

Leadership Learning Circles

Purpose: To provide a space to reflect, ask questions, and seek advice from peers while applying the leadership framework to community development work.

Structure: 4-5 participants in a group that meets at least 1x/month for 6 months with an initial meeting to establish group norms, expectations, and group and individual learning goals. Between meetings, members work on their individual goals with ideas or learning that came from the meeting. After 6 months the group assesses their learning and agrees to continue for a set amount of time or disband.

Initial set-up meeting: Introduce Leadership Learning Circles, decide on duration, focus, and timing for meetings and schedule, decide on facilitation responsibilities, create ground rules, set individual learning goals.

Subsequent meetings (standardized): Introduction and settle in, each member gets a set amount of time to ask a question, share a story, or present a challenge to the group. They identify what they want from the time: resources, advice, or coaching. The group asks probing questions first and if desired, offers solutions or resources. Closing.

Principals of LLC's:

- Inquiry (Communication) and reflection (Self-Awareness) are critical in leadership development and need practice.
- Every participant plays a role in the group's success.
- No matter role or title, in the group we are all peers.
- Stories stay, learning goes, unless a different standard of confidentiality is set by the group.
- Work happens in between meetings to achieve goals.
- People learn best when directly applying learning to real-world situations

Example Agenda

Opening (Facilitator)

Settling in question: What are you setting down to be fully present today?

Review ground rules and member expectations and adjust if needed

Member Time Slots – each person gets the same agreed upon amount of time

1. Member provides brief update on goals, tells the group what they want from them in this time slot, then asks a question, presents a challenge, or tells a story.
2. Peers listen and provide the feedback asked for (question asking, advice, or resources)
3. If there is any time left, it is spent in quiet reflection.

Repeat for all members

Closing

Short time to reflect and set intended actions before next meeting

Tell members actions

Evaluation: Rank the meeting and say what you could have done in that meeting to improve it (if anything)

Questions for Initial Set Up Meeting

What ground rules do we need to work as a group?

What are our shared group values?

How many minutes will each member be given to share?

What adjustments do we want to make to the agenda so it works for us?

How often will the group meet?

How will the group meet (In person? Video Call?)

Will one person facilitate, or will it be shared?

What tools we will use? Where do the agendas live? Shared resources?

What are the initial learning goals for each member? What do I want to learn about leadership/framework/applying the framework

