

## 3 Essentials For A Successful "Mastermind" Leadership Support Group

**Being a member of a mastermind is a powerful strategy used by high-achieving leaders to move ahead quickly on their goals.**

By Joelle K. Jay



Do you have a support group of leaders you connect with often, or, as I call them, a "mastermind"? Being a member of a mastermind is a powerful strategy used by high-achieving leaders to move ahead quickly on their goals.

A mastermind is a small group of dedicated peers who share and support each other through the challenges of leadership. It provides a mutually beneficial source of inspiration, information, and collaboration for all of the members. Your mastermind members listen to your questions, offer their advice, and help you find solutions. Then, when your problem is resolved, you turn and listen to theirs. This is the essence of a mastermind.

Far more than a typical network, a mastermind is your inner circle--your A team. Now that you know what a mastermind *is*, let's talk about what makes one *successful*.

**Confidentiality.** Like your meetings with your executive coach, or your mentor or sponsor, your meetings with your mastermind are confidential. This is a safe place, where you can be a "work in progress." All of the members of a mastermind are asked to commit to that confidentiality.

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Your job as a mastermind member is to trust the members of your group to keep that commitment, so that you can be open and forthcoming in the discussions and help create a valuable experience for everyone.

Preparation. A mastermind is not just a conversation. It's more like a coaching session. To prepare for a mastermind:

1. Review your vision, goals, and the concrete measurable results you're trying to achieve.
2. Refresh your action plan, and bring a version you can share with your group.
3. Bring questions you want to ask your group, and a clear sense of what you want to walk away with.
4. Do that, and you'll walk away from the meeting considerably closer to achieving your goals, because you've moved past some of the obstacles with the help of your mastermind.

Accountability. As long as you've prepared for your mastermind, you will leave the meeting with clear action steps. Your mastermind can hold you accountable to those action steps as added motivation to keep up the momentum. Be sure to report back on your progress the *next* time you meet!

A mastermind is very different from a networking group, a professional association, or a common interest group. While these types of groups serve important purposes for leaders, that's not the focus of a mastermind. Rather, a mastermind is a group so cohesive that the members operate as one, focusing exclusively on the needs of one member at a time, and then another, and then another. Many leaders thrive with the support of their masterminds. If you focus on building your mastermind with the elements of trust and confidentiality, preparation, and accountability, you will too.

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