

WFD Peer Mentoring Circles Programs

What are Mentoring Circles?

Mentoring Circles are groups of employees who meet over a period of time in a structured format to provide networking, skill-building, and career support for one another.

Why Mentoring Circles?

The trend is clear: mentoring has moved away from one-on-one long-term relationships to diverse networks of advisors who support different aspects of one's career development. While one-on-one relationships are effective for many, networks are better suited to today's work environment and more easily implemented by organizations.

What are the Goals of the Program?

Mentoring Circles 1 and 2 are designed to provide cost-effective mentoring and developmental opportunities for employees in your organization. These programs may be especially helpful to address pipeline issues for women and minority employees who may be under-represented in middle and senior ranks of your organization. The programs:

- Provide coaching, skill-building, and networking opportunities;
- Create a peer network that helps employees build self-confidence as well as personal and professional effectiveness;
- Promote self-directed career management;
- Provide leadership opportunities for those who organize and guide the groups;
- Encourage a culture of mentoring in the organization.

Who are Mentoring Circles for?

WFD offers two Mentoring Circles Programs: one for early to mid-career women (Mentoring Circles 1) and one for mid-career to senior women and men who are on the cusp of leadership roles (Mentoring Circles 2). For both programs, we recommend that participants have at least one year of tenure with your organization.

How are Sessions Structured?

Both Mentoring Circles 1 and 2 use a two-hour format and groups meet over the course of about one year. Curriculum guides are provided for each session. Both programs come with a handbook for those organizing and guiding the groups that includes program descriptions and implementation details. Additionally, both programs include a virtual training session with a WFD consultant for program leaders.

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	PEER MENTORING CIRCLES 1	PEER MENTORING CIRCLES 2
GOALS	Mentoring, networking, skill development, career self-management, establishing a personal board of directors.	Mentoring, networking, skill development, career self-management, exposure to cross-functional management issues, positioning for senior leadership.
PARTICIPANTS	Early- to mid-career women (10-12 per group).	Mid-career to senior women and men (8-10 per group).
FREQUENCY	Every 4-6 weeks for one year (9 sessions).	Every 4 weeks for one year (12 sessions).
FACILITATION	1 or 2 leaders for each group; leaders are 1 or 2 levels above participants.	First 2 sessions facilitated by executive sponsor; rest self-directed by participants.
COORDINATION	D&I Office or HR.	D&I Office or HR.
COMMITMENT	Participants commit for duration of program. Pre-session assignments required. Create and consult with a personal board of directors.	Participants commit for duration of program. Pre-session assignments required.
CURRICULUM TOPICS	Scripted session guides provided. Delivered by leaders and participants.	Facilitation guides provided. Delivered by participants.
ORGANIZATION AWARENESS	Time provided for participants to share challenges and issues in their job.	Participants make formal presentation on a management challenge in their area.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	Career goal-setting conducted at first session; ongoing follow-up with personal board of directors.	Career goal-setting conducted at first session; final 3 sessions focus on career management.

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PEER MENTORING CIRCLES 1	PEER MENTORING CIRCLES 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opening session (ice breaker, skills assessment, goal-setting) ▪ Developing & Strengthening Influence Skills ▪ Communications Skills: Listening Styles ▪ Communications Skills: Presentation Techniques ▪ Managing for Success: Parts 1 and 2 ▪ Advocacy: Marketing Yourself and Your Company ▪ Capstone/Synthesis ▪ Graduation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foundation 1: Program Overview and Career Planning Process ▪ Foundation 2: Presentation Techniques ▪ Developing High Performing Teams ▪ Building Resilient Teams ▪ Influence Skills ▪ Managing Conflict ▪ Managing a Globally Dispersed Workforce ▪ Cultivating Innovation ▪ Strategic Thinking ▪ Enhancing Your Leadership Competencies ▪ Crafting and Promoting Your Personal Brand ▪ Networks and Networking