



VIRTUAL COMMUNITY CONSULT CIRCLES

Purpose

Community Consult Circles are designed to provide each member of a small group the opportunity to ask a question about a challenge and/or opportunity they are currently facing. The role of the group members is to ask powerful questions that help the individual source potential strategies to implement.

Ground Rules

1. Be concise.
2. Monitor your air time.
3. What is shared here, stays here.
4. Be curious.

A Mini-Guide to Asking Powerful Questions

Community consults create the most potential for growth and learning when those in the circle use powerful questions (aka learner questions) to coach their peers through. Studies have shown that coaching increases an individual's self-efficacy and confidence to move forward with a decision. We encourage you to use powerful questions to help generate clarity, creativity and ideas with your peers. While peer sharing in the form of advice giving can be helpful. It is best when it is kept to a minimum

Powerful Questions

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are NOT statements in disguise• Do NOT already know the answer• Do NOT seek to reinforce your own ideas/opinions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek to get more participation• Assume there is more than one right answer• Attempt to discover common ground• Help make connections between perspectives |
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Tips for Framing Powerful Questions

Using these tips will help you to craft questions that allow for more open narrative and a dialogue with multiple perspectives. The goal of crafting questions in this manner is to minimize assumptions and to encourage constructive brainstorming that is led by the individual seeking input.

1. Avoid "Yes" and "No" questions.
2. Be careful with "Why" questions.
3. Start your question with "What" or "How."
4. Be mindful of tone of voice and non-verbal communication.
5. Don't assume you have the right/only answer.
6. Be sure the inquiry is genuine, not patronizing.

Examples:

- ✓ What if...?
- ✓ What else...?
- ✓ What else haven't we considered?
- ✓ What is the real challenge here for you?
- ✓ What do you really want?
- ✓ What other options might we have?
- ✓ If you're saying yes to this, what are you saying no to?
- ✓ What was most useful for you?

Note: These questions are sourced from other resources that might be helpful to participants and facilitators including the books [The Coaching Habit](#) by Michael Bungay Stanier and [Change Your Questions, Change Your Life](#) by Marilee Adams.