



[A Pocket Guide to Coaching Small Groups](#)

Befriending Leaders and Helping Groups Produce Fruit

By Randall Neighbour

★★★★☆ (4 stars)

Buy this book if:

- *Want help building relationship with small group leaders you coach*
- *Want to learn to walk with your leaders outside of your meetings as well as in them*

One of the most common problems in developing a coaching system for small groups (especially for an existing small group system) is building relationships between the coach and the leaders he or she is coaching. This quick read, from a leading figure in the Cell Church movement, fills an important need in describing proven ways to get these crucial relationships off the ground and making them effective.

Because coaching is an influence relationship, for it to function effectively the small group leader must *want* to be coached. Without a strong bond, coaching simply doesn't work. Through extensive stories and illustrations, Randall tells you how to make the relationship between a small group leader and his or her coach flourish. The emphasis is on walking with leaders: calling them during the week to say, "Hi", taking them along with you when you are coaching, getting into their world. The book places a strong emphasis on the place of prayer; for instance, in learning to actually record those prayer requests, spend the time praying for them and then follow up to see what the answers are. Neighbour also talks extensively about developing new leaders informally, so that by the time you are ready to ask them to lead a group they are doing most of what a leader would do already. For churches that always seem to lack enough small group leaders, this is some very useful, practical information.

At 95 pages, this book is not an attempt to be a full-blown coaching how-to. Instead, it simply focuses in on the coaching relationship itself and how to build it. The best parts of the book are the stories and personal examples: Randall is clearly a daily practitioner of small group coaching and not just a theorist.

Like most coaching books from the small group and cell church world, this volume does not make a clear distinction between coaching and mentoring. However, most churches want their small group coaches to wear both mentoring and coaching hats, so that isn't a big obstacle. This book is meant to supplement other coaching guides that are already on the market. So learn your basic coaching skills from a how-to book like [Leadership Coaching](#); design your coaching system using [How to Be a Great Cell Group](#)



[Coach](#) or [Coaching Life Changing Small Group Leaders](#); but if your coaches aren't connecting with your leaders, or are having difficulty building trust (which is an all too common problem), Neighbour's *Pocket Guide* is a great place to start.

Summary

This book is an excellent addition to the small but growing set of available small group coaching materials. The book is inexpensive enough that it should be no problem to get a copy for every one of your leaders, and the problems addressed in it are so widespread in churches launching new coaching systems that you'd be well advised to do so.

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