



GATHERING GUIDE

PART 1: *Be an Active Learner*

The success of each PathwayConnect gathering depends on your personal commitment to actively seek learning. What insights do you gain from the following quote by Elder David A. Bednar about your active participation at weekly gatherings?

“As sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, we have been blessed with the gift of moral agency, the capacity for independent action and choice. Endowed with agency, you and I are agents, and we primarily are to act and not just be acted upon.”

“And Nothing Shall Offend Them,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2006, 90

As you use your agency to learn and choose good, you also invite the Holy Ghost into the process. Elder Bednar said, “The Holy Ghost reveals and witnesses the truth of all things and brings all things to our remembrance (see John 14:26, 16:13; Moroni 10:5; D&C 39:6). The Holy Ghost is the teacher who kindles within us an abiding love of and for learning” (“Learning to Love Learning,” [BYU Spring Commencement, Apr. 24, 2008], speeches.byu.edu). Choosing to include the Holy Ghost magnifies your ability to be an active learner at the gathering.



Three Steps to Being an Active Learner at the Gathering

An active learner chooses to seek learning rather than expecting to learn without any effort on his or her part. The following three steps help define what an active learner looks like at a PathwayConnect gathering.

- 1 **BE PREPARED.** The gathering makes more sense if you engage with the course in a significant way before the gathering. In doing so, you access what you already know. This will prepare you to make connections at the gathering for yourself and others.
- 2 **MAKE CONNECTIONS.** What you learn at the gathering will be more meaningful to you if you connect it to:
 - a. Your own life experiences,
 - b. Other knowledge you've previously gained,
 - c. And the world around you.
- 3 **COMMUNICATE.** Whether you write it, say it to a small group, or share it with the whole gathering group, you will have a better learning experience if you communicate what you are thinking. Communicating not only benefits you, but it also helps your peers make connections.



PART 2: *Be an Effective Lead Student*

In the gathering, the lead student is to model and facilitate the role of an active learner (see Part 1). He or she should dress professionally. The lead student is not a teacher who lectures or teaches a lesson. Rather, he or she facilitates the gathering so that other learners can actively participate. As such, the lead student is simply one of the learners who has been chosen to move the group through the provided gathering agenda.

Three Steps to Being an Effective Lead Student

Lead students should seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost when preparing to facilitate a gathering. Following the Spirit, the lead student can facilitate a successful gathering by doing the following:

- 1 FOLLOW THE GATHERING AGENDA.** Each gathering agenda has been carefully prepared to support the course, so lead students should follow it closely. This includes doing the activities as specified, doing them in the order given, and staying within the activity duration times. These procedures ensure a consistent gathering experience from week to week. It also allows the lead student to focus on helping his or her peers actively participate as active learners.
- 2 ASK FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS.** When a lead student asks follow-up questions, it helps other students make connections about what they are learning and why it is important. This might include asking follow-up questions that go beyond the surface, giving the learner time to think, restating the learner’s insight, and validating his or her participation. Some examples of effective follow-up questions might include “Why do you think that is?” or “How does that affect you?”
- 3 INVOLVE EVERYONE.** There are extroverted learners, or those who like to talk and engage with others, and introverted learners, or those who don’t feel comfortable speaking up. Other learners may be a mix of both. Gathering agendas ask students to engage in activities that encourage both extroverted and introverted responses, such as sharing insights out loud or writing them down. The lead student, whose goal is to model and encourage active learning, should find ways to involve all learners so everyone is inspired to prepare, make connections, and communicate what they are learning.

Don't forget to counsel with your service missionaries. They can be a great help as you prepare to facilitate a gathering.



PART 3: Gathering Procedures

The lead student facilitates most of the weekly gathering. Missionaries will open the class, select hymns and students to give prayers, and then turn the time over to the lead student.

Missionary Responsibilities

Service missionaries help lead students have the best experience possible. During the gathering, both the missionaries and next week’s lead student (also referred to as the “observing student”) fill out an observation and feedback sheet. The observing student’s role is to watch and learn from the lead student in order to prepare to assume the role of lead student the following week.

Lead Student Training

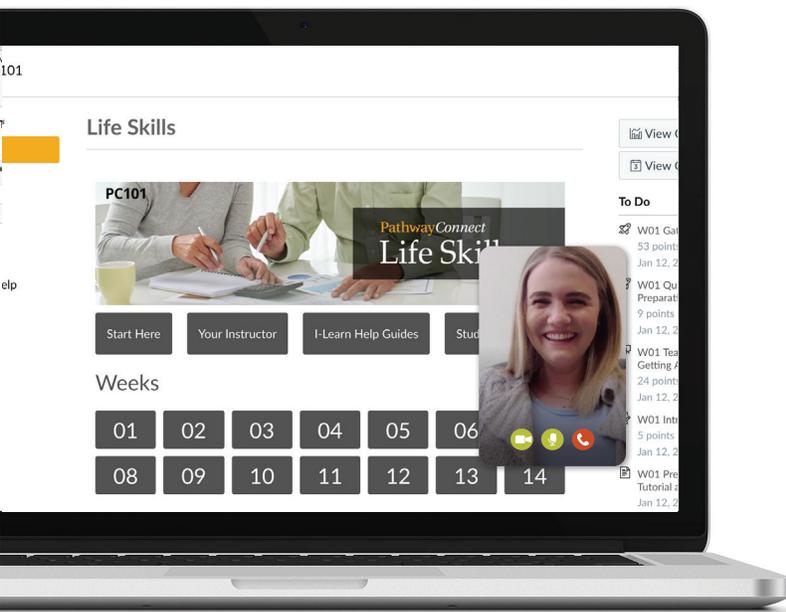
Immediately following the gathering, the lead student meets with the missionaries and the observing student to receive feedback. Missionaries will also spend a few minutes training the next week’s lead student. The missionaries instruct the student regarding his or her responsibilities as outlined in Part 2 above.

PART 4: Best Practices for Virtual Gatherings

If you gather virtually, meaning your gatherings are held using Zoom, please follow the guidelines below. Remember that, to participate in PathwayConnect, you need to have a computer with a camera and microphone with access to regular high-speed Internet.

Learn the System

- 1 PRACTICE:** Learn how to use the major features of Zoom, including how to share your screen. Practice them with a family member or friend. This will help you participate fully in each gathering. Missionaries will be trained to set up breakout rooms. They will also reach out to students to train them on Zoom before the semester starts.
- 2 CONNECT:** Learn how to connect to Zoom so you can arrive on time. Initially, you may need assistance with the software and with your camera and microphone. Please find someone you can consult for technical assistance.
- 3 RE-CONNECT:** If your connection unexpectedly closes and you cannot restore it, be prepared to contact your missionary in another way so he or she can assist you. If missionaries do not show up the gathering due to connection issues, please continue the gathering until the missionaries can connect.



Be Professional

- 4 BE ON TIME:** Being late to a virtual meeting is the same as being late to a physical meeting. Please be on time.
- 5 BE ATTENTIVE:** Avoid doing other activities during a gathering. This includes working, cooking, exercising, or communicating with others outside the gathering. Imagine yourself physically in the same room as everyone else. What would you do to be attentive? What would you not do? Respect and help the lead student by being attentive to what is on the screen.
- 6 BE SEEN:** Have your camera on at all times. If you have to leave temporarily for some reason, keep your camera on so others know you are not there and can watch for your return. However, if your Internet is being slow and you have to choose between a poor connection and no video, turn off your video.
- 7 DRESS WELL:** Wear what you would wear if you were going to an institute class.

Strive for Audio and Video Quality

- 8 STABILIZE:** If you're using a device other than a laptop, please secure it so it does not move around during the gathering.
- 9 USE A HEADSET:** If possible, use a headset or earbuds with a microphone. This can produce much better audio that can be heard more clearly by others.
- 10 REDUCE NOISE:** Reduce or eliminate background sounds when you participate in a gathering. Turn off or mute the microphone unless you need to speak.
- 11 CONTROL BACKLIGHTING:** Make sure the group can clearly see your face. If a strong source of light is behind you, you will appear in shadow.

