

**10 Steps for Planning a Sunday School Leader Training Conference in Your Church**

1. **Set a date and time.**

Consider planning an annual training event in the weeks prior to the first Sunday of the new Sunday School year. Saturday mornings or Sunday evenings might be a great way to kick off the new year.

* 1. Select a time that makes the most sense. There will always be some conflicts but select a time with the least amount of conflict. Take into account school calendars, local community events, attendance patterns, and holidays to avoid.

***Potential Schedules to Consider***

***Base Schedule***

Start Time (0:00): Arrival Activity – with snacks

(0:10): Welcome, Recognitions, and Announcements

(0:15): Age group training session 1

(1:00): Break (snacks)

(1:15): Age group training session 2

(2:00): Break (snacks)

(2:15): Age group training session 3

(3:00): Dismiss/Fellowship

*Friday beginning with supper*

Start Time (0:00): Arrival Activity – with supper served

(0:05): Welcome, Recognitions, Prayer

Eat

(0:30): Inspiration and Directions

(0:45): Age group training session 1

(1:30): Break (coffee)

(1:45): Age group training session 2

(2:30): Break (more coffee)

(2:45): Age group training session 3

(3:15): Challenge

(3:30): Dismiss/Fellowship (desert served)

*Saturday morning ending with lunch*

Start Time (0:00): Arrival Activity – with snacks

(0:10): Welcome, Recognitions, and Announcements

(0:15): Age group training session 1

(1:00): Break (snacks)

(1:15): Age group training session 2

(2:00): Break (snacks)

(2:15): Age group training session 3

(3:00): Lunch served

(3:30): Dismiss

*Saturday morning beginning with breakfast*

Start Time (0:00): Arrival Activity – with breakfast

(0:05): Welcome, Recognitions, and Announcements

Continue eating

(0:30): Welcome, Recognitions, and Announcements

(0:45): Age group training session 1

(1:30): Break (snacks)

(1:45): Age group training session 2

(2:30): Break (snacks)

(2:45): Age group training session 3

(3:30): Dismiss/Fellowship

1. Secure a place.
   1. Secure a place that removes as many obstacles for attendees without making additional obstacles.
   2. Make sure to schedule rooms at the church using the system adopted by the church so you can protect the date, time, and place.
2. Create a focus or theme.
   1. Determine the three main things you want the teachers to understand or be able to do after the event is over. At every step of the planning, make sure that what you are planning contributes to making these things happen.
   2. Creating a theme makes promotion and decoration easier. Titles of the conferences can be tailored to fit the theme.
3. Set a budget.
   1. An event will cost you in some way. The leaders you will be training determine the success of the entire organization so treat them like that.
   2. Items such as breaks, meals, and study resources need to be paid for by the church if possible. (Note: You might ask Sunday School classes to provide a break or food item as a way to say “thank you” to their teacher.)
   3. If using outside guests, be sure to include an honorarium and travel expenses (flight, hotel, meals in transit, rental car, gas, airport parking, etc).
   4. Option: Include some type of item related to the theme to give to the attendees (special coffee mug, book, leather bracelet, spur, etc).
4. Enlist conference leaders and other workers.
   1. Secure leaders for each conference.
   2. Adjust the budget if needed.
   3. Provide expectations to each leader.
   4. Secure a team to provide childcare during the event.

TIP: Partner with another church with them providing childcare workers for you and then you provide childcare workers for them at a different time so your childcare workers can participate in the training at your church.

* 1. Secure greeters and set up/clean up crews.

1. Secure resources.
   1. Secure resources for the conference leaders, making sure they have ample time to prepare.
   2. Secure items to give the conference leaders to express your appreciation beyond an honorarium. (Note: If they are not from your city, a local item is best since it serves as a reminder for that conference leader to continue to pray for you.)
   3. Secure resources to be used by the participants.
   4. Secure meals and break food.
   5. Secure special items to give to each participant to express appreciation and gratitude.
2. Promote the training.
   1. Provide details for inclusion in church publications, streaming announcements, website, and visual announcements.
3. Contact potential participants.
   1. Call personally everyone you hope to have in attendance. Ask them to pray with you for this event, focusing on God using this event to encourage and sharpen the skills of the teachers and leaders.
4. Conduct the training.
   1. Work your plan.
   2. There will be surprises so enjoy and learn from them.
   3. The training isn’t over until you send thank you notes to participants and conference leaders.
5. Evaluate the process.
   1. Evaluate so you can learn from what you did right and what you did wrong.
   2. Even if the event went well, look for things that could have been improved or done more efficiently.
   3. Begin the process of preparing for the next training to be offered. If possible, announce that date at the previous training event.