
TEACHER

— *creating conversational communities* —



Adult Conference Plans

Purpose: This conference plan details a two-hour conference experience for Adult Sunday School and small-group leaders. The goal is to provide an overview of the book and to apply its content to the Bible study setting of conference participants.

Use the Conversation Points ideas to lengthen or customize the plan.

Where?

- **Local church – Sunday School:** use this conference plan to train Bible study leaders prior to the start of the a Sunday School year. Many churches use this conference plan on a Saturday morning or Sunday evening in mid-August.
- **Local church – small groups:** use this conference plan to train small-group leaders throughout the year prior to the start of new semesters of study.
- **Regional and state training** – use this conference plan to train Sunday School and small-group adult leaders at regional or state-wide events.

With Whom?

- **With adult group leaders:** use this conference with adult leaders.

PREPARE

- ☐ Read *Teacher: Creating Conversational Community* by David Francis, Ken Braddy, and Michael Kelley.

Collect the following resources for use during the training event:

- ☐ One copy of *Teacher: Creating Conversational Community* by David Francis, Ken Braddy, and Michael Kelley for each participant. The book can be ordered at *LifeWay.com*.
- ☐ Nametags for each participant (two each)
- ☐ Post-It[®] notepad (wall size) and appropriate markers
- ☐ Marker board and dry-erase markers plus an eraser
- ☐ Audio-visual equipment such as TV/scan converter or data projector and a screen

Create the following visuals:

- ☐ Large chart of the Four Voices (see page 10 of *T:CCC*)
- ☐ Placards of the Eight Learning Approaches (see page 16 of *T:CCC*)

Photocopy the following handouts:

- ☐ Needs-Issues-Concerns Assignment (1 for every 4 anticipated in attendance)
- ☐ How Analytic or Global Are You (1 each for every participant, print front and back)

Enlist the following volunteers:

- ☐ Volunteer to read “Teacher” on page 4 of *T:CCC*
- ☐ Volunteer to present mini-lecture defining a Conversational Community

Download the following:

- ☐ PowerPoint[®] presentation, available from *LifeWay.com/DavidFrancis*.

Prepare a display of the following resources:

- ☐ Samples of ongoing Bible study resources from LifeWay including Leader Guides, Personal Study Guides, commentaries, and other resources specific to each product family
 - ☐ Bible Studies For Life
 - ☐ Explore The Bible
 - ☐ The Gospel Project
 - ☐ Masterwork
 - ☐ YOU
 - ☐ Access
- ☐ Samples of short-term Bible study resources

Prepare the room for the conference:

- ☐ Arrange chairs so they form a semi-circle facing a focal wall
- ☐ Place a copy of *T:CCC*, handouts, and a nametag on each chair
- ☐ Set up and test any electronic equipment you plan to use, such as a TV/scan converter or data projector and laptop

PRESENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- As participants arrive, direct them to create a nametag. Encourage them to write their first name and favorite nickname/moniker they have been or are called.
- After all participants have arrived, share with them your favorite nickname or moniker (Bubba, Papa, the Babe, etc). Explain why that is your favorite nickname or moniker.
- Invite volunteers to briefly introduce themselves to the group using their favorite nickname or moniker. Encourage them to explain the significance of their nickname or moniker.
- Call on a preenlisted volunteer to read “Teacher” on page 4 of *Teacher: Creating Conversational Communities (T:CCC)*.
- Explain that Jesus was known by many names, but “Teacher” or “Rabbi” would have been one of the more common names used by His disciples and others.
- Present a summary of the first section of Chapter 1 of *T:CCC*. Emphasize the high privilege of being called “teacher.”
- Pray, asking God to bless your time together in the conference as He speaks to each person’s heart about what it takes to be a teacher.

2. Defining Success as a Teacher

- Place participants into groups of 2 to 4. Instruct the groups to use a wall-size Post-It® notepad and draw “The Perfect Teacher” by starting with a stick figure. Encourage participants to add elements to the basic drawing that would represent things that would make this person “the perfect teacher.”
 - Bible = what the leader studies
 - Big heart = compassion and love for his group members
 - Hands = ready to serve
 - Halo = godly character
 - Feet = readiness to take the gospel to people
- Call for groups to present their “perfect teacher” and note similarities and differences in what they include.
- Ask: *What is your goal as a teacher? What are you trying to accomplish?*
- Direct the group to share with a partner their responses. Invite a few volunteers to share what their partner said. Affirm responses that relate to obedience or taking action on God’s truth.
- Highlight the statement on the top of page 52 of *T:CCC* (*The real test of a conversational community is not the pursuit of lofty thoughts or intimate fellowship, but the pursuit of obedience.*).

- Lead participants to record in the margin next to this statement their level of agreement with the statement (10 being completely agree and 1 being completely disagree). Assure them that you will be explaining more about a conversational community later.
- Present a brief lecture, summarizing the information found on pages 50-55. Emphasize that teaching should lead to action (transformACTION).
- Direct participants to locate page 56 and to mentally identify the average person in their group. Call for them to review the acts of obedience listed. Ask: *Do these actions define the average person in your group? What is missing? Does this define every person in your group?*
- Remind them that as the teacher, our goal is to help everyone on our ministry list (“class roll”) to become obedient followers of Christ and to continue to grow in obedience to Him.
- Explain that we began this conference with the end in mind so we could understand where we are trying to lead our group. The rest of this conference will focus on how we move group members from where they are to where they ought to be.

3. Definitions

Teacher

- Call for volunteers to share images that come to their mind when they hear the word “teacher.” Record the images on a marker board or large sheet of paper. Call attention to the second sentence in the bottom paragraph on page 5 (begins: We don’t mean a Bible expert...). Lead the group to identify the images listed that illustrate the description given on page 5 (“What is not meant...”).
- Write “Lead Learner” on a marker board or large sheet of paper. Lead the group to discuss how viewing one’s self as the lead learner would impact how a person teaches a group. If the group is large, direct them to discuss in groups of 2 to 4.

Conversational Community

- Call on a preenlisted volunteer to present a mini-lecture defining a conversational community using the information on pages 6-8.
- Ask: *How does a “lead learner” best define the person filling the teaching role in a conversational community? How does the definition of a conversational community apply to each age-grouping?*
- Point out that the authors identify two obstacles that work against a conversational community. Direct the group to scan page 9 to discover those obstacles. Invite the group to share other obstacles they may have witnessed or experienced. Challenge the group to consider ways of removing and tearing down any obstacles that hinder a group from becoming a conversational community.

4. Voices

- Reveal a chart you have created of the “Four Voices” on page 10. Direct the participants to find the chart on page 10 in their copy of *T:CCC*. Identify the source and general concept behind the Four Voices (see pages 9 and 10).

The Bible

- Emphasize the importance of the Bible. Call attention to the doctrinal statement from *The Baptist Faith and Message* on page 11 of *T:CCC*. Direct participants to review the statement, looking for key words or phrases that impact a conversational community. Invite them to share their thoughts. Emphasize that the Bible is the central voice in a conversational community.
- Explain that the Bible speaks to all age-groups but does so in different ways. Use the chart on page 12 to illustrate.

The Holy Spirit

- Call attention to the statement “You are not the only Teacher in the room.” on page 14.
- Give a brief demonstration of the “fall open” method as described on page 14. Use the content in the book to explain the shortcomings of that method and the need for preparation.
- Ask: *How does knowing that the Holy Spirit is with you every step of the teaching process give you confidence as a teacher?*

The Learners

- Randomly distribute the handout, *Needs-Issues-Concern Assignment* to approximately one-fourth of participants. Direct the participants with the handout to stand, while other participants join them, forming small groups. Give the participants with the handout the choice of either leading their small group or to give the handout to another member of their group to lead the discussion.
- After allowing them time to complete the actions described on the handout, invite groups to report using a round-robin format. Direct one group to call out one need, issue, or concern on their list facing a member of their Bible study group, followed by a second group calling out one need, issue, or concern on their list, followed by a third group doing the same thing, until all groups have shared one need-issue-concern facing a member of their Bible study group. Repeat the process until all the groups have shared 4-5 items from their list.
- Highlight needs, issues, or concerns that are the same for different age groups. Explain that while age groups are different, sometimes needs, issues, and concerns cross all age groups.
- Invite participants to call out characteristics of the group they teach or will be teaching. Highlight characteristics that are the same for different age groups. Explain that while age groups are different, they have the same learning styles.

- Display eight placards with the names of each learning approach (one name per placard). Point to the “Eight Learning Approaches” chart on page 16 of *T:CCC*. Lead the participants to review the chart and identify the approach that best suits them. Then direct them to identify different people in their group that prefer each approach. Use the content on pages 17-18 to challenge the group to find ways of incorporating each approach in their teaching plans. Explain that if a person teaches mostly using only one of these, they are leaving the majority of their class or group out of the teaching-learning process.
- To demonstrate that using multiple learning approaches in one session is possible, invite participants to identify which of the “Eight Learning Approaches” which have been used in this training conference so far, associating the learning approach with a particular step or activity.

The Teacher

- Remind participants of the definition of a teacher (lead learner). State: *The fourth voice present is ours.*
- Explain that as *Lead Learner*, we often teach toward our bent as either an analytic learner or a global learner. Distribute the handout, *How Analytic or Global Are You*. Instruct participants to read through the list of descriptors and place a check mark by the items that describe them. Total the number of check marks on each page. (Note: Everyone is part analytic and part global. No one is just one or the other. Participants should have check marks on both lists noting indicators that apply to them. It is important to note that one is not better than the other. This is an indicator of how God has created you.)
- Once participants have completed the assignment, ask those with more check marks on the analytic list to move to one side of the room, while those with more check marks on the global list move to the opposite side of the room. (Note: With most groups, approximately half will be in the Analytic Group while the other half will be in the Global Group. However, a small number of participants will be exactly the same on both pages. Allow these individuals to stand in the middle of the room.)
- Explain that if we teach solely toward our bent as either a global or analytic learner, then we will miss the mark reaching approximately half of our class or group.
- Present a mini-lecture to introduce the Say/Ask/Do concept (see pages 21-23). Explain that the remainder of the conference will focus on this concept.

5. Say/Ask/Do

- Place participants into three teams (an individual can be a team). Assign each team Chapter 2, 3, and 4. Give the following instructions:
 Review your assigned chapter. Identify key points and insights. Use the approach in the assigned chapter title to communicate the key points and insights to the rest of the conferees.

- Allow the groups to work, making yourself available to the groups to clarify as needed. You may want to provide some snacks while each team completes the assignment.
- After allowing time for the teams to work, reassemble the participants.

Say

- Invite the Say team to lead the participants in gaining an understanding of Chapter 2.
- Affirm them for sharing.
- Highlight any points in Chapter 2 that may have been overlooked by the team, but you believe to be significant.
- Allow the other participants to ask questions for clarification.
- Encourage the participants to share any insights, need for clarification, or disagreement they may have with the content in Chapter 2.

Ask

- Invite the Ask team to lead the participants in gaining an understanding of Chapter 3.
- Affirm them for sharing.
- Highlight any points in Chapter 3 that may have been overlooked by the team, but you believe to be significant.
- Allow the other participants to ask questions for clarification.
- Encourage the participants to share any insights, need for clarification, or disagreement they may have with the content in Chapter 3.

Do

- Invite the Do team to lead the participants in gaining an understanding of Chapter 4.
- Affirm them for sharing.
- Highlight any points in Chapter 4 that may have been overlooked by the team, but you believe to be significant.
- Allow the other participants to ask questions for clarification.
- Encourage the participants to share any insights, need for clarification, or disagreement they may have with the content in Chapter 4.

Say/Ask/Do or Do/Ask/Say?

- Lead participants to identify the different combinations possible using all three approaches. (Possible responses: Say/Ask/Do, Say/Do/Ask, Ask/Do/Say, Ask/Say/Do, Do/Say/Ask, Do/Ask/Say).
- Direct participants to discuss with another person the combination they believe works best with their Bible study group and why.
- Invite volunteers to share as time allows. Remind participants of the importance of utilizing all three approaches regardless of the order.

6. CONCLUSION

- Direct participants to skim *T:CCC* and mark pages they need to review and give further consideration. Invite volunteers to share one insight or tip they gained from the conference.
- Distribute another name tag to each participant. Lead them to write their first name and “Teacher” on the nametag.
- Present an overview of the “Teacher” on page 58. Emphasize the privilege and joy of being called “teacher.”
- Thank participants for their willingness to serve as a teacher.
- Close the conference by praying for the participants. Thank God for allowing teachers to be instruments used by Him to facilitate spiritual transformation.
- Dismiss

