



# Leader Guide

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**SELF-RELIANCE**

## FOREWORD

There are great needs among us. Many members are not self-reliant and lack the ability to “provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family.”<sup>1</sup> Bringing people to self-reliance is the work of salvation. President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “[Self-reliance] is an essential element in our spiritual as well as our temporal well-being. ... ‘Let us be self-reliant and independent. Salvation can be obtained on no other principle.’”<sup>2</sup>

Those who need help becoming more self-reliant may include those receiving fast-offering assistance, returning missionaries, recent converts, less-active members, and local priesthood leaders needing better work. Through His Church, the Lord is now providing the powerful new tools, resources, and processes described in this guide to help members on their path to self-reliance.<sup>3</sup>

As a priesthood leader, you are one of those to whom the Lord has said, “I have given unto you ... the keys ... for the work of the ministry and the perfecting of my saints” (D&C 124:143), and, “To whom these keys are given there is no difficulty in obtaining a knowledge of facts in relation to the salvation of the children of men” (D&C 128:11). Read “The Parable of the Bus Driver” on the right. Please ponder carefully your role in driving this essential initiative forward.

This leader guide has been developed to assist you as you exercise your keys, implement these new tools, and help members help themselves toward self-reliance. As you do so, the Holy Ghost will guide you and the Lord will cause you to be His instrument in lifting the poor and needy and hastening His work of salvation.

1. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 6.1.1.
2. Thomas S. Monson (quoting Marion G. Romney), “Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 3.
3. For more information, see [srs.lds.org](http://srs.lds.org).

### The Parable of the Bus Driver

*“The self-reliance initiative is like a bus which requires a licensed driver.*

*“The bus is built by the Self-Reliance Services staff. It is delivered through the self-reliance resource center, and the stake self-reliance committee does the maintenance. The stake self-reliance specialists and group facilitators help members get on the bus (but they must get on the bus on their own). The stake president and bishops are the bus drivers.*

*“All must do their part to help members achieve self-reliance; however, if the stake president and the bishops do not turn their keys to start the engine and drive the bus, no one goes anywhere.”*

**RONALD ABAN,**  
Self-Reliance Services  
manager in Tacloban,  
Philippines

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## PRIESTHOOD LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

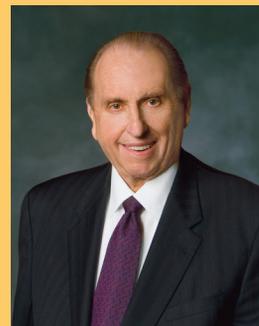
### Stake Presidency (or District Presidency)

1. Learn and teach the doctrines and principles of self-reliance (see back cover). Instruct bishops and members of the stake self-reliance committee in their self-reliance responsibilities.
2. Define self-reliance objectives for the stake.
3. Organize a stake self-reliance committee that can develop, implement, and monitor a self-reliance action plan for the stake.
4. Prioritize inviting returning missionaries and new converts (as needed) to participate in self-reliance activities.
5. Include self-reliance on the stake council agenda.
6. Call a stake self-reliance specialist.
7. Call Church-service missionaries as needed.
8. Review and act on stake self-reliance progress reports and PEF loan reports.
9. Provide guidance for using the family history center for self-reliance purposes as needed.

### Stake Self-Reliance Committee

The stake self-reliance committee includes the following individuals: a member of the stake presidency (chair), the high councilor assigned to self-reliance, a member of the stake Relief Society presidency, the chairman of the bishops' welfare council, and the stake self-reliance specialist. Optional participants may include members of the stake Young Men and Young Women presidencies, additional stake specialists, full-time senior missionaries, and Church-service missionaries.

1. Watch the video "Laboring unto Self-Reliance" (available at [srs.lds.org/videos](http://srs.lds.org/videos)).
2. Develop, implement, and monitor a self-reliance action plan for the stake.
3. Offer regular *My Path to Self-Reliance* devotionals (see page 4).
4. Organize and staff a stake self-reliance resource center. Designate a Church-service missionary couple or a self-reliance specialist to direct the operations of the center and to organize self-reliance groups (see page 2).
5. Teach ward councils their self-reliance duties.
6. Utilize resources and services developed by Self-Reliance Services employees.
7. Invite returning missionaries and new converts (as needed) to participate in *My Path* devotionals and join self-reliance groups.



*"Self-reliance is a product of our work and undergirds all other welfare practices. ... 'Let us work for what we need. Let us be self-reliant and independent. Salvation can be obtained on no other principle.'"*

**THOMAS S. MONSON**  
(quoting Marion G. Romney), "Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare," *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 3

## Stake Self-Reliance Specialist

The specialist serves as the link to all of the functions of Self-Reliance Services (stake self-reliance committee, stake self-reliance resource center, and Self-Reliance Services manager).

1. Prepare the stake self-reliance committee agenda.
2. Train Church-service missionaries and volunteers to operate a self-reliance resource center.
3. Train and oversee other self-reliance specialists in the stake.
4. Order self-reliance materials as needed.
5. Train and assist bishops and ward councils as requested.
6. Help register members at [srs.lds.org/register](http://srs.lds.org/register).
7. Organize, monitor, support, and facilitate self-reliance groups. (Other members may be asked to facilitate groups as needed.)
8. Study and follow principles found online at [srs.lds.org/facilitator](http://srs.lds.org/facilitator).

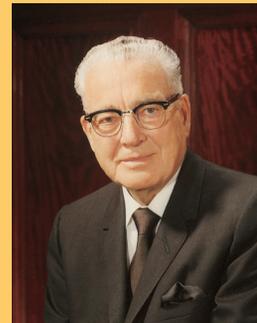
## Bishopric (or Branch Presidency)

1. Teach ward members the doctrines and principles of self-reliance (see back cover).
2. Direct self-reliance efforts through the ward council:
  - Identify, number, and invite all needy members to become self-reliant. The Adult Member Self-Reliance Tool at [leader.lds.org/self-reliance](http://leader.lds.org/self-reliance) may be helpful with this process.
  - Through quorum and auxiliary leaders, provide support, mentors, and assistance to those in need.
3. Invite those in need to complete the *My Path to Self-Reliance* booklet and join a self-reliance group.
4. Call ward self-reliance specialists to facilitate groups as needed.
5. Conduct PEF loan endorsement interviews (see [srs.lds.org/loans](http://srs.lds.org/loans)).
6. Review and act on ward self-reliance progress reports and PEF loan reports. Bishops should not be involved in PEF loan collections.
7. Seek additional assistance from the stake self-reliance committee as necessary.

## RESOURCES

### Self-Reliance Resource Centers

Stakes are encouraged to establish self-reliance resource centers in a Church building, often sharing a location with a family history center. Self-reliance resource centers are staffed by Church-service missionaries and volunteers and provide Internet access, mentoring, and other helpful resources to job seekers, the self-employed, and prospective students.



*"There is no new organization necessary to take care of the needs of this people. All that is necessary is to put the priesthood of God to work."*

**HAROLD B. LEE,**  
 "Admonitions for the Priesthood of God,"  
*Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 104



*"There is no problem in the family, ward, or stake that cannot be solved if we look for solutions in the Lord's way by counseling—really counseling—with one another."*

**M. RUSSELL BALLARD,**  
*Counseling with Our Councils*, rev. ed. (2012), 4

## Self-Reliance Groups

A self-reliance group meeting uses a council model and is different from most Church classes, lessons, and workshops. There are no teachers or trainers. Instead, group members counsel together, learn together, mentor each other, commit to act on what they are learning, and hold each other accountable for commitments. This group mentoring and counseling process, together with the workbooks and videos, creates a dynamic learning environment that strengthens each member in his or her progress toward a self-reliant life.

Stake or ward leaders call self-reliance specialists to organize and facilitate self-reliance groups. Group facilitators are not teachers; instead they help the group follow the self-reliance process as outlined in the manuals. Facilitators will need occasional access to the Internet and a way to show videos in group meetings. Leaders may form as many groups and call as many specialists as needed. Group members may be asked to facilitate if needed. Each group meets at least 12 times for two hours each session and consists of 8 to 14 members. Groups can meet in stake self-reliance resource centers, Church buildings, or other appropriate locations convenient for the members.

Local leaders determine which of the following groups are needed in their units.

1. *Starting and Growing My Business* groups help people start or improve their own business. These groups replace the Self-Employment Workshop.
2. *My Job Search* groups help people find new or better work. These groups replace the Career Workshop.
3. *Education for Better Work* groups help people identify an educational path to increase their income. These groups replace Planning for Success.

As part of each group, members also study 12 doctrinal topics on self-reliance from the booklet *My Foundation: Principles, Skills, Habits*.

## Church Employee Support and Preferred Resource Lists

The Church employs people in each area to assist the self-reliance effort. These include an area self-reliance manager (ASRM), a self-reliance operations manager, Self-Reliance Services managers, and other staff. These employees help coordinate the needs of stake self-reliance resource centers and provide stakes with resources and training. These resources may include mentors, lists of Preferred Programs and Schools, local job opportunities, and names of financing organizations for capital to start businesses.

## Self-Reliance Website

More information for leaders and members is available at [srs.lds.org](http://srs.lds.org).

### How can I measure the self-reliance progress of the members in my ward or stake?

*As you help your ward or stake progress toward self-reliance, consider periodically measuring the number of members who:*

1. *Are identified by bishops as not being self-reliant.*
2. *Have completed My Path.*
3. *Have completed My Foundation.*
4. *Have started a business, a good job, or an educational program.*

## Leader and Clerk Resources

The Adult Member Self-Reliance Tool can support bishops as they identify and focus on members who lack the necessities of life. This resource can be accessed at [leader.lds.org/self-reliance](http://leader.lds.org/self-reliance).

## My Path to Self-Reliance Devotionals

Stakes or wards hold regular *My Path to Self-Reliance* devotionals. This devotional starts members on the path to self-reliance by helping them understand the doctrinal importance of self-reliance, assess their current level of self-reliance, determine the skills and income needed to become temporally self-reliant, and select the self-reliance group that will help them reach that goal. The *My Path to Self-Reliance* booklet facilitates this process. The assessment can also be done individually, with a priesthood leader, with a self-reliance specialist, in a self-reliance resource center, or in other settings. Watch “How to Use *My Path*” at [srs.lds.org/videos](http://srs.lds.org/videos).

## Training Videos

Watch the following videos online at [srs.lds.org/videos](http://srs.lds.org/videos).

AUDIENCE	VIDEO TITLE	
<b>Leaders</b>	I Will Provide for My Saints	
	The Stake Self-Reliance Committee	
	The Stake Self-Reliance Committee Meeting	
	Stake Self-Reliance Specialists	
	Helping Ward Councils	
	How to Form Self-Reliance Groups	
	Laboring unto Self-Reliance	
	<i>My Foundation</i> videos (12)	
	<b>Facilitators</b>	My Purpose
		How to Facilitate a Group
How to: Prepare		
How to Lead: <i>My Foundation</i>		
How to Lead: Report		
How to Lead: Learn		
How to Lead: Ponder		
How to Lead: Commit		
How to: Manage Meetings		
“Go and Do” Learning		

## Feedback Welcome

Please submit your ideas, feedback, suggestions, and experiences at [SRSfeedback@ldschurch.org](mailto:SRSfeedback@ldschurch.org) or [srs.lds.org/feedback](http://srs.lds.org/feedback).

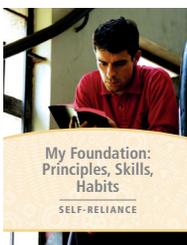
## Group Materials

Materials, videos, and training are available on the Gospel Library mobile application and online at srs.lds.org. Materials can also be ordered from Church distribution centers.



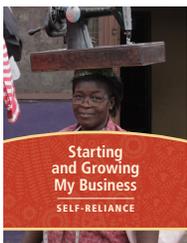
### *My Path to Self-Reliance*

All participants begin with this booklet to determine their current level of self-reliance and decide which group will help them become self-reliant. Groups include self-employment, job search, and education.



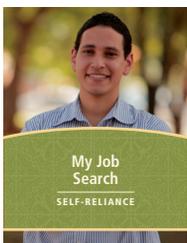
### *My Foundation: Principles, Skills, Habits*

Members of all three groups use this booklet each meeting to discuss and apply essential spiritual principles of self-reliance.



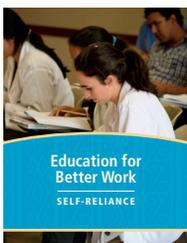
### *Starting and Growing My Business*

For those who have a business or want to start one. Group members practice record keeping, marketing, and cash management. They also test ways to increase their income through small business experiments.



### *My Job Search*

For those who have the skills to get a good job. Group members get a job by identifying opportunities, networking, presenting themselves powerfully, and preparing for interview questions. Participating in this group results in getting a job.



### *Education for Better Work*

For those who need education or training to get a good job or start a business. Group members identify work that will help them become self-reliant and then find a school or program (including Pathway) that leads to that work. Participating in this group results in a school plan and PEF loan (if needed).



Group members who complete the requirements in *My Foundation* and *Starting and Growing My Business* may be eligible to receive certificates from LDS Business College.

## DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES OF SELF-RELIANCE

### Doctrines

**1. The temporal and spiritual are one**

*Doctrine and Covenants 29:34; Alma 37:38-43*

**2. The Lord commands us to be self-reliant  
and has all power to help us**

*Doctrine and Covenants 104:15-16; 100:1; 1 Nephi 9:6;  
2 Nephi 27:21, 23; Mosiah 4:9; Matthew 28:18*

**3. Self-reliance is a principle of exaltation**

*Doctrine and Covenants 132:20*

### Principles

For more details on the following principles, refer to the self-reliance booklet *My Foundation: Principles, Skills, Habits*.

**1. Exercise faith in Jesus Christ**

*1 Nephi 9:6; Hebrews 11*

**2. Be obedient**

*Doctrine and Covenants 93:28; 130:20-21;  
Abraham 3:25; Hebrews 5:8-9*

**3. Act**

*2 Nephi 2:16, 26*

**4. Serve and be unified**

*Moses 7:18; Galatians 5:14*