



# FACILITATING GROUPS

FOR SELF-RELIANCE



# WELCOME—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

## HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

| WHEN YOU SEE THESE PROMPTS, FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS |                                    |                                       |  |  |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Read  | Watch                              | Discuss                               | Ponder   | Activity   |
| One person reads aloud for the whole group.         | The whole group watches the video. | Share thoughts for about 2–4 minutes. | Quietly consider, meditate, and write for about 2–3 minutes. | Work individually or with others for the specified time. |

**Prayer:** Invite someone to say the prayer.

**Time:** Ask someone to set a timer for each section.

**Introductions:** Each participant should take 30 seconds to tell the group his or her name and something about him or herself.

**Read:** Welcome! The purpose of this booklet is to introduce you to self-reliance groups. This is a new Church initiative that will help members learn practical skills and strengthen spiritual habits. Today’s training will look and feel like the self-reliance group meetings you will be facilitating. For the next two hours we will cover the following topics:

- What is a self-reliance group?
- Your role as a facilitator
- The structure of a self-reliance group meeting
- How people join self-reliance groups
- Administrative responsibilities of a facilitator

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## LEARN—Maximum Time: 85 Minutes

### WHAT IS A SELF-RELIANCE GROUP? (10 minutes)

**Watch:** “I Will Provide for My Saints,” available at [srs.lds.org/videos](https://srs.lds.org/videos) under “Video Resource” in the “My Path” section

**Discuss:** How will my faith in Jesus Christ affect my spiritual and temporal self-reliance?

**Read:** The purpose of self-reliance groups is to help people change the way they live. Elder M. Russell Ballard taught: “I believe councils are the most effective way to get real results. Additionally, I know councils are the Lord’s way and that He created all things in the universe through a heavenly council, as mentioned in the holy scripture” (“Family Councils,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2016, 63).

By working together in a council setting, group members have access to more talents, inspiration, experience, and knowledge than they have alone. A self-reliance group:

- Consists of 8–12 members working on a common interest, such as managing finances, finding a better job, improving their education, or growing a business.
- Is a safe environment where everyone feels comfortable participating equally.
- Meets weekly for up to 12 weeks to develop new skills and habits.
- Uses a council model so its members can learn and encourage each other.
- Commits to act each week on what its members are learning.
- Reports progress so its members can hold each other accountable for their commitments.

**Discuss:** How are self-reliance groups different from workshops or other classes you’ve attended?

**YOUR ROLE AS A FACILITATOR (15 minutes)**

**Watch:** “How to Facilitate a Group,” available at [srs.lds.org/videos](https://srs.lds.org/videos) under “Video Resources” in the “Leader Guide” section

**Discuss:** What did the facilitator in the video have to change from being a teacher to being a facilitator? How did it impact the group?

**Read:** The Lord said about councils or groups in the Church, “Let not all be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, *that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all*, and that every man may have an equal privilege” (D&C 88:122; italics added).

In self-reliance groups, no one is called to teach! As a facilitator, your job is to help group members follow the materials, participate, and invite the Spirit into the discussion. You were not called to be the subject expert. Instead, you should participate as a group member, keeping commitments and learning together. Following the principles below (in bold) will help your group have a successful experience.

**Create a safe environment.** Each week participants will report openly to the group their progress keeping commitments. They will make mistakes and experience failure as they journey toward greater self-reliance. This is normal and healthy. It is critical that participants feel they are in a safe environment to try, fail, and eventually succeed.

**Discuss:** What are some ways you can help participants feel safe, comfortable, and accepted in the group?

**Read: Encourage participation.** As a facilitator, you should not speak more than anyone else in the group. You should blend in and help give everyone a voice.

## ACTIVITY

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**Step 1:** In groups of three, read the facilitator actions below.

**Step 2:** Each of you choose one action from each column and discuss why it benefits or hurts participation.

| WHAT ENCOURAGES PARTICIPATION AND UNITY?  | WHAT HURTS PARTICIPATION AND UNITY?   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Redirecting questions to the group</li><li>○ Speaking respectfully of others</li><li>○ Knowing everyone's name</li><li>○ Smiling and being friendly</li><li>○ Starting and ending meetings on time</li><li>○ Trusting and following the workbooks</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Discouraging and critical comments</li><li>○ Commenting on every question and having to speak the last word</li><li>○ Ending the meeting late</li><li>○ Talking too much or acting like the teacher</li></ul> |

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**Discuss:** How would you deal with someone who dominates the conversation or doesn't participate?

**Read: Start and end on time.** Group members should be able to trust that the group will start and end on time. Each section and activity has suggested time limits. Each week you can assign someone in the group to be the timekeeper.

**Discuss:** What other things can you do to help the groups run on time?

**Read: Keep comments relevant and positive.** Never share stories that are critical of others, even if they are about someone unknown to group members.

**Discuss:** How can you encourage group comments to be focused and respectful?

### THE STRUCTURE OF A SELF-RELIANCE GROUP MEETING (40 minutes)

**Watch:** “Go and Do’ Learning,” available at [srs.lds.org/videos](http://srs.lds.org/videos) under “Video Resources” in the “Leader Guide” section

**Read:** Each group meeting has five sections. You should never skip a section.



**Report:** In this section, group participants evaluate their effort and report their progress to the group. They share the things they have learned from practicing new skills and habits. Evaluating progress is critical to form new habits. (Takes 20–30 minutes.)

**Discuss:** How can reporting our progress openly to the group help us?



**My Foundation:** In this section, members learn and put into practice principles of faith, education, hard work, and trust in the Lord. Each week participants review a basic principle that will help them become more self-reliant. (Takes 20 minutes.)

**Discuss:** Why do we study both doctrine and temporal skills in our groups?



**Learn:** In this section, group participants read, discuss, and practice new ideas and skills that will help them be temporally self-reliant. (Takes 40–50 minutes.)



**Ponder:** In this section, group participants ponder and write about the things they have learned during the group meeting. They seek guidance from the Lord and identify ways to improve. Please do not skip. (Takes 5–10 minutes.)

**Discuss:** How does pondering—in silence and without discussion—allow the Holy Ghost to teach us?



**Commit:** In this section, participants commit to practicing the new skills and habits they learned and discussed in the group meeting. Making and keeping commitments is critical to the process of establishing new habits. To help, participants will select another member of the group to act as an **action partner**. Action partners check on each other during the week to provide encouragement and support. Participants also commit to teach what they learned to their family or friends. (Takes 5–10 minutes.)

**Discuss:** Why is it important to be and have an action partner?



**Act:** Participants must act on their commitments during the week to change the way they live! Doing and teaching others what they learned helps develop skills and habits of self-reliance. (Takes 3–8 hours a week.)

**Discuss:** How can I help group members act during the week to build good habits?

**Read:** Now that you know about the structure, let's practice a real section of a meeting together.

### ACTIVITY

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**Step 1:** Choose someone in the group to facilitate a *My Foundation* section. The facilitator should not teach the principle to the group. Instead, he or she follows the material as written and encourages everyone to participate.

**Step 2:** Turn to page 12 and begin the *My Foundation* principle, "Self-Reliance Is a Principle of Salvation."

**Step 3:** After you finish the *My Foundation* section, use the questions below to provide feedback to the facilitator.

- How well did the facilitator follow the script?
  - How did the facilitator encourage participation from all members of the group?
  - Did group members feel the influence of the Holy Ghost?
- 

### HOW PEOPLE JOIN GROUPS (10 minutes)

**Watch:** "Self-Reliance Groups," available at [srs.lds.org/videos](https://srs.lds.org/videos) under "Video Resources" in the "My Path" section. (No video? Continue reading.)

**Read:** The process to join a group involves three steps.

First, ward councils invite members to attend a self-reliance devotional.

Second, members attending the devotional will:

- Learn basic doctrines and principles of self-reliance.
- Assess their current spiritual and temporal needs.
- Select a group that will improve their skills.
- Choose a day, time, and location for group meetings.

Third, members typically start attending the group they chose one week after the devotional.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FACILITATOR (10 minutes)

### Group Registration

**Read:** It is important to register the group and later to complete a report at the end of the group. This process will allow you to request certificates for group members, receive additional training materials, and help the Church improve the self-reliance initiative. Please review the instructions below:

- Before the first group meeting, download the Group Registration Form at [srs.lds.org/report](https://srs.lds.org/report). Complete the form during the first group meeting. After the form is complete, visit [srs.lds.org/report](https://srs.lds.org/report) to enter the information.
- Contact the stake self-reliance specialist each week to let him or her know who attended the meeting and any group member success stories.
- Before the last group meeting, download the End of Group Report and Certificate Request Form at [srs.lds.org/report](https://srs.lds.org/report). Complete the form during the last group meeting. After the form is complete, visit [srs.lds.org/report](https://srs.lds.org/report) to enter the information.

### Preparing the Room and Videos Each Week

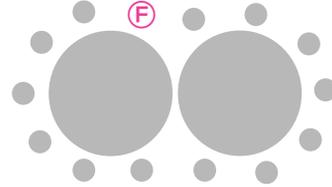
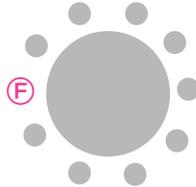
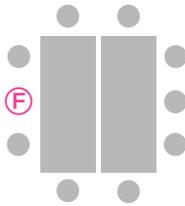
**Read:** Your stake self-reliance specialist should reserve a room in the Church building for you. Each week you should come a few minutes early to set up the tables and chairs. You should also set up the audiovisual equipment and verify that the videos and sound work.

**ACTIVITY**

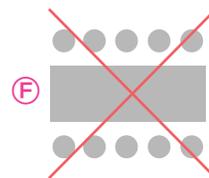
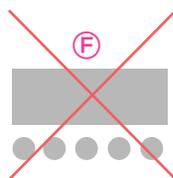
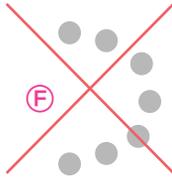
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**Step 1:** Review the room layout diagrams below.

**Step 2:** Discuss why the seating arrangement is so important to the group learning process.



**NOT LIKE THESE**



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**FACILITATING “FIND A BETTER JOB” GROUPS**

Your meeting options are flexible. Please read pages 16–18 in the appendix. Present the meeting options to those who choose your group at the self-reliance devotional.

## SUMMARY

**Read:** Refer to this list often during your service as a facilitator.

### What You Do *before* the Group Meeting

- Call or text group members to remind them of the date, time, and place.
- Review the material to prepare to facilitate—but do not prepare to teach it as a lesson.
- Ask the stake self-reliance specialist to give you enough workbooks for everyone who signed up plus two additional copies.
- Arrive early to properly set up the chairs, tables, and videos.
- Have pens and pencils for people who forgot to bring their own.

### What You Do *at* the Group Meeting

- Greet group members warmly and get to know them.
- Recognize and applaud their accomplishments and progress.
- Assign a timekeeper to manage the suggested times.
- Encourage discussion among the group.
- Emphasize acting on commitments between meetings.
- Remind group members to respect confidential information.

### What You Do *after* the Group Meeting

- Visit [srs.lds.org/report](https://srs.lds.org/report) after the first and final group meetings for registration, reporting, and certificates.
- Encourage action partners to contact and help each other during the week.
- Contact the stake self-reliance specialist each week and let him or her know your attendance and how the meeting went.
- Prayerfully review the materials for the next group meeting.
- Prepare spiritually and act upon promptings you receive.



# MY FOUNDATION: SELF-RELIANCE IS A PRINCIPLE OF SALVATION— Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

**Ponder:** John 10:10 (on the right)

**Discuss:** What is an abundant life?

**Watch:** “He Polished My Toe,” available at [srs.lds.org/videos](http://srs.lds.org/videos). (No video? Read page page 13.)

**Discuss:** Do you believe there are solutions to your problems? How can we qualify for the Lord’s power to assist us?

**Read:** Handbook 2 reference and the quote by Elder Dallin H. Oaks (on the right). Being self-reliant does not mean that we can do or obtain anything we set our mind to. Rather, it is believing that through the grace, or enabling power, of Jesus Christ and our own effort, we are able to obtain all the spiritual and temporal necessities of life we require for ourselves and our families. Self-reliance is evidence of our trust or faith in God’s power to move mountains in our lives and to give us strength to triumph over trials and afflictions.

**Discuss:** How has Christ’s grace helped you obtain the spiritual and temporal necessities of life?

## ACTIVITY

**Step 1:** Choose a partner and read each principle below.

**Step 2:** Discuss why believing these truths can help you become more self-reliant.

### DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES OF SELF-RELIANCE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Self-reliance is a commandment.   | “The Church and its members are commanded by the Lord to be self-reliant and independent” ( <i>Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball</i> [2006], 116). |
| 2. God can and will provide a way for His righteous children to become self-reliant. | “And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine” (D&C 104:15).   |
| 3. The temporal and spiritual are one to God.  | “Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual” (D&C 29:34).  |

*“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

#### JOHN 10:10

*“Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family. As members become self-reliant, they are also better able to serve and care for others.”*

#### HANDBOOK 2: ADMINISTERING THE CHURCH (2010), 6.1.1

*“Whatever causes us to be dependent on someone else for decisions or resources we could provide for ourselves weakens us spiritually and retards our growth toward what the gospel plan intends us to be.”*

**DALLIN H. OAKS,**  
**“Repentance and Change,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 40**

**Discuss:** Read President Marion G. Romney's quote (on the right).  
How do you know if you are becoming more self-reliant?

**Commit:** Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each commitment.

- Share what you've learned today about self-reliance with your family or friends.

**Back to page 8.**

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## HE POLISHED MY TOE

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



**ELDER ENRIQUE R. FALABELLA:**

When I was growing up, we didn't have much. I remember one day when I approached my father and said to him, "Papa, I need a new pair of shoes. These ones are already worn out." He stopped and looked at my shoes and saw they were really worn out. He said, "I think this is something we can fix." He took a bit of black polish and polished my shoes, leaving them shiny and nice. He said to me, "Now they're fixed, son." I replied, "No, not yet. You can still see my toe sticking out of my shoe." He said, "Well, we can fix that too!" He took a little more polish and he polished my toe!

That day I learned that there is a solution to every problem. I am convinced that this principle of self-reliance and this initiative is a way to hasten the Lord's work. It's part of the work of salvation. All of us can become better than what we are now. You have to let go of apathy. Many times we become complacent, and this destroys our progress. Every day is a day I can make progress if I decide to do something different to improve what I've done poorly in the past. If you do it with faith, exercising faith and hope in Christ that He will be there helping you, you will find the way to make progress in temporal and spiritual things. This is because God lives and you are His son or daughter.

**Back to page 12.**

*"Without self-reliance one cannot exercise these innate desires to serve. How can we give if there is nothing there? Food for the hungry cannot come from empty shelves. Money to assist the needy cannot come from an empty purse. Support and understanding cannot come from the emotionally starved. Teaching cannot come from the unlearned. And most important of all, spiritual guidance cannot come from the spiritually weak."*

**MARION G. ROMNEY,**  
**"The Celestial Nature of Self-Reliance,"**  
*Ensign, Nov. 1982, 93*



## PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

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*Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the quote below and write responses to the questions.*

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“This is the miracle of Church councils: listening to each other and listening to the Spirit! When we support one another in Church councils, we begin to understand how God can take ordinary men and women and make of them extraordinary leaders” (M. Russell Ballard, “Counseling with Our Councils,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 26).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

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What will I do as a result of what I learned today?

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## COMMIT—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

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*Each week we make commitments. When we meet next week, we will begin by reporting on your commitments. Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and sign below.*

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### ACTIVITY

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**Step 1:** Choose a partner in your group, and read the commitments aloud to each other.

**Step 2:** Promise each other you will keep them and sign below.

- I will watch the videos below (available at [srs.lds.org/videos](https://srs.lds.org/videos) in the “Leader Guide” section):
  - How to Lead: Report
  - How to Lead: My Foundation
  - How to Lead: Learn
  - How to Lead: Ponder
  - How to Lead: Commit
  - How to: Manage Meetings
- I will register my group after the first meeting and complete the report during our last group meeting (visit [srs.lds.org/report](https://srs.lds.org/report)).
- I will practice the *My Foundation* principle and teach it to my family or friends.
- I will use the Facilitator Self-Assessment form (page 19) each week to evaluate my progress.
- I will begin making the personal change I wrote today in the “Ponder” section.

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*My signature*

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*Partner's signature*

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*Note:* A member of the stake self-reliance committee will follow up with you on these commitments.

Offer a closing prayer.

## APPENDIX

### FIND A BETTER JOB: MEETING OPTIONS

Your options for meetings are flexible. Many groups choose to go through the material within the first two weeks so they can start practicing and putting those skills to work right away in their job search.

Once you have completed all of the chapters, continue to meet at least weekly for about an hour for support, accountability, and more practice until the group has met for 12 total weeks.

Here are a few suggestions that other groups have found effective. *Suggested agendas can be found on page 18.*

- Option 1:** Meet for 8–9 hours for the first meeting to complete all of the chapters. Then meet weekly for about an hour for the remaining 11 weeks.
- Option 2:** Meet twice for 4–5 hours each within the first two weeks to complete all of the chapters. Then meet weekly for about an hour for the remaining 10 weeks.
- Option 3:** Meet four times for 2–3 hours each within the first two weeks to complete all of the chapters. Then meet weekly for about an hour for the remaining 10 weeks.
- Option 4:** Meet weekly for 2 hours each week, doing one chapter a week. It will take 10 weeks to complete all of the chapters. Meet weekly for about an hour for the remaining 2 weeks.

You can also come up with your own meeting options.

|                 | LEARN SKILLS QUICKLY | PREPARED FOR JOB SEARCH SOONER | SOME LONGER MEETINGS | A FEW EXTRA MEETINGS | MOST MEETINGS ARE 1 HOUR | EASY TO SCHEDULE | PLENTY OF PRACTICE TIME |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Option 1</b> | ●                    | ●                              | ●                    |                      | ●                        |                  | ●                       |
| <b>Option 2</b> | ●                    | ●                              | ●                    |                      | ●                        | ●                | ●                       |
| <b>Option 3</b> | ●                    | ●                              |                      | ●                    | ●                        | ●                | ●                       |
| <b>Option 4</b> |                      |                                |                      |                      |                          | ●                | ●                       |

## FIND A BETTER JOB: AGENDAS

### Option 1

| MEETING 1<br>(8-9 HOURS)                        | MEETINGS 2-12<br>(1-1.5 HOURS)                                |
|---|---|
| <i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapters 1-10<br>Commit | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Sharpen My Skills<br>Commit |

### Option 2

| MEETING 1<br>(4-5 HOURS)                       | MEETING 2<br>(4-5 HOURS)                                  | MEETINGS 3-12<br>(1-1.5 HOURS)                                |
|--|---|---|
| <i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapters 1-5<br>Commit | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapters 6-10<br>Commit | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Sharpen My Skills<br>Commit |

### Option 3

| MEETING 1<br>(3 HOURS)                         | MEETING 2<br>(2 HOURS) | MEETING 3<br>(3 HOURS)                                   | MEETING 4<br>(2 HOURS) | MEETINGS 5-14<br>(1-1.5 HOURS)                                |
|--|------------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| <i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapters 1-3<br>Commit | Chapters 4-6           | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapters 7-8<br>Commit | Chapters 9-10          | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Sharpen My Skills<br>Commit |

### Option 4

| MEETING 1<br>(2 HOURS)                      | MEETINGS 2-10<br>(2 HOURS)   | MEETINGS 11-12<br>(1-1.5 HOURS)                               |
|---|--|---|
| <i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapter 1<br>Commit | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Chapters 2-10 (1 per week)<br>Commit | Report<br><i>My Foundation</i><br>Sharpen My Skills<br>Commit |

## FACILITATOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

After each group meeting, review the statements below. How well are you doing?

| HOW AM I DOING AS A FACILITATOR?   | Never                    | Some-times               | Often                    | Always                   |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I contact group members during the week.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I share my excitement and love for each group member.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I help ensure that every group member reports on his or her commitments.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I talk less than other group members. Everyone participates equally.            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I let group members answer questions instead of answering them myself.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I stay within the recommended time for each section and activity.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I make time for the "Ponder" section so the Holy Ghost can guide group members. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I follow the workbook as written and complete all sections and activities.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| HOW IS MY GROUP DOING?   | Never                    | Some-times               | Often                    | Always                   |
| 1. Group members love, encourage, and serve one another.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Group members keep their commitments.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Group members are achieving both temporal and spiritual results.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Action partners regularly contact and encourage each other during the week.     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Self-Reliance Services  
PERPETUAL EDUCATION FUND

