



The Writing Guide

This is the guide for writing and editing FLEXTALK summary articles and discussion questions. Please consult this document before writing or editing FLEXTALK articles.

Formatting Articles

We have two article formats. One is a full article, and the other is a video highlight article. Each has its own purpose. The full article should be used when a video is longer than approximately four minutes in length or is detailed enough to merit elaboration. The video highlight article should be used when a video is shorter than approximately four minutes in length, is an interview or conversation, or is redundant without elaborating on new concepts (i.e. the video is full of examples but does not draw out explanations of main points). Please consult the sections below and see the sample posts for more ideas.

Full Article Format

Full articles should be about 450-650 words, not including discussion questions. Start with a 3-5 sentence introduction, framing the topic in a clear and compelling manner. The body of the article should be clearly separated into sections of 3-5 sentences each. Each of these sections should have a sub-heading that makes understanding the topic easier or more compelling. Include quotes, verses, or related topics as necessary. End the article with a 2-5 sentence summary or closing paragraph.

Full Article Sample: <http://flectalk.org/getting-5-point-clarity-on-parenting/>

Video Highlight Format

Video highlight articles should be about 250-500 words in length. Start with a 3-5 sentence introduction, framing the topic in a clear and compelling manner. Then include 4 to 6 highlights (2-3 sentences each), discussing the main themes of the video. End the article with a 2-5 sentence summary or closing paragraph, and include quotes, verses, or related topics as necessary.

Video Highlight Sample: <http://flectalk.org/how-to-spread-the-leadership-virus/>

Discussion Questions

Please include at least three discussion questions with your article, intended to empower great conversations among families, small groups, and individual mentoring relationships. Consider these tips:

- **Avoid questions with a “yes” or “no” answer.** The problem with these types of questions is that they don’t promote discussion. These questions are dead ends for the group leader. Often, a question can be reworded in order to make it more open ended. Instead of writing, “Have you ever experienced depression in your life?”, you could write, “Describe some times in your life when you experienced depression.”
- **Not all questions have to be questions.** It can be difficult to add variety to your questions. One way to get around this is to invite people to create lists, describe an emotion, or explain something from their own life. For example, you could say, “On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you with your life (10 being most happy and 1 being most unhappy). Explain.”
- **Look at the talking points for inspiration.** If you need help coming up with questions, look at the talking points in the lesson or re-watch the video. Is there an obvious question that flows from a talking point? Is there an obvious follow-up question that comes from the quote or verse that was mentioned?
- **Ask a few questions that anyone can answer.** These questions can be answered by anyone, even if they didn’t understand the lesson. For example, if you are talking about pride, a simple question could be, “Who is the most humble person you know? How can you tell that they are humble?”
- **Keep your questions rooted in the lesson.** Make sure that your questions flow naturally from the lesson. Don’t bring in new ideas or concepts that weren’t covered in the video.
- **Keep your questions interesting.** No one wants to answer questions that force them to regurgitate the lesson they have just heard. We want people to understand the truth that they have learned, and apply it to everyday life. It’s OK to have a few questions that reinforce comprehension, but keep it interesting. And focus on application.
- **Link to other resources in your questions.** Some questions will be challenging. In order to help leaders and groups to successfully answer your questions, link to other FLEXTALK resources that may help them answer the question.