



Group Leader “Hats” GroupWords

Most of us have been in the position of wearing many hats, of being responsible for more than one job at a time. Well, this is often true for the Small Group Leader. In his book, **How to Have Great Small-Group Meetings**, Neal McBride lists ten roles that effective group leaders perform in order to keep a meeting stimulating and on track. I found them instructive and challenging and wanted you see the ten hats that Small Group Leaders often wear:

- [GATEKEEPER](#) — Makes sure that everyone participates, and no one monopolizes.
- [ENCOURAGER](#) — Offers words of praise, support, and friendship; creates a warm atmosphere.
- [REFLECTOR](#) — Summarizes the feelings, ideas, and reactions of the group.
- [LISTENER](#) — Pays attention to what group members are saying and responds appropriately.
- [CLARIFIER](#) — Asks questions to make sure group members understand one another.
- [FOLLOWER](#) — Allows the group to make decisions and offer ideas.
- [STANDARD SETTER](#) — Reiterates the ground rules that keep the group functioning at its best.
- [CONSENSUS TESTER](#) — Invites input about the group’s direction and how it should function.
- [HARMONIZER](#) — Mediates conflict and helps group members move toward reconciliation.
- [TENSION REDUCER](#) — Brings perspective and context to stressful situations.

I’m sure that there are other “hats” that you may wear. But regardless of what we call the hat, the health of the group is worth the many roles played by the leader. Thank you for all that you do ... and wear.