



SUCCESS RULE #29 How to Form a Mastermind Alliance



In previous rules I discussed the need to be self-aware of the seeds you sow - your goals, dreams, vision, New Year resolutions, etc. - and what it is you think about. To help, it's important to have many different sources that continue to remind and reinforce those thoughts and hence your success. In Tool Number 28 I spoke about creating your own Vision/Dream Board with a picture and a link to examples. If you are looking for a way to take your thinking to the next level, becoming a member or starting your own mastermind alliance may be a solution worthy of your consideration. The benefits that a well-organized mastermind group can bring to your business and your life can be invaluable.

Although there are a number of interpretations of what a master mind alliance (group) is, generally speaking it is a group of likeminded individuals gathering together (in person or on the phone) in the interest of accomplishing individual or collective transformational and extraordinary results. Napoleon Hill in the 1930's. studied 500 of the richest, most successful people alive, at that time, the concept of the Master Mind group is one of the success factors he identified ([Click here and listen to Napoleon Hill](#)). But even in the 1930s it wasn't new. The founding fathers of the United States were a mastermind alliance. The great philosophers Plato and Socrates formed mastermind alliances in the day. Today many modern day entrepreneurs meet regularly to further their success. Do you? Could you? Should you? If you want extraordinary success in your life consider starting your own master mind alliance. Click here for more on master mind alliances and a sample agenda.

Happy Masterminding, and remember shape your life by choosing who you spend time with and start examining the people that you spend the most time around. If the people that you are spending the most time with are enabling you towards your best self then great, if they are not start meeting new people who will support and enable you to become the best person you can be and it will show in your business!

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead

Lay the ground rules. When creating or joining a mastermind group, it is crucial to establish a clear-cut sense of purpose. Everyone in the group must buy into the purpose. These early stages of development are critical to the group's future success. If everyone in the group had a different expectation, disaster would be inevitable. Using the simple 5 Ws and H provides guidelines. Who will be members of the group? What is the group's main purpose? What is our topic for discussion? When, where, and how often will we meet? Why will we meet? How will the meetings be structured? The questions are endless. If the group does not seem like a good fit for you, to another group or create your own.

Members of a mastermind group learn quickly that they must leave their ego at the door. Those who are unwilling to relinquish power won't last long. Problems can occur when some members have unrealistic expectations of the group or they don't grasp the concept of collective thinking. Some members may expect the group to solve all of their business or personal problems, or they may want to use the group as a therapy



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session. Groups who have self-centered, dominant members may self-destruct if the group allows that behavior to continue. Individual members like this can undermine the true purpose of the group's formation. An individual member who tries to overpower the group will either be warned, or will eventually be voted out of the group, because that person throws off the balance of the group.

Trust and harmony form the foundation. The success of a mastermind group is built on the foundation of trust and harmony. It comes from sharing information and ideas, and learning to accept opinions openly and willingly. If only safe, polite comments are shared, nothing is gained, nor is the feedback valuable. Members don't benefit from a group of yes people. They want diversity of opinions and backgrounds from members who will offer constructive criticism and valuable opinions that encourage others to look at an issue with fresh eyes. Confidentiality must be adhered and one of the most important part of mastermind group. To the outside world you want yourself, family or business to look its best, but in a mastermind group, you can admit anything without being penalized because everything discussed stays in the group. We see ourselves through rose colored glasses; our mastermind alliance is our reality check. It's here I caution you're careful who you invite to be a part of your alliance. It is critical to select the right people. Not just anyone should be allowed to be a part of the alliance. They must be invited to become part of the group Not that you can't, but I might avoid co-workers, friends and family.

Sustainability. Like any meaningful relationship, you will go through the "Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing stages so time must be spent on building that trust and harmony. Seeking feedback from group members keeps the group productive. It's a good idea regularly end a meeting (perhaps every 3 or 4) by asking each person to reflect on what working and what's not, and how the group can improve. It keeps the group focused and on track.

Determine how often the group meets. If located in the same city you might meet monthly. If farther apart but in the same state or area, you may opt for bi-monthly or quarterly meetings. Members of national mastermind groups opt for meeting about twice a year or by phone on a more regularly basis via a conference call. The duration of meetings depends on the group, but most meet for two to four hours; others who meet less frequently may opt to meet for a half or full-day. The group decides. If a mastermind group has achieved the goals it set in the beginning, it may disband.

Closing tips

--Establish your Rules of Engagement (ROE) before the group is formed.

--Take charge and be choosy about who you select as members in the starting group. It's better to start off small, and build the group than to go for volume without substance.

--Know how to fire a group member if things aren't working out. Decide how you will eliminate group members before you form the group. If you wait until the group is up and running, and a problem exists, it will be too late to backtrack.

--Don't fool yourself. If you are not making a difference to other group members, or they are not making a difference to you, it might be time to find another group that is better suited to your needs.



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Agenda

LDI Mastermind Group

18 Jan 2012, 6:30 AM – 8:30 PM

Facilitator – Anthony Tormey (Jan-Mar)

Time Keeper – Dale Carnegie (Apr-Jun)

Recorder – Napoleon Hill (Jul-Sep)

Members who have RSVP'd – Timings can be adjusted based on # of attendees

I. Individual good news to share 2 Minutes each

II. Introductions – As required 0 Minutes

III. Individual time – participants should forward a short description of the challenge they need help with so others can come prepared to share resources and input. Times can be negotiated and shared. If you don't need your time, offering it to others is encouraged. If you need more time, request it.

Anthony	10 Minutes
Napoleon	10 Minutes
Dale	10 Minutes
Henry	10 Minutes
Eli	10 Minutes
Albert	10 Minutes

60 Minutes

V. Request for others to join DOI Mastermind – Open discussion

10 Minutes

10 Minutes

VI. Tip or resource to share

3 Minutes each

15 Minutes

VII. Wrap-up and schedule next meeting **come prepared with your availability and desires.** Consider 30 days from this meeting date plus or minus 3-5 days

10 Minutes

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Supporting Information for Individual Time

- **Anthony** – I am seriously thinking about starting a not for profit to help veterans reintegrate and succeed after returning from combat or leaving the military. I would like to get feedback from the group on the idea of offering free success workshops to veterans. I am looking specifically for ideas on how to make this work and things I should be cautious about. Your help is greatly appreciated.
- **Napoleon** – I've got this idea to study how the rich get rich and putting it in a book to share with others. I'm wondering if there would be any interest in doing something like this
- **Henry** – I've been stuck with the color black for the Model T and considering other colors. I'd like the groups opinion on white and grey.
- **Albert** – I've been struggling with this trying to figure out what E equals. The letters M and C keep popping up in my head but I want it run it by the group for a reality check