



Create Your Own Bliss Circle

A Bliss Circle is a made up of individuals who meet regularly to help each other brainstorm and problem-solve. You don't need to know the members personally to invite them to be on your team. They can be experts in solving problems, simply people like you or people you admire. For optimum participation, however, there should be mutual reciprocation among all members, so consider what your group has to offer when inviting new members to join.

Confidentiality is another key component. Agree not to disclose personal information. The key component to a working Bliss Circle is trust, so you may want to discuss the ways in which you will trust each other at your first meeting.

This model is designed to meet monthly, but you can adjust your schedule based on the group's interests and needs. For a monthly meeting, consider following this agenda:

1. Schedule your meetings for one-two hours, with 15 minutes allotted to each member.
2. Each member presents a challenge, interest or need to the group. The group then brainstorms ideas and possible resources for the team member until the 15-minute allotment is up.
3. Another member takes notes for the presenter. This allows the member with the challenge to focus on the brainstorming instead of trying to record all ideas.
4. The only rule is that when your turn comes, you are not allowed to criticize or discount the team's suggestions with comments like, "That won't work, I don't have the money," or "I've tried that before." Instead, ask for clarification on how to make a suggestion work or for ideas to find funding.
5. At the end of the meeting, each person selects a goal or action plan to complete prior to the next meeting. You may want to set a deadline to report outcomes via e-mail before your meeting for greater efficiency.
6. If a member does not take action or make some effort toward their goal or ideal, invite him/her to step down from the team until their schedule permits him/her to focus on their results. This prevents fewer members from slowing down the committed majority.

Most circles reach their optimum efficacy in about six to nine months, although some groups last longer by meeting less frequently. Your team's longevity depends on the outcomes you all want to reach; there is no right or wrong way to proceed, and you should intuitively be able to gauge when it is time to invite new members or to disband the group.

You'll find more ideas like Bliss Circles in the "Real Women Have Chipped Nails" and "Lessons of a Life Diva" programs by Allison Adams Blankenship. Allison gives your teams hands-on tools that are immediately usable. Call 800-644-7641 or visit www.PrecisionSpeaking.com to find out how to bring Allison and these types of programs to your organization.