

**IN THIS
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“Lofty words cannot construct an alliance or maintain it; only concrete deeds do that.”

~ John F. Kennedy

“If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.”

~ Isaac Newton

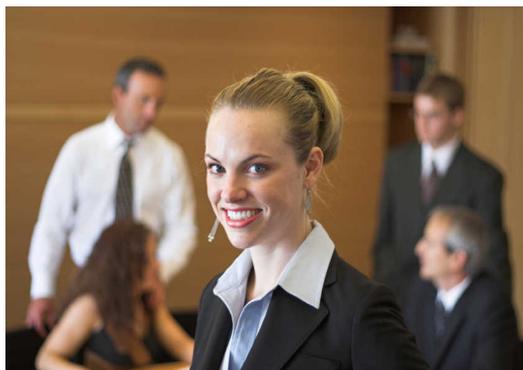
Multiply Your Success

I have recently given a number of presentations and workshops about effective goal setting, in which I briefly mentioned the power of Mastermind Groups in creating success. As a result, I have received a lot of questions about these groups, how they work, and how to create them. So, I thought this month's newsletter might provide an ideal opportunity to describe their effectiveness and also offer you the opportunity to become involved in a group.

A Mastermind Group, or Success Group, is simply a team of like-minded people who meet regularly to discuss issues they are facing in their lives or businesses. The group pools their collective wisdom to tackle these issues, brainstorm possible strategies, provide encouragement to each other, and hold each other accountable.

Typically, people who take part in Mastermind Groups can achieve more success than simply working by themselves because they are leveraging the knowledge, wisdom and experience of all the members of the group.

Have you heard the expression, “Two heads are better than one?” Well, Mastermind Groups take that concept and multiply the results by harnessing the brain power of 5-6 creative, motivated people who are all interested in one purpose: *creating success for themselves and their group members.*



success stories. In fact, it was through the weekly meetings of Benjamin Franklin's alliance (which he called *Junto*) that the concepts of the public library system and volunteer fire departments were developed.

So, how do you create your own Mastermind Group?

1) Focus the Group.

Start with a clear vision of what you hope to achieve within the group. Will your group be focussed on business, leadership, self-improvement, relationships, health, spirituality? Your focus will determine who you will want to join you.

2) Create Your Dream Team.

Have you ever thought, “I wish I could run some ideas by ___?” Here's your opportunity! Think of people who you admire, trust, and respect. Who are the people that first come to mind when you think of successful people in your particular focus area? These meetings can be held over the phone, so don't limit yourself by geography. Make a list of your dream team and ask them if they want to be involved (cont'd on p.2).

People have likely been forming success alliances or Mastermind Groups since the beginning of time. However, it was Napoleon Hill, in his classic book *Think and Grow Rich*, who coined the term “Mastermind”, drawing on Andrew Carnegie's formula for success.

Who else has captured the power of the Mastermind? Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, Charles Wrigley, and William Hertz are just a few of the earliest

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3) Establish Meeting Guidelines. These guidelines can be developed by the group as a whole to determine what is most effective for everyone involved. Items to consider include:

- frequency of meetings—weekly, bi-weekly, monthly?
- length of meetings?
- in-person vs teleconference meetings?
- who will take on the role of facilitator?
- how to decide whether or not others can join the group?

4) Come Prepared to Each Meeting. While these meetings may have a social atmosphere, the objective is to produce results. Encourage everyone to come to the meeting prepared with a clearly articulated focus for the week. Meetings will run much more effectively if each person has a clear idea of what he/she wants to accomplish during the allotted time.

5) Include Some Form of Accountability. As a group, decide how you would like to be held accountable for achieving the action items committed to at the previous meeting. This procedure may be as simple as an email sent the day before the meeting noting accomplishments for the week, or scheduling a few minutes at the beginning of each meeting to discuss what actions have been completed. Accountability is a key feature of these groups! Without some way to check on the status of commitments, priority action items can easily get put aside in our busy schedules.

Do you think a Mastermind Group could help you reach your goals more quickly? Join me in this month's special *Live Your Strengths* challenge.

Live Your Strengths Monthly Challenge

This month, I have a special challenge for those of you who are interested in starting or joining a Mastermind Group: *I am willing to act as a connector and resource for you as you seek out others to form your teams.*

Ideally, you will have a list of people that you are anxious to have as part of your Mastermind Group. However, if you are having trouble identifying people with whom you would like to form a group, or if you see this as an opportunity to expand your existing contacts and resources beyond your current circle of peers, I can be of assistance.

Over the coming weeks and months, I will act as a connector for people trying to find good matches for the Mastermind Groups they want to form. As people contact me, I will try to connect them with people who meet their specifications in terms of geographical location, focus of Mastermind Group, etc.

In addition, for those of you who know the people you want to approach to be on your team, I have a number of resources I am willing to share such as:

- Sample scripts or invitations to invite people to join your group.
- Information on free teleconferencing services that you can use (with your regular telephone) if you choose to conduct your groups over the phone.
- Other keys to success, such as suggestions for how to structure a meeting and how to get the most from your participation.

It is my hope that with this assistance, everyone who is ready to take part in a Mastermind Group will have access to both the people and resources to do so. ***If you are interested in getting more information or taking part in this challenge, please email me with "Connect for Success" in the subject line.***

***"No one ever became a success without the help of other people."
~ Hillary Clinton***

Do you have suggestions for upcoming newsletters or success stories you want to share?

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