

EMPOWER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

CHAPTER 1

1. On page 5, Jeff poses the question, “What would it look like if volunteers realized the power of the ‘untrained, ordinary,’ collectively owning and celebrating their influence in a great movement of God? Is this what Satan fears most and has hidden best?”

Thinking about your group, answer these questions. Discuss what it would do for your organization or church to effectively harness the potential of your volunteers. Give specific examples.

2. What evidence in your life and/or the life of your church or organization do you see God using the “ordinary to stun the world” (page 5)? Why is it important to understand this aspect of the way God works?
3. Discuss how Jeff related his job of cleaning the trucks to David’s shepherding job. How did his story affect you? What parallels do you draw from his story to the organization or church that you lead?

CHAPTER 2

1. What does “going on the offense” look like for your organization or church? How would you characterize the way your group engages on the spiritual front line—defensive, offensive, or a mix of both? What do you need to change about your approach to engagement?
2. How does the story of Josiah encourage you and your ministry? What lessons will you apply to your organization or church?
3. On a scale of one to ten (one being not evident at all; ten being Scripture informs every aspect of everything we do), what number would you assign to how the Word of God functions in your ministry currently?

Jeff writes on page 26, “... in Galatians the Bible is mentioned as the only offensive weapon in the armor of God. It says it is alive and active, sharper than any two-edged sword. The Scripture says the words recorded on its pages are actually God-breathed. ...” Why is this definition important? Discuss how it will change the way you lead your organization or church.

CHAPTER 3

1. How do you respond to the idea that “the greatest opportunity for the viral spread of a movement exists when the vast number of ordinary carriers engage those they normally encounter each day as they go about living their lives” (page 39)?
2. What is the difference between your organization’s volunteers only getting involved in your group and volunteers flowing out to impact your community? How do most of your volunteers interact with your organization?
3. What are the best ways to bestow increased value on volunteers? What happens when volunteers feel valued? What specific changes will you make with your volunteers so as to “release the hero that lies within each one of them” (page 45)?

CHAPTER 4

1. What assets do you see as already existing within your organization? How can you place high value and expectations on your volunteers so those assets will be realized and used for ministry purposes?
2. How has the crippling disease of comparison affected your organization's volunteers? When have you seen the symptoms—doubt, fear, and acceptance—of the disease in your group?
3. Jeff writes, "Great movements that change things are not borne on the back of awesome; they are borne on the back of ordinary" (page 60). How will you incorporate this idea into your philosophy of ministry going forward? Why is it important to do so?

CHAPTER 5

1. In your own words, describe the retail strategy based on scarcity. Contrast that with the "long tail effect," which is based on abundance and focuses on catering to a niche market. How do these two different ideas apply to the way your group does ministry?
2. Why is it important that organizations and churches understand the "rise and fall of the hit" so that they can "flourish in the twenty-first century and beyond" (page 73)?
3. What will it mean for your organization to stop thinking "tens of millions" and to start thinking "millions of tens"? Give a few specific examples.

CHAPTER 6

1. What do you think about this statement: "You don't value what you don't trust" (page 82)? How do trust and value lead to empowering others?
2. What are some specific ways you can better exercise and demonstrate trust in those you lead?
3. When volunteers and employees are trusted with their jobs, why do engagement and performance soar?

CHAPTER 7

1. What examples can you give that demonstrate this truth: Complexity kills movement. Simplicity sparks movement (page 91)?
2. Do you agree or disagree that leaders of American Christianity have created a "spectator generation of Christian youth"? Explain your answer.
3. How do you see the enemy of your ministry targeting the Word of God—a critical node—among the people you lead?

CHAPTER 8

1. Discuss the importance of The Center of Bible Engagement study results (pages 101-104). What surprised you about the findings? What do these findings mean for the group you lead?
2. To what do you attribute the success of the Fields of Faith events? How will you incorporate those aspects into your organization?
3. Compare and contrast the stories Jeff writes about: the small girl with the Samurai sword and JuJu, the Hofstra student who was interviewed on Fox & Friends. What makes these ordinary stories? How does God use them?

CHAPTER 9

1. In your own words, describe the principle of seven. Where does its power lie? When have you seen this principle at work?
2. Why do you think fighting a common enemy mobilizes a common response?
3. What is your response to Jeff's statement, "People don't just want to take in something; they want to take on something" (page 140)?

CHAPTER 10

1. What is the villain of your organization?
2. How can you shift your stated common goals to include a goal of defeating a common enemy?
3. How unified is your organization? How will fighting a common enemy affect the unity of your organization?

CHAPTER 11

1. What is your strategy for building your organization—through volunteers who are renters or owners? What is the difference between the two?
2. What examples can you give for this principle: High Challenge + High Trust = High Ownership (page 157)?
3. What specific steps will you take in your organization to help create ownership among those you lead?

CHAPTER 12

1. Where have you set the bar of expectation for volunteers? Are there any opportunities to raise the bar during the year?
2. What lessons do you learn from the example Jeff tells about the Rhodesian ridgehounds?
3. Why is there such power in ordinary ownership?