

The Grassroots Leadership Revolution

Peer Group Considerations Worksheet

One of the things we've learned about organizing successful peer groups is that it's critical to know your objective and keep the group as peers which often means looking beyond the titles in your organization.

QUESTION	1. What's your focus? Knowing what your objective is will then help you recruit the right people for the program and set the right focus. You may have more than one objective, but try to isolate the PRIMARY objective and then the supporting objectives.
CONSIDERATIONS	What do you want to accomplish? Here are just a few examples of the types of goals that you may feel like group coaching can support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High potential development• Culture change• Merger/acquisition• Integration• Developing a coaching culture• Breaking down siloes• Encouraging innovation• Increasing collaboration• Supporting diversity
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QUESTION	2. Who you would like your peer group program to be for? A VP who is 58 is going to have a very different take on leadership learning than a VP who is 33. Think about stage of career, not title.
CONSIDERATIONS	Early Career What issues and challenges face professionals who are just beginning to carve out their career? Often, they are juggling young families, new marriages and high performance pressure at work. What else is on their radar? Mid-to-Late Career People who are in the later 40's and 50's are often thinking about how to maximize their final career years. What else would be relevant to this group?
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QUESTION	3. Are the group members committed? Not everyone is interested in developing themselves and one of the biggest death knells to a group coaching experience is with people who don't want to be there.
CONSIDERATIONS	How will you vet your prospective members to ensure they want to learn and develop? An interview? An application? What's the mix of qualities that are most desirable for the success of your group? Listening skills? A self-directed mentality? Candor? Make a list in the notes section.
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QUESTION	4. How can you reduce potential tension in your group? Think about how to minimize situations where peers who work together, and could ultimately be competing for the same job, find themselves shoulder to shoulder.
CONSIDERATIONS	As you assemble your peer group, ask yourself: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the peer group members a good representation of cross-functional teams?• Is there diversity within the group?• Are there any group dynamics that could lead to conflict or a lack of trust?
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QUESTION	5. If you're focusing on high potentials, what's your definition? Sometimes it's easy to confuse high potential and high performance. And, in peer group programs it's okay to have a mix of both but be aware of the balance.
CONSIDERATIONS	Jack Welch once made a comment about the difference between "A" players and others. He said, "A players just care more." How are you defining "high potential"? Do your peer group members exhibit a natural curiosity about the world that extends beyond their roles? High potentials tend to soak up group coaching experiences because they see how they can learn from someone who might be in an extremely different role and how to apply the learning into their work.
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QUESTION	6. What are your metrics? Once you know what you're trying to achieve and who you want to be involved, it's time to set some specific metrics for your leaders.
CONSIDERATIONS	Which metrics will you monitor? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speed to promotion• Reduction in reactive coaching spend• Ability to move talent across the organization• Increase leader confidence and coaching capability• Number of qualified candidates on your succession map• Retention of key talent• Increase leader commitment and engagement to the organization• Reduction in involuntary turnover• Something Else?
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QUESTION	7. How many group members and how often will you meet? The final component to establishing your group program is then to really decide on the size and frequency of your group sessions. The bigger the group size, the more time you will need to devote. The shorter the time frame, the smaller the group size needs to be.
CONSIDERATIONS	There are lots of different models out there. Often CEO groups of 15-20 will meet once a month for a half or full day session, while a Mastermind group of six people might meet for three hours once a month. At the Roundtable, we often facilitate groups of eight who meet every six weeks for three hours. Eight people offers a good diversity of thought and robust conversation, and six weeks provides you with time to integrate the learning back on the job and is also, in this time-starved world, not so frequent that it feels like a burden. What's the right size and frequency of your peer group?
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