

PEER COACHING CIRCLES

Coaching Issue Identification

One of the principles of Peer Coaching Circles is that “the wisdom is in the room,” meaning that we can sometimes gain as much from the wisdom and experience of our peers as from traditional learning strategies. An increasingly popular and successful process among private sector leaders involves regular meetings of a “board” of colleagues to get advice and feedback on one another’s operational and strategic challenges.

Our objective is to replicate such a process during your participation in Peer Coaching Circles. We have learned this technique from The Executive Committee, a company that facilitates these kinds of sessions with over 5,000 executives around the world. The desired outcome is that each of you will return to your organizations with feedback, advice, and action ideas from a group of peers on an important issue you are currently facing.

To accomplish this objective, each participant will need to do some thinking prior to the coaching session to identify and frame his or her issue. To assist you in preparing for this session, we have developed a list of questions to help you identify possible issues and a format to use to outline the key area on which you would like to focus. These questions can also give you an idea of the magnitude of the issues we hope people will bring. Please note that we are using the word issues as opposed to problems. That is intentional. We want to help people expand their thinking beyond solving problems to creating excellence. Think about issues, opportunities, challenges, and problems that might help you make that shift.

Two additional points

Peer Coaching Circles are meant to be a resource for you and your colleagues. In order to support that intention, we ask that you treat the session as **completely confidential**, and that you refrain from sharing any information about fellow participants or their issues.

The issue you choose should be one that can be addressed by your peers, and not of such a technical nature that only an expert could be helpful. For example, a problem with your computer infrastructure would most likely not generate very useful insights from your coaches. The questions below will give you an idea of where to start.

Questions to think about

- What is it about your job that is keeping you up at night?
- What is your single biggest supervisory problem? Your biggest opportunity?
- How do you handle the different stages of change? Are there issues at work that may bring up resistance from your staff?
- How do you typically deal with conflict? Does this method prove to be effective in your workplace?
- What are you spending most of your time on at work? Do you feel like you are using your time effectively?
- What is your preferred decision making style? How do your staff generally respond to decisions you make?
- How do you typically communicate about decisions and changes with your staff? How do your staff generally respond to your communication efforts?
- Are there aspects of the culture of the department/University that impede your success or happiness at work? Do you have ideas about what needs to change?
- What are your personal long-range goals in your job? Do you anticipate any specific obstacles to reaching them?
- How would you rate the performance of each of the people you supervise? How well do you do in holding them accountable?
- Are you new to the role of manager at UW? Do you feel that you and others have fully made the transition and are clear on expectations?
- What things are you now doing that you would like to stop doing or would like to turn over to someone else?
- Does your boss make your job easier or more difficult? How have you handled your relationship with him or her?

COACHING ISSUE IDENTIFICATION FORM

During the coaching session you will be presenting your issue to a group of your colleagues. It will be important for you to have thought the issue through and to be able to present it cogently and concisely. Please use this form to outline the issue in preparation for the session.

■ **Brief statement of the issue:**

■ **Relevant background information:**

■ **Who are the people involved?**

■ **How have you tried to address the issue so far?**

■ **List up to three specific questions or items you would like your colleagues to address with you.**
