



DISCERNING DIRECTION TOGETHER

Facilitation Guide

Dear Team Leader/Coach:

Now that you have taken time to look over your team's individual and group reports, you are ready to guide the group through the process of *Discerning Direction Together*. This facilitation guide is *not* a script. Instead, it will provide questions and make some suggestions to help stimulate a dialogue between you and your team as you discern how and where God is leading you in this next season.

Your goal in these sessions should be to facilitate an open and honest exchange of ideas and feelings as you seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit and determine how you should respond as the Body of Christ.

If you decide to invite an outside coach or consultant to help with these sessions, they will follow a similar plan of action.



Discerning Direction Together - Session 1

SESSION 1 GOALS:

- Listen well to each other, and listen well to the Holy Spirit as others share
- Affirm what the Lord has placed inside each team member

Engaging - Introduction

1. Provide context to the process and your desired outcome from the time to the team. Speak to why the process is important from your perspective as the team leader. Highlight that we believe God speaks to all team members about the direction, and not only the leader. It is important that the team hears this throughout the sessions. Remind them of the process so far:
 - a. Completed the online process to draft a statement and provide feedback about the team.
 - b. Shared in a 1:1 conversation about their statement, sharpening the language, and clarified its meaning.
 - c. Reviewed the language personally, and prepared for this session where we get to share our statements together.
2. Create space for interaction. Ask “Have you ever met a friend who lacks purpose and passion for their job, even though they have just settled into it? And can you contrast that with a person you’ve talked with recently who was bursting with passion and excitement with life?”

Discuss:

What was the difference between the two individuals?

Critical Insight: If spiritual gifts portray how we play out our part in the body of Christ, then *Discerning Direction Together* gives context to where or with whom we are to use our Gifts.

Aligning – God’s Direction for You

In Romans 15:15-20 the apostle Paul portrays his deep desire for Gentiles to come to Christ. It was not that he disliked the Jews. Rather, he was passionate about giving his life for the Gentiles, even if it meant going to Spain as he mentions later in chapter 15.

- **Defining your direction:** *Purpose, Calling, Leading, Vision, Mission, and Passion* are all terms that describe God’s direction for your life. It is the heart concern focused on the people, activity, or location where are you willing to invest your life for the sake of the Kingdom of God and that motivates you to extraordinary levels of sacrifice.
- **Where does it come from?** For some people, calling comes out of the core of heart emotion and it is hard to explain why it is there. They simply have a strong sense of knowing that this is what they are meant to be and do. For others it is woven through years of experience, sometimes tied to pain or joy in one’s history. For yet others, it is tied directly to Spiritual Gifts like teaching, encouraging, or helping.

God has provided a direction for each person’s life. It is important that we understand our own personal sense of direction, and also that we seek to understand how others view their sense of God’s direction on their lives. Some people feel such a strong sense of God’s direction that they are willing to start a new program or ministry to fulfill what is on their heart. Some might feel called to empower and support others as they pursue the direction where God is leading. As you discern how God is directing you, you will begin a process of narrowing your focus to a specific:

- **Person or group of people**

It might be a segment of your city, perhaps an apartment complex or housing area, a people group in another culture, artists, single parents, youth ages 25 and under.

- **Activity or task**

You might be drawn to teaching, serving the poor, tutoring children, discipling young Christians, or focused on mentoring leaders.

- **Location**

You might feel a burden for a specific region of your own city or another city, the neighborhood around your home, an apartment complex, or a specific foreign country.

Reflecting – Your Personal Direction

1. Allow each person to reflect on their Personal Discerning Direction Statement, prayerfully considering its accuracy and focus.
2. Pray as a group that the Lord would give you insights to Discerning *Our* Direction Together as you begin to share.

Sharing – Your Personal DDT Statement

1. Visible to everyone in the room, have each individual write their Personal Discerning Direction Statement from their Personal DDT report. This can be done easily by providing each person their own flip chart paper posted around the room.

Option: *If people tend to enjoy creative expression, allow them to draw or depict their statement however they choose.*

Note: *As a team leader, you can print the Discerning Direction Together Leader Report to have them all in one place.*

Note: As you facilitate this exercise, be aware of an important dynamic: Some people will only realize or be able to articulate their calling after they have heard some examples from others in the group. Because of this, begin sharing by saying something like this: *“Some of you will be so moved by what others share, that you will gain new insight to your own sense of direction, calling, ministry burden, or Kingdom passion. That is okay; actually it is a powerful way that God speaks to us through others.”*

2. Invite those who think they have a clear sense of personal direction to start the sharing.

Make certain that no one says, *“I think we OUGHT to...”* Oughts usually do not happen – we invest in that about which we are passionate! Instead, encourage them to use statements such as, *“I feel led to...”* or *“I sense God is directing me toward...”*

3. Allow each person to read their statement aloud to the group, or describe their picture.
4. Encourage the group to ask for clarifications if needed and affirm each individual for their vulnerability after they share. (Even if you do not agree completely with their conclusions at this point, this is not a time to evaluate their statements. It is a time to affirm each other and thank each other for sharing.)
5. Provide space for everyone to respond to each other with additional words, thoughts, and reflections.

Note: You can provide post-it's © to the team and have them write affirmations or feedback to the person on their flipchart.

6. Pray again for discernment and openness to the Holy Spirit.

Debrief – Discerning *Our* Direction Together

Focus on the following questions:

- What is on your heart from what others shared?
- What surprised you/ stood out to you in listening to the others share?
- How have these individual DDT Statements shaped the direction our team has taken up to now and how might they influence the future direction of our team?
- What is God saying to us through what has been shared about *Discerning Direction Together* thus far?

Close in prayer asking God for wisdom to incorporate and integrate the passions He has placed within us.

Discerning Direction Together - Session 2

SESSION 2 GOALS:

- Listen well to the Holy Spirit as others share
 - Draft a Discerning Direction Together Team Statement
 - Discern actions to take to begin to implement the directional shift
1. Pray for openness to the Holy Spirit's Leading.
 2. Reflect on the last session.
 - What stood out from last time?
 - What did you learn about each other?
 3. Discuss team impact.
 - We talked about our personal direction statements last time... now let's talk through how much we believe we are currently able to invest into that direction
 - Have each team member on a sticky note put their percentage on the papers posted around the room.
 - Allow each person to share why they selected their number, and if they would like to see it increase, what changes they believe might need to happen.
 - NOTE: Personal Discerning Direction Together Statements do not become an entitlement to 'go rogue' or to begin to demand more time investment. We are having a conversation about where God may be leading us together.
 - Give everyone a chance to ask questions and affirm one another's personal sense of God's direction.

4. Discuss team direction.

Where do we see Deepening:

Where do we see potential overlap of our personal direction statements?

- Where is God deepening our commitment to things we are currently doing?
- How will this impact us moving forward?

Where do we see Expanding:

Where might we need to expand to allow our team to fulfill our sense of direction?

- What could the Lord be telling us about where we should expand our current ministry or reach?
- Who might be implicated in such a move?

5. Take a “Listening Break” to allow people to pray personally and in small groups

Define what you are Shifting From / To:

Think about what is NOT represented in the room that may have been expected.

- What should we *stop* doing?
- Where might we need to prayerfully consider adding to our team?
- Where might we invest less time and resources to begin something new?

6. Begin to narrow and sharpen what you are hearing together.

Think about the summary of our meetings together so far.

- What are key words or ideas that are consistently being restated?
- What direction do we believe God is calling us to pursue?

7. Draft a statement of your team’s direction.

- What is a statement we believe will capture the core idea we are hearing from the Lord?
- Don’t get hung up on perfection, rather get ‘close enough’ where people can see themselves in the direction statement, and they are excited by it.

8. Discuss the next steps.

Creating practical steps and actions is critical. This portion of the meeting should be at least 20 minutes.

- Who else needs to be involved in our conversation? Who else needs to know about our conversation?
- What other information is required for us to make this shift to fully realize our direction together?
- When could we begin to DEEPEN, EXPAND, or SHIFT into our new direction?
- What behaviors would we expect to START, STOP, CONTINUE?
- How will we know we are on track in 30/60/90 days?
- How will we hold each other accountable to revisiting and continually discerning God’s direction together?

Use the simple chart / framework below to track the items defined and discussed together. This can be launch into the work.

What? [Action to take]	Who? [Person who is responsible]	When? [Date of completion]

Team Leader / Facilitator Notes:

What if someone says, “I don’t seem to fit”?

Now is not the time to draw any firm conclusions about that. Over the course of the next few months, explore with the individual what they sense God is saying to them and how they and the team should respond.

Questions to consider together over time:

- Might their Personal Discerning Direction Together Statement be something the team should consider including?
- Might the team need to sponsor the beginning of a new ministry?
- Are there others who are already doing this ministry? Should the individual connect with them, either as part of this team or should they join that ministry with this team’s blessing?