: More Inspirational Thoughts for Each Day of the Year Volume 11* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 111.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid 167.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid 26

<sup>4</sup> Ibid 152