



# Executive Circles

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This model of Executive Circles™ is based on the book: *One Circle™ – Tapping the Power of Those Who Know You Best* and *Mission Possible™ – Creating a Mission for Work and Life*, both by Maureen F. Fitzgerald, Phd (copyright).

### 1. What is an Executive Circle?

Executive Circles are one of the most powerful organizational structures available. They are a cost-effective way to retain talent, access expertise, connect people and build organizational capacity. Made up of about six individuals, these are designed to help each person set clear goals, work through difficulties and stay on track. Each Circle meets once a month for about three hours under the guidance of a certified Circle facilitator to share experiences, provide wise advice and support each other in addressing challenges. As a result, individuals solve day-to-day problems; achieve goals; develop transferable skills and continuously learn.

### 2. What is the purpose of an Executive Circle?

Executive Circles are primarily for purposes of continuous professional development, corporate mentoring and succession planning. The Circle process is designed to access the synergy of a group to help members creatively solve problems and reach their work-related, professional and personal goals. Circles can be used by almost anyone and specifically: executives wanting to become better leaders; managers wanting to mentor others; and professionals wanting to grow personally and professionally.

### 3. What are the benefits of Executive Circles?

Executive Circles are beneficial to individuals, groups and organizations. Individuals are able to create solutions; solve problems; gain wise advice; generate resources; develop skills; continuously learn; achieve goals; and obtain support and connection. Groups learn how to work better together, be more trusting and develop interpersonal and communications skills. Organizations develop social learning networks that access practical know-how and develop learning and mentoring communities.

### 4. How do Executive Circles work?

Executive Circles are structured discussion groups with clear ground rules and a set agenda. At every meeting each member presents a professional challenge and asks for specific feedback. These challenges are discussed and each person concludes their discussion by agreeing to take certain action before the next session. The group agrees to fundamental principles and practices and decides to follow a proven process that allows every person to contribute. This process is both structured and flexible enough to accommodate the ever-changing needs of the individuals in that group. Ongoing coaching and topical education is provided.

### 5. How long do Executive Circles last?

Circles are designed to last for several months and can last years.

### 6. Who will be in my Circle?

Circle members are matched on the basis of similar professional experiences and interests. Also considered are motivation to join and the purpose of the Circle. Ideally members should have similar goals and non-competing interests. Once a Circle is formed, new members may only join if the other members agree.



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### 7. What will I have to do in an Executive Circle?

You will need to show up for all meetings and agree to participate. You will also need to agree to the Executive Circle principles, practices and process.

### 8. Who runs an Executive Circle?

An Executive Circle is lead by a certified Circle facilitator. Each facilitator has extensive business experience, is skilled at facilitation and is committed to keeping the group meaningful for all participants. Although primarily responsible for maintaining the process and keeping the group on track, the facilitator provides ongoing tips, insights and strategies and can provide coaching if required.

### 9. How are Executive Circles different?

Unlike many other development programs Executive Circles are cost-effective and easy to set up. More importantly, they tap organizational know-how and individual practical knowledge that can not be readily found in a course or book.

These Circles are based on proven theories of peer-mentoring and adult learning that show that professionals learn best in supportive context-specific environments when they are able to immediately apply their learning. In Circles, each person decides what he or she wants to learn and requests the specific feedback desired at that particular point in time. There is no wasted time or irrelevant learning. Each person learns from the others' experiences, tests out that learning in the workplace and returns to the next session to report on how it worked. Executive Circles also capitalize on the strength of relationships of trust and each person's personal desire to solve their immediate problems.

### 10. What do I do to set up a Circle?

CenterPoint Inc. sets up and facilitates Executive Circles. We meet with you and select those individuals who would most benefit from a Circle and then invite them to an introductory session. Once set up, each group is given an orientation and decides on timing of the meetings. Here are some samples of the types of Circles we offer:

- **Executive Leader Circles** (men and women): These Circles are for corporate managers and executives who want to be more effective leaders and better decision makers.
- **Leading Women Circles:** These Circles are for women leaders inside organizations who want to achieve success, influence and balance while advancing their careers.
- **Opti-Mom Circles:** These Circles are for working moms who are navigating parenthood and elder care while trying to achieve life balance.

All programs are tailored for each organization to meet their specific needs. For more information please contact us at 604-228-8900 or at [info@CenterPointInc.com](mailto:info@CenterPointInc.com).