

CTS Training Module

Mastermind Fundamentals

Welcome to the **CTS Mastermind Fundamentals** Training Module. In this session, we'll be reviewing with you the basic purpose and structure of Mastermind Groups. Our intent with this training is to give all potential participants a general overview of the intent of these groups, and the inherent benefits of participating in one.

Let's begin with defining just what a "Mastermind" group is, and what its' primary function is. One of the early adopters of this concept was Napoleon Hill, author of the Personal Empowerment classic "Think and Grow Rich." One of the first such notable groups consisted of Henry Ford, Thomas Edison and Harvey Firestone. I came across an old photo of the three of them camping and sharing stories around a campfire. What I wouldn't give to have been there to listen in on those conversations. Can you imagine?

Hill's original name was a "Mastermind Alliance," and he defined it this way. *"No two minds ever come together without thereby creating a third, invisible intangible force, which may be likened to a third mind, the Master Mind."*

Mastermind groups offer a combination of brainstorming, education, peer accountability and support in a group setting to sharpen the members' business and personal skills. They help you and your mastermind group members achieve success. Participants challenge each other to set powerful goals, and more importantly, to accomplish them. The group requires commitment, confidentiality, willingness to both give and receive advice and ideas, and to support each other with total honesty, respect and compassion. Mastermind group members act as catalysts for growth, and they serve as both devil's advocates and supportive colleagues. This is the essence and value of Mastermind Groups.

It's very important at this stage to review what a Mastermind Group is **NOT**, as there always seems to be some confusion regarding this. So let's cover what some of the common misperceptions are regarding Mastermind Groups.

It's not a class. While groups can vote to bring in guest speakers and teachers occasionally, the main focus of a mastermind group is the brainstorming and accountability support among the group members.

It's not group coaching. Mastermind groups are about the **MEMBERS** sharing with each other, not about the Facilitator coaching individuals in a group setting. You get everyone's feedback, advice and support. Yes, if the Facilitator is an expert on the topic, he or she will certainly chime in when appropriate. But the conversations are always balanced between all members.

It's not a networking group. While you may share ideas and resources with each other, it is not the main focus of the meetings. However, through your connections with other members, you will always find plenty of mutually beneficial opportunities and professional networking.

In a mastermind group, the agenda belongs to the group and each person's participation and commitment is key. Your mastermind partners give you feedback, help you brainstorm new possibilities, and set up accountability structures that keep you focused and on track. You create a community of supportive colleagues who brainstorm together to move the members to new heights.

You'll gain tremendous insights which improve your personal and professional life. Your mastermind group is like having an objective board of directors, a success team, and a peer advisory group, all rolled into one.

Masterminding is all about being there for each other. It's about showing up and participating deeply for every single meeting. Because of the nature of a mastermind group, a significant commitment is required. Your mastermind group members rely upon your participation, and you want to know that they are going to be around to support you too.

Mastermind groups look for highly-motivated people who are both willing to ask for help and support, and are willing to give help and support to other people. Groups are looking for people who are ready to commit several hours per month to their own personal and professional growth.

And it's not just about showing up for meetings. True commitment means you will offer help — and ask for help — in a balanced way at every meeting. It's the give-and-take among members that makes a group valuable to everyone.

To get a sense of how these groups come together, let me share with you how my personal Mastermind Group came to be. This all began for me in the spring of 2003. I had been with a "Big Ticket" networking company for several years, and things were really beginning to come apart at the seams for them, and for me as well. I knew some big changes were in store for me. I had been studying the concept of Mastermind Groups for some time, and I knew this was something that could really help me to find a new direction.

I invited a close colleague of mine, who happened to be a dynamite marketer, to join me in getting this group started. Initially, we simply wanted to get together regularly at a pre-determined time and discuss strategies on how to improve our results. We met once a month for about 90 minutes on the telephone to strategize. We also kept in regular contact at least weekly via email and sometimes by phone to challenge each other, and we both became almost "addicted" to our regular sessions.

It wasn't long before we both realized we were onto something very special, and our goal was to attract a few more talented and inspiring people to share our vision. I knew from my years of studying these groups that smaller ones worked best, usually about 5 to 6 people. And we definitely needed to get some fresh "ideas" germinating, so we decided to invite a third member.

We both were acquainted with a Public Relationship expert who had been instrumental in the success of a major best-selling series of Personal Empowerment books, and that series went on to sell over 200 Million copies. We had both met her at a Seminar in Atlanta a few years before, and we kept in touch with her on a fairly regular basis. We had no clue how she would respond to this idea, but I made the call and she and I talked for about an hour. To my absolute delight she loved the concept and was excited to be a part of it, so I decided to have her meet my other Mastermind partner. We all did a 3-way call together and she was "IN." This was a major step forward for the group, since we were now much more than a couple of

buddies getting together on the phone once a month. We now had the makings of a real Mastermind Group.

Bringing in that 3rd person into the fold added incredible value to the group. She is a remarkably insightful and bright individual, and is “light years” ahead of many of the entrepreneurs that I had previously hung out with. She’s a never-ending source of innovative marketing strategies, and she’s undoubtedly the most determined person I’ve ever met. And like the two of us, she’s totally committed to her continued improvement, and she’s constantly working at that. It was literally a “marriage made in heaven” for all of us.

It was the brainstorming sessions of our group and my sharing of my goals and ambitions with them that led to me making the leap to CTS in April of 2004. That was a **HUGE** decision for me at the time, but boy did it sure turn out to be the right one. But I vividly recall the lengthy discussions we had together about my options, and their insightful input and unwavering support was critical to me just at a time when I needed it most. And it was the best decision I’ve ever made.

Over the next 4 years we selectively added two more members to our group. One owns an Advertising Agency, and the other is an unbelievably successful Network Marketer. They both fit seamlessly into this group, and that’s precisely where we stand today, with the same 5 members. We still meet once a month by phone for 2 hours, and we all get together personally once each year for a “Mastermind Weekend.” No families involved, just the 5 of us. We all arrange our schedules so that we never miss that personal growth time together.

OK, let’s just do a short review of what we’ve talked about here:

- Mastermind Groups are simply a small collection of committed and like-minded individuals meeting on a regular basis to brainstorm ideas to help each other achieve more.
- Your mastermind partners give you feedback, help you brainstorm new possibilities, and set up accountability structures that keep you focused and on track.

- Mastermind groups look for highly-motivated people who are both willing to ask for help and support, and are willing to give help and support to other people.
- Everyone in the group is totally committed to benefit the entire group, and egos are “left at the door.”

Please note that CTS will not be monitoring any group, and will not resolve any conflicts that arise in any group. That’s something that you’ll need to resolve within the group itself. Our Support team will monitor posts to our message board to ensure nothing inappropriate is being posted, but that’s the extent of our involvement.

One final thing, as this question has come up several times. This is a CTS resource just like all the other resources that CTS provides for you. Accordingly, this is **ONLY** available to CTS members in good standing. At no time are any non-CTS members allowed to participate in any group under any circumstances. We trust this clarifies that situation for everyone.

Thanks for joining us on this “*Mastermind Fundamentals*” Training Module. Make sure you review the next module in this series, “*Joining A Mastermind Group.*”
Bye for now.