

Why you should build your own 'mastermind' group

Time to take a break from event specific items on this vacation week. For this article, I borrow from a document drafted by David Teten and Kaushal B. Majmuder and appreciate their support in writing this article.

For those of you who have read "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill, you'll have heard of mastermind groups. Jo Condrell defines it as "a ...group (that) consists of people who work together in absolute harmony to achieve diverse goals. While these people work in harmony, they may be very different from each other. The common element is that each draws something from the others, and each contributes freely to the group. It is the focusing of each mind on a common issue that triggers thoughts not readily available to one mind. Those in the group draw upon their unique experiences and specialized knowledge to help each other. When many minds concentrate on a single point, the activity generates a power over and above the sum total of each of the individual minds"

With the right members, having a mastermind group is like having your own board of directors, an invaluable resource for your life and career. If set up correctly a mastermind group can help you:

- 1) accelerate your personal and career success;
- 2) catalyze and coach you in implementing your career and personal goals;
- 3) meet like minded people and provide yourself with an instant and valuable support community of peers;
- 4) give back to those who give to you

There are general guidelines on setting up the group (and Think and Grow Rich has further detail on how to do this) but the general structure includes the following:

- A. a two hour meeting once a month, usually a dinner during midweek;
- B. a maximum of ten preferably 6-8 members;
- C. facilitation of the meeting is rotated between members;
- D. diversity of members is important, different ages, professions, races, religion;
- E. a democratic process: everything about the group is open to scrutiny, discussion and modification by vote of majority of members in the group.

What makes a valuable Mastermind Group member? Well, an aspiring member should be:

- A. Nominated by existing member
- B. Live within commuting distance of group meeting location
- C. Has a compatible current level of career and professional achievement and aspirations
- D. Thoughtful and analytical

- E. Has the desire and inspiration to make this year, decade and life extraordinary.
Knows he/she is ultimately responsible for his/her own success
- F. Is an active listener

I find that most people act tactically not strategically, and I am continually looking to help others find ways of mapping out the course of their careers, if not their lives. Done properly, a Mastermind Group can provide invaluable support of your goals and aspirations. My advice, start thinking of who in your personal and business circles might be candidates for yours!

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