



OVERVIEW

In association with The Mentoring Company, TB+A is offering Mentoring Circles® to the furniture and supply industry. Mentoring Circles® groups, pioneered by The Mentoring Company™ in 1993, is an action learning model. The focus of Mentoring Circles is to strengthen performance, leverage best business practices and has been proven to increase profitability. The group identifies topics and goals, and then exchanges experiences, challenges, and opportunities using a proven process. Circles enhance productivity and have been proven to dramatically increase new business generation.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The Mentoring Circles structure consists of a catalyst mentor from within the client organization, a certified facilitator from the Mentoring Company and an average of 15 participants. The facilitator works with your organization or group to identify needs, applications, and the internal catalyst mentor(s). Mentoring Circles meet for two hours, usually every two weeks for 12-16 weeks. Participants bring current business challenges to receive mentoring from the catalyst mentor and the group. Groups can meet “virtually” to minimize travel. The facilitator works collaboratively with the catalyst mentor through the duration of the circle to ensure effectiveness, consistency and that goals and desired outcomes are achieved.

RESULTS

Mentoring Circles outshines traditional one on one mentoring. Group mentoring generates many different perspectives rather than a single point of view. Group mentoring shares the talent and expertise of all and de-emphasizes hierarchy. Group mentoring accelerates the learning and decision making process of individuals. Mentoring Circles increases people’s abilities to be responsive and bring about change.

ROI

-As of July 2009, a national and well known financial services corporation utilizing Mentoring Circles achieved a 360% increase in new business compared to a “control group” within the firm who was conducting business “as usual.”

-A national financial services corporation reported in 3rd quarter 2009, an increase in net new assets of \$16.4 million total from 14 MC participants over a “control group.”

-A Fortune 500 Engineering Company’s goal was in increase the company’s competitive advantage to win new contracts. After one month, a VP who participated in a MC received knowledge from the group and with that, was able to win an additional 22 contracts worth \$380,000 in new revenue. In total, the company projects another \$1,140,000 as a result of information exchanged in MC.

Increased revenues stated above were reported by client companies to MC and not calculated by The Mentoring Company. More information on these and other ROI stories are available upon request.

WHAT KINDS OF TOPICS ARE DISCUSSED?

Topics are developed to address current and specific needs of the group. The list of subjects are endless, but example topics of past groups include:

- How to be successful in these turbulent times
- How do I determine and enter new markets
- How do I increase my service offerings
- How can I become more visible in my market
- How to develop better strategic alliances
- How to effectively penetrate competitively held accounts

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

Participants can range from Dealer principals, senior dealer managers, manufacturer's reps, regional or district managers, manufacturer dealer groups or association members. Circles can be created from any of these groups and can be cross-organizational as well as cross-functional in relation to positions.

TESTIMONIALS

"This is a process unlike any I've ever experienced. This is one of the most worthwhile leadership development activities I've ever participated in."

Former VP Business Development Fortune 500 Company

"Compressed "years" of learning/experiences into a six month period."

Manager, Large Corporation

"Mentoring is a 'life line' to others who will not judge you in any way, particularly in a hierarchical way. This kind of relationship-building is particularly important in the work environment. Mentoring Circles enhance individual professional development and increase productivity, as well as create opportunities for positive systemic change."

Director

"Storytelling has been phenomenal; courage has taken on a new meaning."

Functional Manager, Large Corporation

"...I brought my challenge to the Mentoring Circle and asked for mentoring on how to approach my prospect... My Mentoring Circle gave me a number of product ideas. I tackled this hurdle head-on, developed a proposal for my prospect and sold her on this new government program that exactly met her needs. So instead of getting \$6-7 million, my new client gave me \$12.8 million!"

Manager, Large Financial Services Corporation

FREQUENT QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

This sounds too long range and too "soft" – I need hard results now.

Mentoring Circles focused on generating revenue for business development participants has quantifiable data demonstrating Mentoring Circles ability to outperform control groups by 200-300% or more.

Meeting twice a month for two hours each meeting will take too much time out of busy schedules

This is often an initial concern, but also one that is quickly dismissed once the process begins. We are all aware that in these hectic times, there are many inefficiencies as people rush to manage challenges. Our clients feel that MC is a valuable use of their time, especially when increased effectiveness is a result. In fact, one participant found her time in the MC so valuable that she flew home one day early from Singapore so as not to miss the meeting.

We already have a “mentoring” program in house where new sales people are assigned to a more experienced counterpart who helps them learn the business.

One to one mentoring is a valuable tool although many organizations report that a chemistry mismatch between mentees and mentors resulted in ineffective, unproductive and short lived programs. One on one mentoring also limits the amount of knowledge, solutions and ideas the mentee receives - within a group environment of peers, there are many perspectives and experiences shared and the mentee can better understand a challenge from multiple view points. With this additional information, the mentee has more opportunities to find the best solutions to his/her unique challenges.

We already do “best practices” quarterly with some other dealers.

Traditional “best practices” tend to “present” information and attendees are then left to figure out how to make it work in their own environment – the “what” is taught, but the “how” is often left to interpretation. Expertise from catalyst mentors along with shared successful outcomes of with peers provides timely, actionable ideas and solutions that increase revenues. Often new ideas are generated in addition to reviewing existing.

I have heard of other mentoring groups – how is this one different?

Yes, there are other mentoring programs. Mentoring Circles is a trademarked, copywrited process that has years of documented, quantitative and qualitative research data that demonstrates its success. In fact, some of The Mentoring Company’s current clients have initiated circles after failed in-house programs, some of which were one-on-one mentoring programs.

How do I know this will work?

Quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate the effectiveness of Mentoring Circles to strengthen performance contribution, leadership readiness and to increase profitability. This data is available upon request, and we would be pleased to review in detail results experienced with past and current clients.

Budgets are tight – we can’t spend money on training right now.

Everyone’s mindset is on cutting costs. Our focus with Mentoring Circles is on generating revenue. The results demonstrate the MC easily pays for itself with the ability to drive revenue and not be a cost line item. The per person hourly fee is very low, and the typical return on investment is quite high.

Do I have to travel every two weeks to meet with the group?

We have years of experience implementing MCs through teleconferencing vs. meeting in person with very little difference in the results. All of the MCs focused on business development have been with participants located across the country.

Our people are experienced – our only problem is the economy.

It's the economy that requires unprecedented creativity and innovation, and MC fosters this kind of new thinking. Discussing current and prospective customer needs in depth and applying smarter solutions in light of the economic situation is key to thriving.

I still don't understand what you are "teaching" in this process.

MC is an action learning process with an exchange of information that is geared to "real time" challenges. Participants request mentoring on their specific client and prospect issues and explore perspectives and experiences from multiple participants. Information is not taught – instead, existing information is exchanged through the MC process which is what makes this unique. Learning is company based and not consultant based.

I won't be comfortable letting my "guard" down in front of a group – whatever I share could come back to bite me.

Some people are cautious initially and trust is built and earned over time. Catalyst mentors put themselves on the line to support participants in achieving their objectives. Individuals acclimate at their own pace and choose what challenges to bring for mentoring. In the end, we find that many participants often develop lasting relationships that extend long after a circle has ended based upon the trust and value that is received from the process..

This is so different from anything we have ever done – I'm not sure it will fly with my group.

That is a fairly typical concern of our new clients. Since the learning is driven by the real time challenges of the participants, the gains are realized quickly and the uniqueness of the process is soon recognized for the value it provides. It is exactly this new process that makes circles successful. Without exception, every company who has done a circle has initiated more. And interestingly, within several organizations, participation in a Mentoring Circle is referred to as "your ticket to the top" (as quoted by a participant).

COSTS

The per person hourly fee is extremely low – often under \$100. We would like to learn more about your group, your challenges and your goals. We can then provide a specific and targeted proposal for your review. Please contact Trish Brock for more information: tbrock@trishbrockassociates.com 720.277.3035.