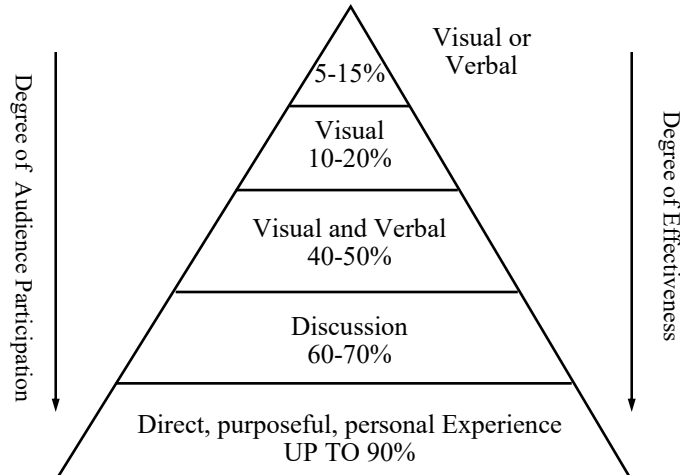


HOW TO . . . LEAD (NOT FOLLOW) A GOOD DISCUSSION

I. Effectiveness of Discussion



Based on
Dale's Cone of Learning
by Edgar Dale
Professor of Education
Ohio State University

II. Rules of Discussion

- A. Do not interrupt other people.
- B. Do not belittle others' comments or questions.
- C. Ask thought-provoking questions.
- D. Submit to Scripture as the final authority.

III. Ingredients of Discussion

- A. Relevant, specific topic
- B. Open-ended questions—defining and analyzing the topic
Avoid:
 1. Fill-in-the-blank questions
 2. Rhetorical questions
 3. Intimidating questions: "If you really loved God, what would you do in this situation?"
 4. Forced answers
- C. Honesty
- D. Conflict: "bread and butter" of discussion
- E. Participation
 1. Listening
 2. Discussing
 3. Asking questions

IV. Problems of Discussion

- A. Discussions can get sidetracked.
 1. What is your goal?
 2. Write questions which are goal-directed.
 3. Recognize and cut off rabbit trails.
- B. Discussions can include controversial issues.
 1. Know what the Bible says.
 2. Prepare questions which will turn kids to truth.
- C. Discussions may never get off the ground.
 1. The group is too large.
 2. The setting is bad.
 3. There is a large age difference.

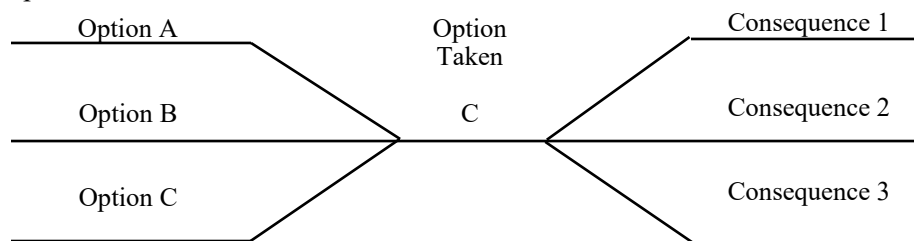
4. There are too many leaders.
5. Seating hinders speaking and listening.
- D. Individuals make discussion practically impossible.
 1. The Expert—know-it-all
 2. The Talker—about anything
 3. The Silent One—reason for silence (rebellion or just quiet)
 4. The Negative One
 5. The Peacemaker—go with the flow
 6. The Bomb
 7. The Dominator—Do not let him take over.
 8. The Comedian
 9. The Philosopher

V. Tips for facilitating discussion

- A. Get everybody to express his opinion or definition in one sentence.
Example: The primary reason friendships are destroyed is . . .
- B. Express an opinion yourself and let them react to it.
Example: I believe the root problem of all friendship failures is pride. What do you think about that?
- C. Ask for feelings or actions to be taken concerning a hypothetical situation.
Example: Your best friend just started dating your ex-boyfriend. He seems to be telling her stories, and your friendship is beginning to unravel.
- D. Do not be shocked; try to have an open mind, and watch your body language.

VI. Discussion Starters

A. Options



B. Hypotheticals

1. What would you do? Why?
2. Counseling a boy who does drugs and does not believe he will be able to stop

C. Role-playing

1. I will be the camper. You be the counselor.
2. A worldly man translated the King James Bible; therefore, the Bible cannot be true.

D. Object lessons

E. Comparison studies (Bible/world)

1. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*
2. Dear Abby

Primary Source: *Get 'em Talking* by Mike Yaconelli and Scott Koenigsaecker (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House).