

Session Two: Covenant

Overview:

The goal of Session Two is to develop a covenant that will guide the way the leaders in your Incubator relate to one another. The last session emphasized the importance of creating an environment in which spiritual leaders and ideas are born, nurtured, and developed. The covenant that you create as an Incubator will give you the ground rules for working together and establish the way you will support each other during the duration of your Incubator.

By the time you finish this session you will have written your covenant. During Session Three, you will review your covenant and will ask people to sign it as a way to affirm what you agreed upon.

Session Setup:

- One guidebook for each person
- Nametags or name cards you can put in front of each person
- DVD player hooked up to a TV or LCD projector with screen
- Flip chart with paper and markers or a large white board or chalkboard to take notes for everyone to see.
- Comfortable room with tables and chairs setup in an oval or u-shape so you can see each other
- Water and other refreshments
- As people enter have music from the DVD playing. On the bottom of the opening screen you will see Music Menu. Play *When we are Living* and *Pues Si Vivimos* (original song in Spanish) and other songs of your choice in the background.

L¹:Love: Incubate Your Heart & Formation Que

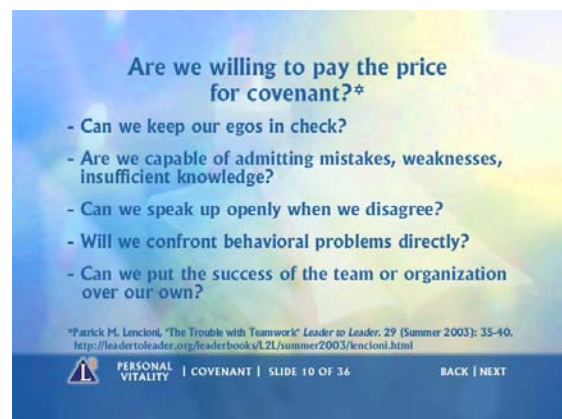
Use slide 2 to show the group where they are in the process. Use slide 4 to remind people of the expectations to:

1. Form a Covenant with your Incubator
2. Become a Team Leader
3. To develop an I-MAP



Principle: Covenant is a theme that runs through the whole Biblical narrative. More than an agreement, a covenant is a sacred trust between individuals and between people and the Creator. In order to establish a supportive and nurturing environment, a covenant needs to be formed to establish a foundation on which relationships can grow.

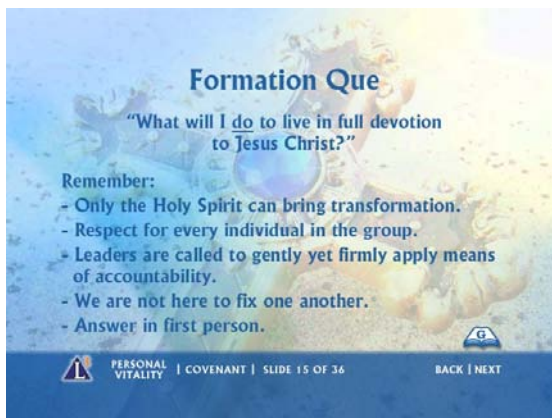
Facilitate: Scroll through slides 5 to 7 as you talk about the meaning of covenant. Use slide 8 to pose the question, "What covenant metaphors do you find in scripture?" On your writing surface, generate a list as people respond to the question. Keep this to about 7 minutes, as you will have many opportunities for people to share in this session. After you generate your list, show slide 8 to see how it matches your list.



Principle: Lencioni in his book *"The Trouble with Teamwork"* presents an insightful list of questions about way we relate to fellow team members. This list challenges us to take our covenant relationships seriously. Honesty is dependent on trust.

Facilitate: After reading this list, go to slide 11 for the reflection question. Divide the Incubator into groups of four and ask the groups this question: "What are your personal experiences of covenant?" Make sure you finish after twenty minutes.

After the reflection time, ask the participants to join together in “A covenant prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition.” Conclude the Incubator Your Heart time by singing, “When we are Living.” You may do this in either English or Spanish.



Principle: The Formation Que (question) is a covenantal question that all L³ Incubator participants agree to answer and be held accountable to each time the Incubator meets. The question each person is asked to respond to is, “What I will do to live in full devotion to Jesus Christ?”

In many ways this is the most fruitful time that you will spend during your Incubator. It’s exciting to see people challenge themselves and grow in spiritual disciplines, and in relationships with others and with God. Leaders in Incubators (remember everyone in your Incubator is a leader!) are invited to ask the rest of the group to hold them accountable to what they request. Here are some examples of things people might say:

- I need to pray every morning. Please hold me accountable to praying 15 minutes every morning before I go to work.
- I haven’t been spending enough time with my son. Please hold me accountable for spending one evening a week with him doing something fun.
- I have not been spending enough time in sermon preparation. I always let other things take my time away from this. I need to spend all day on Tuesdays in sermon preparation and prayer.
- I have let myself go. I need to lose some weight and exercise. Please hold me accountable for walking for one hour four times a week.

Your L³ Guidebook has a place to write each person’s name and his or her request. If you have a covenant to pray for each other, this is a quick way for people to keep track of the prayer requests of the group. Encourage leaders in the group to write down each request pray concerning them before the next session.

At your next session you will start by reviewing what people said the last time. As the facilitator, make sure you take good notes. After they report on their progress they can take it off the list or add something else. For example, “Last time I talked about praying 15 minutes a day before going to work. It’s going well. I want to try 20 minutes.” Or, “My prayer time is not going well, I will try it again.”

Share: As this is the first time, start out by sharing the kinds of requests people may make. Share what you want to focus on and then ask another person to share.

Facilitate: You have ninety minutes for this time. As people get used to doing this it is easy to lose track of time. If you have twelve people in your group, each person only has seven-and-a-half minutes to share. There will be times when someone needs more time. Your job will be to keep things moving and allow everyone time to share.

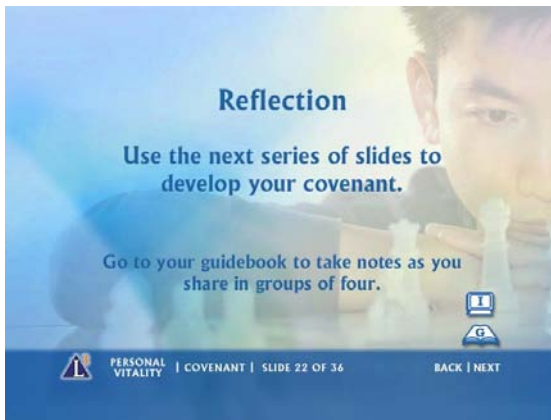
If you are meeting once a month for an eight hour session, you can expand this time to two hours.

Before starting the process, go over the statements on the slides to establish the ground rules for the Formation Que. As people share, help them follow the guidelines. There will be people who will want to offer advice and try to fix a problem; remind them that the goal is not to fix it but to allow room for God to influence the situation.

L²: Learn: Reflection & Key Concept

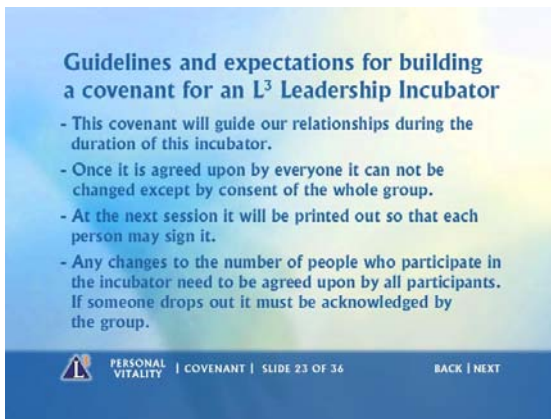
Working together, your Incubator will now turn to the task of writing a covenant. This section is broken down as follows:

1. Quotes about team (slides 17–21)
2. Intro to building the covenant (includes Reflection side (slides 22–23)
3. Covenant building process (slides 24–34)



Principle: Covenant building is a group process. A covenant creates the ground rules for the way you live together in community.

Facilitate: Start with slide 16 (L²: Learn) and scroll through the quotes as you begin to talk about creating a community of fellow believers. When you come to slide 22 (Reflection) refer people to the guidebook as you begin start the process of creating your covenant.



Principle: The building of a covenant is not to be taken lightly. Many people have not thought about the importance of making a covenant, especially in a small group environment. Remind people that an Incubator is different than a small group Bible study or similar educational experience. An Incubator has high expectations for its purpose and the kind of relationship the Incubator forms with its members. The stronger the covenant you make with each other, the more effective the Incubator will be.

Facilitate: Go over the guidelines and expectations for building a covenant for an L³ Leadership Incubator.



Principle: The next series of slides walks you through a process for writing out a group covenant. You will first focus on Leadership, Teamwork, Non-negotiables, and Desired outcome.

Facilitate: Set up a white board or flip chart so you can list the group's responses to the following four questions. You may ask different people to take notes for the group on the white board or flip chart, or do it yourself. Your goal will be to have four lists of answers that the group can reflect upon as you write out the covenant.

For the first two questions, generate a general list of ideas.

1. What does a great leader look like? (slide 25)
2. What does a great team look like? (slide 26)

Questions 3 and 4 help you focus on the guidelines for your Incubator.

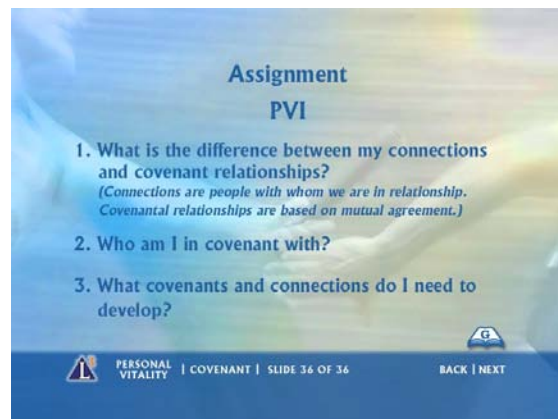
3. What are the non-negotiables of our relationships in this Incubator? (slide 27)
4. What is the desired outcome of these relationships in our Incubator? (slide 28)



Facilitate: Now that you have your four lists, you are ready to develop the covenant. Go through the next series of slides to help pinpoint specific agreements the group is making. Refer to the following areas as you write out the covenant. You will cover:

Participation	(slide 30)
Prayer for one another	(slide 31)
Incubator non-negotiables	(slide 32)
What happens if we breach the covenant?	(slide 33)

Now that you have written a first draft, work together to refine and finish the final draft. At the next session you will review it again and sign it as a way to show you are all in agreement (slide 34).



Principle: There are many people with whom we are connected. People at work, people in a community service group, and so on. While we may be in relationship to each other, it is not necessarily built on a covenant relationship.

A covenant relationship is much deeper because it is based on mutual agreement. Perhaps the clearest example of this is the marriage vow. When a couple gets married they make a covenant with each other to mutually support, encourage, and love one another.

Relationships can be taken to a deeper level when we enter into covenant with each other. For many people the Incubator will be the first experience of being in covenant with a group of people. For many this experience is life changing.

Facilitate: Go over the Assignment and remind participants that at the next session they will review their covenant. Encourage them to refer to the actions people listed in their Formation Que and to keep each other in prayer.