

Think

WITH JUDE

Peer Mentoring Group Facilitator Guide

A note from Jude

Peer mentoring groups are small and action oriented. Led by a skilled facilitator, these small groups of ideally 6 people from diverse backgrounds collectively work on a shared challenge over 3-6 months. They are a challenging, supportive and cost effective way for organisations to help their people develop personally and professionally.

This guide outlines a simple structure that anyone can adopt. It is just a guide, so please feel free to adapt it to your needs, experiment with different approaches and most importantly get the peer group members involved in the design.

As I am passionate about helping women live their purpose I have written this guide with career advancement in mind, and the great thing about peer group mentoring is that it lends itself to almost any challenge, such as:

- Business development strategies,
- Leading a team and
- Growing your business

... to name just a few.

If you have any questions about peer mentoring and how to implement it then please get in touch. And please share this guide with people in your network, women need more advantages to level the playing field and peer mentoring groups are a fantastic way to do that.

Warm regards

Jude Sclater

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The facilitator

The skill of the facilitator is very important in a peer mentoring group, more important than their expertise on the topic being discussed. Their role is to:

- Draw on the collective knowledge of the members so that they are creating solutions together.
- Help keep the group on track ensuring that conversations are pushing into new thinking and action and not just covering what we already know.
- Helping group members to build their self awareness by consciously reflecting on what they are learning and the implications of that.
- Support the group to become self sufficient.

It is possible for the group to self managing by rotating the facilitator role in each session. The facilitator for each session should be agreed ahead of time and no one should be facilitating if it is their turn in the fish bowl.

Setup

Group Size

- 5-6 people is optimum to ensure enough variety of experience in the room and time for everyone to be heard.
- Aim for diversity of background, career stage and experience.

Frequency

- Fortnightly or monthly works best to ensure the cohort builds a strong support network.
- Encourage the group to form a WhatsApp group to share stories and get help between sessions.

Duration

- Two hours for the first session and then 90 minutes for each subsequent session.
- Increase each session by half an hour if you have 7-8 members – additional timings are indicated in the guide.

Materials

- Coloured pens, post its, flipchart or A3 paper and action sheets.
- Encourage all participants to bring a notebook that they will use throughout.

Session 1

| Mins | Activity, colourful if po | Preparation / Notes |
|------|--|---|
| 20 | <p>Introduction</p> <p>Members introduce themselves by saying their name, where they are from and answering a question aimed at creating connection within the group.</p> | <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favourite food • Last place you went on holiday • Favourite cartoon <p>Add 3 mins for each extra member</p> |
| 15 | <p>Contracting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put up the 3 flipcharts (see right) and give the group 2-3 minutes to individually to put answers on post it notes. One idea per post it. 2. Ask members to put up answers to the first question on the flipchart, talk through the points and group any that are similar. Get agreement that if we achieve all these things this group will be a success. This is a good chance to set clear expectations of what this group can achieve. 3. Continue with next two questions. 4. Discuss how the members can create a supportive and challenging environment and get agreement on this. <p>Keep the flipcharts to bring out at each session to remind group members what they agreed.</p> | <p>Post it notes and marker pens the more colour the better.</p> <p>Before the session prepare 3 flipcharts with the following titles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This mentoring group will be a success for me if.... • What I need from this group is..... • What I can offer the group is.... |
| 70 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask each member to draw their ideal career, for those struggling to draw suggest a mind map (see page 9 for example) 2. Each member of the group has 5 minutes to talk through their biggest career challenge uninterrupted. 3. The group has 5 minutes to share their observations, thoughts and ask questions (see page 11 for guidance on asking great questions) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree with the members that you will cut in if the conversation does not take the person into new thinking. • Add 10 mins for each extra member |

Session 1

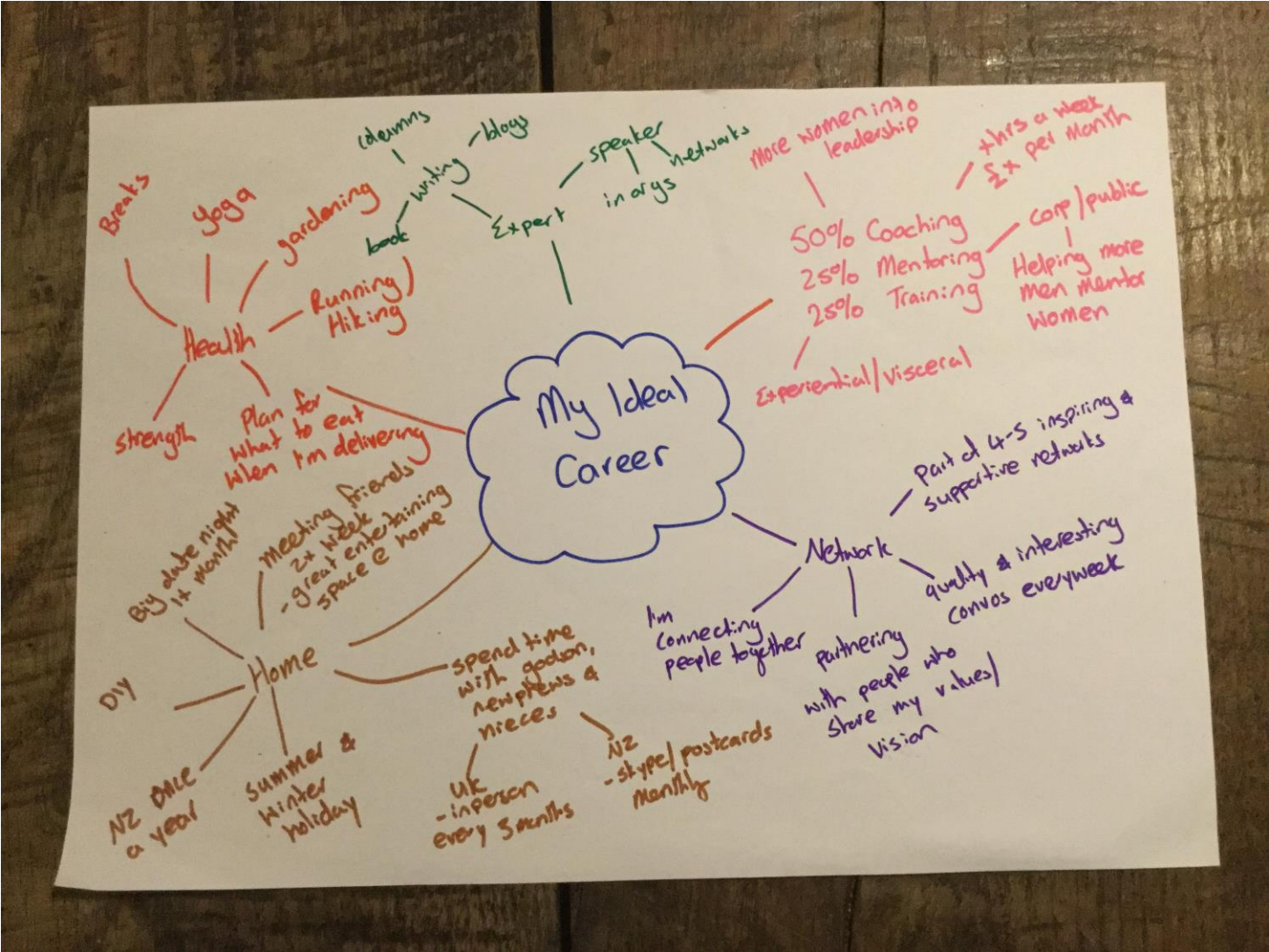
| Mins | Activity | Preparation / Notes |
|------|--|---|
| 10 | Actions and check ins 1. Explain that at the end of each session members will pair up and commit to working on two actions until the next session. They should also set up a time to check in with each other to check on progress. 2. Hand out sheets and give members time to set actions | Print an action sheet for each person – a template is on page 10. |
| 5 | Appreciations Each member including the facilitator shares one thing they have appreciated about being part of the group. | Add 2 mins for each extra member |
| | Close | |

Sessions 2-5

| Mins | Activity | Preparation / Notes |
|------|---|---|
| 10 | <p>Welcome Ask each member to share a rose (success) and thorn (challenge) since the last time we met.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put up the summaries from the contracting. Add 2 mins for each extra member |
| 70 | <p>Fish bowl technique</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Member talks for 5 minutes about the challenge they are facing in their career. The rest of the group has 5 minutes to ask clarifying questions to get more information– at this stage ask members not to give advice, share observations or ask ‘have you tried/thought about...’ questions. (see page 11 for guidance on asking great questions) The member moves outside the circle (or fish bowl) and listens to the group discuss for 10 minutes what they have heard and what ideas they have to help the member overcome their challenge. The member re-joins the circle and has 2 minutes to share what resonated for them and ask their own questions of the group. <p>Repeat with two more members 22 minutes per round</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This works best is everyone is sitting in a closed circle. In each session 3 members will get the chance to deep dive into the challenges they are facing. Each member will get two opportunities to do this over sessions 2-5. The time is tight so ensure you contract with the group about cutting in to ensure the conversation stays on track and to time. |
| 5 | <p>Actions and check ins Encourage members to pair up with someone new each time.</p> | Print action sheets (page 10) |
| 5 | <p>Appreciations Go round the circle and share what you appreciate about being part of the group</p> | Add 2 mins for each extra member |
| | Close | Remind members to bring their career map from the first session with them next time. |

Session 6

| Mins | Activity | Preparation |
|------|--|--|
| 6 | <p>Welcome Ask each member to share a rose (success) and thorn (challenge) since the last time we met.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put up the summaries from the contracting. Add 2 mins for each extra member |
| 70 | <p>Myth Busters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ask each member to pull out their ideal career map from session 1 and add to it what has changed since their first peer mentoring session. Put the posters up on the wall. Ask members to write what is still blocking them on separate post it notes and put them up on their career map. 10 minutes. These blockers are the myths our minds make up to stop us. Get everyone up and stand around one of the career maps. The member will share what has changed for them since the first session and what blockers they still have. The rest of the group comes up with suggestions for how to bust these myths. Write the myth buster on a postit note and place it over the blocker. 10 minutes per member. Repeat for all other members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 10 mins for each extra member |
| 9 | <p>Ongoing support Discussion of how members will support each other now formal mentoring sessions have ended</p> | |
| 5 | <p>Appreciations Go round the circle and share what you appreciate about being part of the group</p> | Add 2 mins for each extra member |
| | Close | |



You

Your Buddy

Action 1:

Action 1:

Date:

Date:

Action 2:

Action 2:

Date:

Date:

Agreed check in date:

Agreed check in date:

Contact Details:

Tips on asking great questions

The ability to ask great questions that help others access new and fresh thinking is a key reason why peer mentor groups are so successful.

The best questions:

- Often start with “What...? How...? or Tell me...”
- Are simple and short without waffle and endless examples
- Focus on the present and future and not the past
- Focus on solutions and not problems
- Are generous and in the service of the member to help them find their own solutions, not what you think they should do
- Are not suggestions disguised as questions, ‘qu-gestions’, for example “don’t you think that...?”, “would it be a good idea if...?”, “how about doing...?”
- Help the member reflect on what they have learnt and what they will do differently now

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Get in touch

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