

# HOW TO CREATE YOUR ULTIMATE MASTERMIND TEAM



A Comprehensive Guide To  
**SURROUNDING YOURSELF** *with the*  
**PEOPLE WHO WON'T LET YOU FAIL**

*by Liz Seda & Scott Dinsmore*

— THE —  
CONNECT WITH ANYONE  
**CREED**

ENVIRONMENT IS EVERYTHING  
WHO'S IN YOUR CORNER?

**SHOW**  
YOUR  
**PASSION**  
-----  
CARE  
**ABOUT**  
PEOPLE  
-----  
**SMILE**

XXX  
**BELIEVE**  
IN PEOPLE

XXX  
**KNOW**  
WHO YOU ARE  
WHAT MATTERS TO OTHERS  
WHO YOU WANT IN YOUR LIFE

**MAKE**  
FRIENDS  
PEOPLE A PRIORITY  
SOMEONE'S DAY

**BE**  
UNFORGETTABLE  
UNIQUELY YOU  
GENUINE

**LEAD**  
AN  
INTERESTING  
LIFE  
-----  
**TELL**  
**STORIES**

**SHOW UP!**

BE WELL-GROOMED | **SEE FRIENDS NOT STRANGERS** | BE OPEN TO  
CONVERSATION | **CONNECT WITH PEOPLE LONG BEFORE YOU**  
**WANT SOMETHING FROM THEM** | REMEMBER NAMES | **BE THE**  
**CONNECTOR** | FIND COMMON GROUND | **PAY ATTENTION** | CREATE  
COINCIDENCE | **KEEP TRACK OF EVERYTHING** | CREATE TRUST | **BE**  
**BOTH THE MENTOR & THE MENTEE** | SEE OPPORTUNITY IN OTHERS  
| **KEEP UP & FOLLOW UP** | EMBRACE PERSISTENCE |

**BE GRATEFUL & SAY THANK YOU**



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**AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON  
GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THIS GUIDE  
& YOUR MASTERMIND TEAM**

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Forming the right mastermind group has the potential to change your world.

It can also seem like a daunting task. We've done our best to document every step of the process to make it as easy as possible.

We recognize how in-depth many of these steps are, and we want to do all we can to help you create a successful team.

That's why, for those of you interested, as part of our How to Connect with Anyone course, we take the time to interview every member and form unique mastermind groups based on each member's goals, experience and geographic location. If you think you'd like hands-on guidance in building your mastermind, please join our Insider's Team to be notified as soon as our next course opens.

**We will be accepting 150 new members on a first come first serve basis during the last two weeks of February. We will not be opening it again until the end of 2013 so be sure to get on the Insider's list if interested!**

**\*\*\* [Click here to join our Connect with Anyone Insider's Team](#) \*\*\***

Thanks for taking the time to check this guide out. We really do believe it could make all the difference.

*~ Liz Seda & Scott Dinsmore*

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**HOW TO:**  
**CREATE YOUR ULTIMATE  
MASTERMIND TEAM**

## ENVIRONMENT IS EVERYTHING

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*“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” ~ Jim Rohn*

You can either choose to hang around people who pull you down and mock you for going after big goals and thinking differently, or you can choose to spend time with people who inspire you. The people you want in your corner will support your dreams, raise your standards and believe in your ability to make the impossible possible.

You – and only you – can select a powerhouse team. Forming a tight-knit group of individuals you respect to accomplish business and personal goals is the best way to surround yourself with people who are going to lift you up.

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This is the essence of a mastermind alliance. A successful mastermind is one that operates in complete harmony and cooperation for the success of each individual member, as well as for the success of the group.

This guide is presented in a step-by-step format, but you should pick and choose which sections are most important to you and your goals. With the right mastermind group, there's no limit to what you can accomplish in your business and life.

Here's to filling your life with people who make the impossible your new normal!

## STEP 1: CHOOSE YOUR MASTERMIND GROUP TYPE

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A mastermind group can take many shapes and forms. Depending on your vision for your group, there are four types of mastermind groups you can create:

### TOPIC-BASED

These mastermind groups are formed around a specific topic like fitness, animal rights, homeschooling, German as a second language, etc.

Here's an example of a mastermind group on the topic of [Children & Family](#).

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### MISSION-BASED

This type of group is focused on the achievement of one single goal. For example, their mission/purpose could be to come up with a way to add 500 miles of bike trails in the USA in one year.

Here's an example of a mastermind group formed to bring more real estate buyers to Destin: [Destin Real Estate Masterminds](#).

### BUSINESS

A business-based mastermind group is formed to help each member grow their business, regardless of the niche.



Here's a great example from [The Tropical MBA Inner Circle Mastermind Group](#).

## **GOALS & ACCOUNTABILITY**

Accountability groups help members keep certain goals, whether they are business related or not.

Here's an example of a Goals Group in Melbourne, Australia: [Goals Group](#).

These are the four main subsets of groups, that exist for the benefit of the goals of each individual member of the group, I've identified in my experience & research. There are probably others, but most of them could fit under one of these broad categories.

## STEP 2: DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE

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Agree on a focus, purpose, or mission for your group. This is extremely important! You and your members need to know *why* you're meeting. More than that, they need to truly *believe in your group's purpose*.

Your purpose might be to help each other build more successful businesses, to hold each other accountable to specific goals you have in life, or to free all farm animals from abuse.

No matter what the purpose, *everyone in the group needs to be supportive of and committed to that purpose*. For this reason, it's okay to make your initial purpose a bit broad and then narrow it down with the contributions of your members.

The point is to get clear on your intentions for this team so that you can pick the right members and communicate why they should want to join your mastermind group.

Here are a few examples of mastermind group mission statements:

### **The to Be Book**

*We are a dedicated, committed group of people who still have plans for their lives. We meet online on a weekly basis to bounce back ideas, brainstorm and create new projects or improve old ones, form dream teams, create synergy, support, learn and empower each other. Through our combined mind power and network we help each other to live in our purpose and reach our highest goals.*

## Masterminds For Action

*Our Masterminds Group was created as a place to join and collaborate with other business minded entrepreneurs, leaders, network marketers, affiliate marketers and or any other similar niche.*

*We are a marketing masterminds group that has formed an alliance with a diverse team of marketing experts! So far we have positioned ourselves starting from social networks then onwards toward several other marketing and advertising venues.*

*Our Ultimate goal is to assist others to achieve true online marketing success no matter how big or small the task may be. With our unique and special marketing team we will create a massive web presence that will join us together with thousands of like-minded people creating a force that will be the biggest group on the net!*

## Ladder Bloggers

*Our Mission Statement: Going Deeper While Climbing Higher*

*We desire to climb higher, one step at a time, while going deeper with each other, with our blog readers, and with God. But a ladder can't stand on its own—it needs something to lean on—so we're supporting each other on the journey!*

## Personal Success Systems Inc

*Together we will discover how to break through the barriers, clear the path, striving for consistent peak performance and total fulfillment. We believe in the philosophy of a Mastermind Alliance. The definition of a Mastermind Alliance is “a group of two or more individuals working toward the same purpose or goal”. Our relationship with our clients, either individual or corporate, is a Mastermind Alliance.*

### STEP 3: CREATING YOUR MASTERMIND GROUP GUIDELINES / GROUND RULES

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It's important for your mastermind group to understand the group and individual expectations right at the beginning. It makes your meetings more productive, and it also makes handling unpleasant situations much easier and straightforward.

Your mission here is not to dictate, but to set the tone for all of the meetings that you'll have in the future. Your members should be able to contribute to the guidelines.

Nail down the fundamentals, like how often you want to meet & anything else that's non-negotiable to you. Then present your skeleton to the group at your first meeting and decide on the rest of the guidelines there. Just make sure you're addressing all of the essentials, which I've outlined below.

Here are a few points you can consider putting into the initial draft of your ground rules:

- How are unimportant decisions made? By a leader or a vote?
- Establish that your group is not group therapy, and whining, complaining, or gossiping will not be tolerated (or will be limited to 1 minute).
- Specify if this is a free mastermind or a paid mastermind. It's argued that paid mastermind groups get more commitment from their members since they have higher stakes in attending.
- The other side of that argument is that no one is going to want

to join your group without it having an established reputation.

- The middle ground to this problem is to require members to donate money to charity or a of some kind, when they miss a meeting or when they are late.
- What are the consequences for missing a meeting or being late?
- Define the terms and process in which a member is dismissed, and how you're going to go about introducing new members to your group once it's fully established.
- How personal are members allowed to get?
- How confidential is your mastermind? Is everything sacred? Do you need to create an non-disclosure agreement?
- What's your policy for competition (both in business and in trying to one-up each other every meeting)?
- Ask for a commitment to honesty, integrity, trust, and respect for all members.
- Ask members to be self-aware and to not try to dominate the conversation or give orders.
- Leave your ego at the door.

Ladder Bloggers have a great [example of mastermind guidelines](#) in action.

## STEP 4: PUTTING YOUR TEAM TOGETHER

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The number of members you have in your mastermind group is entirely up to you. They can range from 2 to 50. Keep your purpose in mind when deciding how many members you want.

Think about whether you're looking for intimacy or just a broad pool of resources and experiences.

So much of the power of a mastermind comes from the intimacy created by a small group of 3-5. In a small group you have more time to focus on the issues each individual member is facing. You can meet more frequently and it's much easier to coordinate the best time for everyone to meet.

On the other hand, larger groups offer a much broader field of resources, experiences, niches, personalities, and expertise. If your objective is the simple exchange of knowledge, it's much more beneficial to have a very large group.

You can also break a large group down into smaller groups that niche down for a more intimate feeling while also taking advantage of the large pool of resources a large group offers you.

However, I suggest that you start small with four people at the beginning. You can always add more members if you feel like your group is having a hard time keeping up the energy and momentum.

### **What to consider in your members:**

There are a few overarching guidelines you should follow if you

want to create a successful group:

- Similar experience levels
- Similar ambition levels and desires for achievement.
- Similar values, beliefs, and ethics
- No competitors
- Location (if you want to put together a mastermind group that meets in-person)

I suggest putting together a perfect member profile, just as you would with a perfect customer. It helps you get clear on what you're looking for so you can invite the right people.

### **Your Perfect Member:**

- What level of business and personal ambition are you looking for?
- What types of commitments do you want to see in them? Personal growth? Health?
- What character traits would you like (sense of humor, honesty, integrity, communication)?
- Are they someone that you respect and want to learn from?
- Are they innovative enough for your group? Are they too cutting-edge to make a good fit?
- Are you inspired by this person?
- Do they have any skills or qualities that you want to develop for yourself?

- Do you like this individual as a person?
- Would you be friends with them?
- What are their interests?

## IN-PERSON VS. VIRTUAL MASTERMIND GROUPS

In a perfect world your mastermind group would meet in person every time. All members would arrive at a beautiful destination via teleportation and no time would be wasted commuting or organizing sessions.

Although you can have virtual mastermind meetings that are just as effective as in-person meetings, there's no replacing the energy that comes with being in the same room with people.

If your mastermind group is long-distance, try organizing an in person meeting once a year if possible. Your relationship with each member of the group will instantly magnify. You'll feel closer and more connected than you ever could feel meeting virtually.

It goes without saying that meeting in person is going to be easier if you live in a city like San Francisco or Miami. If you do live in a highly populated city, try finding a local mastermind group.

Even if you live in a really small town, you can find a few people who have the same world view as you do. Whether or not you form a mastermind alliance with them, don't count out potential like-minded people in your small town. There are amazing people around every corner.



If you do join a local group, you can even meet in person once a month and do the rest of your meetings virtually if logistics are too complicated.

## **RECRUITING MEMBERS**

When creating your own mastermind group, you have two choices:

1. You can build your team by invitation only, or you can make your cause public and get prospective members to come to you.
2. In this case, you'll need a way to filter the responses to find the people who are the best fit for your mission.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not try to form a focus group, or your own personal team of mentors. Your goals should be collaboration and mutually beneficial relationships with peers you admire and respect. In other words, don't invite Richard Branson to be a part of your Beginners Online Business Mastery mastermind group. Similarly, don't invite three local business owners when your business is focused around how to market and sell to local business owners.

## **WHERE TO FIND MEMBERS**

Whether you're starting a local mastermind group, or a virtual mastermind group, the process of finding members for your group is the same: reach out to people you know, starting with your inner circle and continuing outwards.

### **Begin Close To Home**

Think of people you already associate with that would fit the bill for your type of mastermind group and purpose. It's a good idea to start here because chances are you already like the people you associate with on a daily basis. You probably share the same values and have the same beliefs.

After you've exhausted the people in your inner circle, whether that's because they aren't a good fit or they can't join a mastermind right now, branch out to your outer circle.

### **Friends of Friends**

Now is the time to start asking your inner circle if they know anyone that meets your requirements and might join your mastermind group.

Ask your friends, colleagues, and mentors.

Since these people are the common thread between you and your potential mastermind member, it makes sense that they're likely to make a good match.

If this doesn't work you'll have to go to branch out farther.

### **6 Degrees of Separation**

Scan through your connections/friends/followers & people you follow. Look first at people you've had at least one encounter with. Scan their profiles, updates, and website to find out more about them and their goals.

If you find someone you're interested in, interact with them a little more via social media and their blog to get a better sense of

who they are. If you really like them, send them an email inviting them to your group. There's an email template at the end of the workbook you can use to guide you.

If, at this point, you still haven't found what you're looking for, you'll need to go to outer space.

### **Use A Megaphone**

At this point, you'll have to start getting your message out to the masses.

- If you have a blog or website, write a post about your intentions and ask for members.
- Of course make use of your social media outlets like Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Go to forums and post your idea (in the proper area of course). It can be any forum at all.
- Go to meetup.com and start a mastermind group meetup (virtually or locally).
- Ask other people with web presence to spread the word for you in their blog, newsletter, or social network.
- Ask websites with mastermind services to post a 'wanted' ad for you.

You can even hang flyers at local events, community centers, on people's windshields. Whatever you need to do.

If you do have to blast out your message, you'll need a way to

filter out the noise and choose your best candidates. There are a few examples of applications for mastermind groups at the end of this workbook to help you when you're creating your application. There are also some tools you can use for the application itself, and a ton of interview questions to get you started.

## THE OTHER OPTION

The last thing you can do is recruit members actively from conventions & events in your area of interest (like World Domination Summit).

If you have your heart set on creating a local mastermind group, here are some other things you can do to meet people in your area:

**Volunteer:** Offer your time to a cause you care about. There's a pretty good chance you'll meet someone there who shares the same beliefs you do.

**Twitter Search:** Perform an advanced twitter search for people in your area and see what they're tweeting about. Join the conversation and make a connection.

**Have a Party:** New to the neighborhood? Throw a party! Have you lived in your neighborhood for a while? Throw a party! Everyone loves a good party and you can theme it in such a way to attract like-minded people.

**Attend Local Events:** Check out Eventbrite, Meetup, Facebook, Tweetups, and your local city website for events in your area.

**Take a Class:** Search your local university & college websites for continuing education or community classes. You can even search your cities website for community classes. Try signing up for a class that's interactive. Read the class description and see if there will be opportunities to connect with people other than before or after the class. A photography class is a decent option.

Or, if you really want to niche down, take a course like [Write Your Life](#):

*A famous writer once said, “Listen to your life; all moments are key moments.” In this fun and supportive—yet challenging—class, learn how to draw on the “material” of your life to write and revise whatever you wish to work on, including stories, memoirs, novels, poems, or plays. Working individually, in small groups, and one-on-one with the instructor, take your initial writing and develop and polish it so it is ready for publication. This class is sure to inspire your creativity.*

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**Attend a Seminar:** If you want to increase your odds of finding like-minded people, attend a seminar like this one:

*This spring, our [Humanities in Action](#) lectures focus on the theme “The World at Risk.” Scholars will review economic, political, public health, and national security risks to the global community. All Humanities in Action events take place from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at Flyleaf Books, 752 MLK Jr. Blvd., in Chapel Hill. There are no preparatory readings for Humanities in Action events.*

*Register ahead of time and pay \$18.00 per program*

It's hard to find a better way to discover people's values and beliefs than a talk centered around controversial topics. You don't have to participate if you don't want to. Just listen for the people that make you feel alive.

**Join a Business Association:** Search for 'business association in [your city]' and Google will give you a ton of results for organizations in your area you can join. Don't think you'll be able to find one? Think again. I found an organization dedicated entirely to soybeans. I'm not even going to mention the Sweet Potato Commission or the Pork Council.

Lastly, it's beneficial for each member if they have their own definition of what success looks like to them (see attached worksheet). You can also use these while you redefine/polish your mastermind groups purpose and ground rules.

**Meetup:** This is a great way to meet people in your area. I was a part of a [Meetup](#) in my city where I got to meet [Chris Guillebeau](#) in person. I would have never found out about his visit if I wasn't a part of the group.

You can do other things in your community like join a sports league, join a women's or men's group, join a book club, go to local sporting events and much more.

It all boils down to just talking to people. You could meet your masterminding soul mate at the gas station if you're aware and present enough to notice the fact that he's reading the same advanced copy of Chris Brogan's book that you are while standing in line to buy the same brand of dog food you use at home.

## STEP 5: ESTABLISHING YOUR MEETINGS

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### AGENDA

Your agenda should remain pretty much the same every time you meet. Structure and order create habit and it's also conducive to getting things done.

In general, the facilitator welcomes everyone, makes sure everyone is there, reads the group's mission statement/purpose, states an inspirational quote to start the meeting, announces if someone is going to be late/not present, etc.

Then everyone gets some time to talk about their week. You can decide what sort of topics are acceptable (personal/professional) in your guidelines if you want.

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This is when you get into the main part of your meeting.

A common format is for groups to select one person to focus on for the session that week. This is called the 'hot seat' and it alternates every week (see Structure 1).

Sometimes this part of the meeting is used to identify some burning needs or desires of members that will be addressed during that meeting if you've set it up that way (see Structure 2) or if you have an 'open floor' type meeting (see Structure 3), where anyone who speaks up can have the attention of the group.

The end is usually dedicated to goal declaration and making commitments.

Here are a few other ideas for your mastermind's agenda:

- Have a weekly activity, where you commit to doing an experiment for the week and report back on that as your update (like the homework Scott gives us for his Connect With Anyone course each week).
- Agree to read an article or chapter of a book to discuss during the next session.
- Designate time for special requests where a member can ask the group for an extra call or they can ask for the time of one individual.
- Have a meeting about a particular topic where someone gives a presentation during the next session.

Most importantly, have an agenda, even if it only has three points on it. Make sure all of your members are aware of it and, most importantly, follow it. It's ok to leave some agenda items flexible, but it should be understood that other items aren't flexible.

For example, if you schedule a hot seat for a member, but you don't get to it because the updates in the beginning ran over, that's not doing justice to the member who planned for their session.

On the other hand, if someone is dealing with something really urgent and they absolutely need the help of the team, put their needs before the procedure. Just so long as no one else is hurt in the process.

If, in the future, you find your group functions better without an agenda, then you can scrap it, but always begin with structure.



Here are five sample structures for you use as templates. You can obviously pick and choose what you want to use from each one.

### **STRUCTURE 1**

12:00 ~ Welcome & state mission

12:10 ~ Short update on previous week (all members)

12:20 ~ Hot-seat session with one member (scheduled in advance)

13:00 ~ Hot seat member states action plan for problem/project

13:05 ~ Everyone states goals for coming week

13:15 ~ End meeting with inspirational story

### **STRUCTURE 2**

9:00 ~ Welcome & state inspirational quote

9:10 ~ Personal and Professional updates (all members)

9:20 ~ 2 or 3 urgent problems from professional updates chosen to address

10:00 ~ Hot seat members state action plan for problem/project

10:10 ~ Everyone else states goals for coming week

10:15 ~ End meeting & State mission

### **STRUCTURE 3**

9:00 ~ Welcome

9:05 ~ Short update on previous week (all members)

9:15 ~ Open Floor

10:00 ~ Submission of special requests

10:05 ~ Everyone states goals for coming week

10:15 ~ End meeting

#### **STRUCTURE 4**

9:00 ~ Welcome

9:05 ~ Professional updates (all members)

9:15 ~ Hot seat session with one member (planned in advance)

10:00 ~ Planning of weekly group activity

10:10 ~ Everyone states goals for coming week

10:15 ~ End meeting

#### **STRUCTURE 5**

9:00 ~ Welcome & state mission

9:05 ~ Short update on previous week (all members)

9:15 ~ Topic Presentation/discussion (planned ahead of time)

10:00 ~ Planning of weekly group activity

10:10 ~ Everyone states goals for coming week

10:15 ~ End meeting

#### **MEETING PREPARATION**

Do you want your members to prepare for each meeting? If so,

what sort of preparations do you feel would benefit the flow of your meetings? Think about pitching this to your group if you think it will help. See the [Mastermind Meeting Preparation Sheet](#) at the end of the workbook for an example of what meeting preparation might look like.

## MEETING FREQUENCY

Ideally, your mastermind group will meet at least once a week. It doesn't matter if you meet in person or virtually as long as you are following up on a regular basis.

If you decide to meet less frequently (i.e. once a month), you'll want to have longer sessions (3-6 hrs).

Whatever frequency you choose, make sure that the energy stays high and the frequency is consistent.

## MAINTAINING FOCUS:

The purpose of your mastermind group needs to be at the forefront of everyone's mind at all times. If you don't maintain focus, your group can turn into a social gathering, committee, or any number of unproductive collections of people that defeat the purpose of the formation of your group in the first place. Decide how long you'll permit coffee-talk and also decide how you will address personal problems.

*The success of your mastermind hinges on the ability of each of your members to complete promised tasks, be*

*present, and support the goals of their team. Without the kind of cooperation, dedication and camaraderie that will create synergy, your mastermind will likely fizzle out long before it has a chance to gain traction.*

What is not part of the meetings:

- Coaching - unless it's a topic-based presentation from one member planned ahead of time.
- Preaching
- Secret Agendas
- Trying to generate leads or promote products or services
- Distractions or multi-tasking of any type - Phones, TV's, Email, Social Networks, etc.
- Psychotherapy

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### **MEMBER ROLES:**

Sometimes it's helpful to assign member roles to keep things organized. There can be one person assigned to a role permanently, or you can alternate roles.

The only role that is mandatory is the facilitator, but I strongly suggest you have a note-taker as well.

**Facilitator (mandatory):** speaker for the group and responsible for running the meeting

**Timekeeper:** keeps eye on the time during short updates and makes sure the group stays on schedule (politely).

**Coordinator:** takes care of finding places to meet or ways to meet online. Also takes care of yearly in-person retreats and logistics for that. Collects money when people are late/don't show up/ or if it's a paid mastermind group.

**Note-Taker (highly recommended):** writes down major points of meeting and everyone's basic goals for the week and posts them wherever group communication takes place outside of meetings. If you want to get fancy you can record your calls with Google Hangout or Skype Call Recorder for Mac (or something similar for PC).

**Moderator:** makes sure people don't get out of hand during emotionally charged discussions. Clears up disputes when discussions get complicated and facts get confused. Can be a regular position or a moderator can be brought in whenever there's a conflict in the group.

## **BEST PRACTICES**

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### **ORGANIZE**

Try to schedule meetings ahead of time. Aim for three months of meetings scheduled at a time.

Someone will have to be the leader/facilitator during each meeting. You will probably assume this position at first since you are the creator, but consider rotating this responsibility to different members for each session.

### **COMMUNICATE**

#### **...often**

Communicate with each other as often as possible, even if it's just with one other member. Talk to members who are missing too many meetings or are dominating meetings before it gets so bad that you need to dismiss them.

#### **...seamlessly**

Share your goals via email or some other shared space after the meeting. I strongly recommend on deciding who will take notes each meeting to record commitments and goals for the following week.

#### **...outside of meetings**

You shouldn't be afraid to communicate between meetings. Email all of your comrades if you have a big win, or ask for an emergency call if you're in a bind.

### **...authentically**

Take the time to get to know your members and build trust before throwing in the towel. This could take only a few meetings, or it could take four months. Stick to it for at least 6-9 meetings before deciding it's not a good fit. You can always start/join more than one mastermind group.

### **...honestly**

Talk to the group when you feel like you're not getting what you want out of your meetings. Let them know what you need to feel supported. Ask them if there's something that you're not doing to get the most out of the group. It's possible that you just need to speak up. Being vulnerable and authentic in this way could mean the difference between dropping out of your group and sticking with them for a decade.

### **...compassionately**

Take the time to talk about group dynamics every so often. I wouldn't suggest doing this too soon, but after 3 or four months, dedicate one entire meeting to the constructive communication of what each person can do better to facilitate seamless collaboration within the group.

## **COLLABORATE**

### **Listen**

Don't interrupt members while they're talking, even if it's to help. Write your questions and suggestions down and bring them up after they're finished speaking. You are all peers. Don't lecture others and be open to different perspectives.

## Encourage

Celebrate the milestones of your members. Don't forget that their accomplishments are also your accomplishments, so celebrate for the both of you.

## Open Up

Be vulnerable and encourage your members to be the same way. Real breakthroughs happen when members don't hold back. This is not a networking event or an interview. Honesty, vulnerability, and trust are essential for your personal and professional growth within the group.

You can't expect the group to do all of the work for you. Even with the powerful benefits of a mastermind group, you need to take full responsibility for what you give yourself from each meeting.

*"Honesty, vulnerability, and trust are essential for your personal and professional growth within the group."*

It's up to you to give to others as well as yourself. If you make sure that you're open, honest, and give without expecting something in return, you'll reap the benefits tenfold.

## Have Fun

Sometimes you just need to have a good time. Focus is important, but burnout is a fact of life and you don't want it happening to your group.

When you feel momentum dropping, people stressing out, and general dis-ease throughout the group, you know it's time to schedule in some fun time.



## DISCRIMINATE

When you find the right group, the group where magic happens, you need to protect it.

That means that you'll have to turn down others who want to join your group, even if one of your members suggests it. To deal with this, develop a plan in the beginning for accepting new members. Including:

- How will you decide if someone is a good fit for the group?
- What's the procedure for introducing a new member to the group?
- Do you even want to accept new members once your group is established?
- Will you need to vote on new members?
- What happens if you accept a new member but they're messing up the entire groups chemistry?

Address how you'll handle these tough situations before they happen. You'll avoid a lot of hurt feelings, and save time and energy discussing it down the road.

*Include the answers to these questions in your guidelines.*

## STICK TO YOUR GUNS

Your groups purpose and guidelines are sacred. You must follow them or risk losing credibility. If it says that you have to pay \$1

to Charity Water for every minute you're late or when you don't complete your homework from the past week, you must hold people to that.

### **Easy Out**

No one knows how long your mastermind is going to last. It could be six months, it could be 10 years. Regardless, you should give your members the chance to opt-out after a certain amount of time

If your members can see an end in sight, they are more likely to put more energy in the whole affair. They won't worry about it eventually draining them of all their energy. They won't feel as if they just signed up for a lifetime commitment.

You could offer a trial period of 30 to 90 days or eight to ten meetings, at the end of which all members get the option to opt out with no hard feelings.

### **Presence**

Every time you show up for a meeting you need to be prepared to show up in both body and mind. It doesn't matter if you don't have anything to share, or if the meeting is focused on someone else that day.

Be present. Don't think about your next deadline, what you have to do after the call, how you can rearrange your office so it gets more sunlight, or anything else that's not directly related to the purpose of that group.

You can't fake this. If you're not present, you might as well not

show up. Shut everything off. Focus on the group. *Commit to giving it all your attention and effort for the time you're together.*

I can't emphasize how important this is. If you do not hold your group to this standard it will fail.

## HOW TO KEEP THE MAGIC FLOWING

There will come a time where it feels like your group is losing momentum. Maybe every week is starting to stay the same or people keep on coming back to meetings without having done any of their commitments.

Even if just one person starts falling off of the bandwagon you have to address it immediately. Usually it's just because everyone needs to take a break. Here are a few things you can do to keep the magic flowing in your group:

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- Offer breaks from meetings occasionally. Maybe you take one week off every four weeks to prevent burn out or to offer your members a chance to catch up or rest.
- Address the problem of the one member who seems to be losing focus. You can either address it directly, or indirectly by having the group get together and do something for them that will give them a lift.
- Do something that will be a quick win, just to start building that momentum again.
- Organize a three day in-person retreat.
- Do something unrelated to work that's fun.

## WORST PRACTICES

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Here's a list of the most common reasons masterminds fail.\*

1. Members are not committed. They don't show up for every meeting. They make excuses why they didn't achieve the actions and goals they set for themselves. They don't pay attention during meetings and/or don't participate fully.
2. The Group Facilitator does not have a good handle on how groups function, and doesn't know how to build trust and communication in a group environment. They're not trained to keep group conversations going, to deal with difficult members, or to keep energy levels high.
3. The mastermind group is too large. [If] the purpose of a mastermind group is that everyone gets a chance to bring their problem, decision or idea to the table, and that everyone gets to brainstorm with the person in the "hot seat." If the group is too large, people get left out of discussions. *This is why 3-5 people is often an ideal size.*
4. There's no mechanism for communication between meetings. Meetings typically range from 90 minutes to a full weekend. But what about all the time between meetings when life continues to happen?
5. The Group Facilitator treats the mastermind group like a class, lecturing to the members instead of encouraging the members to work with each other as a peer advisory board.
6. The group hasn't decided on the purpose of the group and the structure of the meetings, so everyone flounders.

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7. The members fail to hold each other accountable. They don't hold people's feet to the fire and they allow members to make excuses about why something didn't get done.
8. The group doesn't meet often enough. One of the benefits of a mastermind group is that each member selects a goal or action item to be completed by the next meeting. If the meetings are too far apart, all momentum is lost.
9. The members' experience level/success level ranges too widely. While having very successful people in a mastermind group is great for a new person, the more seasoned person will feel they're not getting as much value from the group.
10. The group members don't feel safe in the group environment. People will not open up and talk about their problems and challenges if they fear ridicule or rejection. They also will not open up if they feel their competitors are in the same room, listening to their problems or stealing their best ideas.

\* Source: [The Success Alliance](#)

## MASTERMIND GROUP INTERACTIVE WORKSHEET

**Team name**

**Purpose/mission statement:**

**Ground Rules/Guidelines**

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**Meeting Logistics**

Day	<input type="text"/>
Time	<input type="text"/>
Frequency	<input type="text"/>
Location	<input type="text"/>

Agenda:

TIME	AGENDA ITEM

Notes:

## MASTERMIND GROUP WORKSHEET EXAMPLE

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**Team name:** Up And Coming Blogger Mastermind Team

**Purpose/mission statement:** Our mission as the Up and Coming Blogger Mastermind Team is to inspire and challenge each other to reach and exceed our online business. We will support each other's journey to A-list blogger status within two years. We aspire to be better in every aspect of our lives every day and we hold each other to that standard relentlessly. Our ideas and resources are shared throughout the group without restraint and in honest and genuine support of the endeavors of each member.

**Ground Rules/Guidelines:** Members are expected to arrive on time to all meetings. If you are not able to make it, please email LizS@alifeonyourterms.com 24 hours in advance.

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Members who miss a meeting must donate \$25 to the charity of their choice.

This is a safe community built on a foundation of trust and respect. Everything discussed during a mastermind session is private. Criticism should be constructive and positive.

All members are expected to contribute and participate equally in both receiving and adding value. Negative people get whipped under the full moon.

Members can expect to be asked to leave the group if they violate the trust of the group or act in a way that hurts the group or any



of its members. Also if they miss three meetings in a row without calling they will be considered missing in action.

Members who don't follow through on their commitments for the week must either donate \$45 to the charity of their choice, or dance Gangnam style on camera.

Meetings will be held at The Batcave or on Skype at 9:00AM on every Friday. Meetings will end at 10:30AM.

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
9:00 AM	Liz Welcomes everyone and plays the recording of a Morgan Freeman imitator stating our mission.
9:05	Updates on last week's personal and professional goals as well as any other updates from the week.
9:20	Hot seat member session at the end of which they state their action plan and goals for the following week.
10:10	Open floor for others who need support.
10:25	End meeting. Play recording of the Morgan Freeman imitator stating our mission.
10:30	End meeting. Play recording of the Morgan Freeman imitator stating our mission.

TEAM MEMBERS

Individual success and expectations questions for each member:

- What is your desired outcome in participating in this mastermind group?
- What are you top three goals that you would like to achieve with the help of the group? They can be personal or professional.
- What support are you seeking from the group specifically?
- How will you know if this mastermind group is successful for you?

NAME	SUMMARY OF PERSONAL INTENTION

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I am committed to my own success, as well as the success of each individual member of my mastermind group.

## EMAIL TEMPLATE TO PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

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The important thing to keep in mind when sending an invitation to join your Mastermind group is that you communicate clearly the purpose, benefits, and logistics of your mastermind group.

The potential member should be able to decide if your mission resonates with them and if they can commit the time and energy to the success of the group.

Here's an email template to help you out when contacting new potential members (we are contacting Fred who is an 'ambitious business owner').

Ideally, the person you are contacting is someone you have some type of relationship with. It's a pretty tough proposition for your first contact with someone to be a proposition for them to join your highly intimate mastermind group.

At the very least, check if you know anyone who knows the person you want to contact, and kindly ask them to refer/introduce you. Make sure to tell them how much you think the other person will benefit from you getting in touch.

*Hey Fred,*

*I'm contacting you because I'm putting together a mastermind group of 4 or 5 ambitious business owners with the purpose of helping each other's specific growth goals for 2013. I'm looking for business owners who've already done well, and are looking to expand.*

*I thought you would be a great fit since you mentioned in your latest blog post your goal of growing your community by 30% next year. A mastermind group would be a powerful catalyst in the attainment of your goals.*

*Not only do I expect tremendous business growth and benefits, I also believe that we will help each other grow on a personal level. From seeing how you work with people, both through your blog and in our personal chats (and what James has told me about you) I have the feeling that you'd be a fun fit for what we're building.*

*Once we have our small group formed, we will sort out all the details, but I do plan to hold meetings once a week for 1.5 hours.*

*We'd love to have you a part of this, both because I know how much you could teach the group about book marketing and I know our other two members know blog/subscriber growth like the back of their hand, which should really help you this year.*

*If this is something you might be interested in, let me know so we can talk more about the group and the possibilities.*

*Thanks so much! And by the way, I love the new coconut hat. :)*

*Liz*

## MASTERMIND MEETING PREPARATION WORKSHEET

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Fill this sheet out before every meeting if you decide it's something you think will help facilitate your mastermind meetings. Here's an example of one I filled out for my latest mastermind meeting.

**Meeting Date:** \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**What to share for my short update:**

1. What were the results of my business goals last week:
2. What were the results of my personal goals last week (if any):
3. Other news/updates?

**Current projects and priorities:**

**What could I really use support on right now:**

**What help looks like to me:**

**What's my expectation for today's meeting? Am I looking for support or am I just giving?**

**What have I learned recently that could be beneficial to one or all of my team members?**

## MASTERMIND MEETING PREPARATION

### WORKSHEET (SAMPLE)

Fill this sheet out before every meeting if you decide it's something you think will help facilitate your mastermind meetings. Here's an example of one I filled out for my latest mastermind meeting:

**Meeting Date: 12/7/2012**

#### **Updates to share with group:**

1. What were the results of my business goals last week?  
*Last week I had two guest posts accepted on really high profile blogs. Also I was given the opportunity to work with someone I've admired for a long time.*
2. What were the results of my personal goals last week (if any)?  
*I've successfully made the transition into a full vegan diet and I've exercised every night this week.*
3. Other news/updates?  
*I sent out a survey to my subscriber list and got a really great response rate and some valuable feedback.*

#### **Current projects and priorities:**

- *Development of first paid product.*
- *Continuing to seek out guest blogging opportunities.*

#### **What I could really use support on right now:**

- *I'm having a hard time putting the feedback from my survey into action.*

**What help looks like to me:**

*I'd like to show the results to my team and see what conclusions they can draw from it and brainstorm a few actions I can take from those conclusions that align with my overall goals and vision.*

**What's my expectation for today's meeting? Am I looking for support or am I just giving?**

*This meeting will be successful for me if I can walk away with one or actionable ideas from my survey.*

**What have I learned recently that could be beneficial to one or all of my team members?**

*I should tell Amy about the reader that emailed me who's a business coach because she was looking for business coaches to talk to last week.*

## PROSPECTIVE MEMBER QUESTIONS

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If it turns out you have to make a public announcement to attract members to your group, you'll need a way to filter all of the responses. Here's a list of questions you can ask them (or yourself).

### Questions to ask prospective member:

1. What are your values?
2. What are your strengths?
3. What are your fears?
4. What are your goals?
5. What are you most proud of?
6. What are you passionate about?
7. What do you want from the group?
8. Are you willing to commit to helping others reach their goals?
9. Are you willing to do what it takes to achieve your ideal life?
10. Will you commit to the meeting schedule?
11. Who do you admire most in your market?

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### Questions to ask yourself:

1. Do I feel that they will show up both in body and mind, ready to contribute?
2. Would I work with them outside of the mastermind group?
3. What can they bring to the table?
4. What can my group offer them?
5. Are they at about the same skill, expertise, and level as I am?
6. Are they likeable?
7. What is my gut telling me about this person?
8. Would I go on a double date with this person and their significant other?



## RESOURCES

### EXAMPLES OF MASTERMIND MEMBER APPLICATIONS

**The Momnificent Mom Mastermind Group:** A group developed for moms who want to focus on personal and family Growth.

**Paid to Exist Mastermind Alliance:** This is by invitation only.

**Glazer-Kennedy Insider's Circle:** An open application for a paid mastermind group.

### CONNECTING

**Google Hangouts:** Chat with your members

**Skype Group Call or Video Chat:** You can have a group call on Skype for free, but it costs money to get video as well.

**Facebook Social Hangouts:** This is similar to Google hangouts. You have to download the app before you can use it.

**ooVoo:** ooVoo lets you video chat with up to 12 friends at a time for free.

### COLLABORATING

**Google Drive:** You can create and edit documents online while collaborating real-time with your other team members. You can also use this to share all of your agendas and notes.

**Wridea:** Wridea makes it easy to collaborate and share ideas with your mastermind group. It's more of a brainstorming tool and organizes and categorizes ideas onto different pages, provides

unlimited storage, and allows users to comment on topics and ideas.

**Twiddla:** Twiddla works very well when you're trying to get a visual point across in a virtual meeting. Groups can use it to mark-up and comment on web pages, images, and anything else.

**Awesome Highlighter:** Show your group a piece of text in an article without having to tell them which paragraph and sentence. Just use this to highlight the page and give your team the short URL provided by Awesome Highlighter.

**Scriblink:** Get an instant and free online whiteboard you can share with your group by giving them the private URL.

**Facebook Group:** Start a private Facebook group to use to communicate throughout the week and post your goals and action items from your last meeting.

**LinkedIn Group:** Start a private LinkedIn group to stay in touch outside of meetings and use it as a shared space for all members to collaborate as well as a way to email all of your members about team updates.

## ADMINISTRATIVE

**Self-Destructable Text Notes:** Do you have a private message to send someone in your group? Your note will self-destruct after the receiver reads it. You can also use if you want to have a private Twitter chat.

**Survey Monkey:** You can use Survey Monkey if you decide that you want to have people apply for your mastermind group.

**Google Forms:** You can use Google Drive to create surveys to collect application responses as well.

**Doodle:** Doodle allows you to schedule events for free without even registering. You can send different dates times to all members and they check off which times they are available to meet.

**Entrepreneur Legal Forms & Templates:** If you decide that you do need an NDA, you can download a template here for free.

**Mastermind Group NDA:** Here is an example of an NDA created for a mastermind group.

**BUILD YOUR TEAM.**  
**WATCH THE MAGIC HAPPEN!**

You now have all of the information you need to create a successful, flourishing mastermind group!

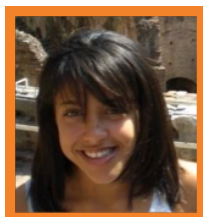
The only thing you have to do now is commit to your mission and DO IT. Your mastermind group is only as effective as the amount of effort you put into it.

It doesn't matter where you live, who you know, what you do, or how old you are. There's a group of people out there that are waiting for you to connect with them.

Here's to making magic happen.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**Liz Seda**

Liz is a corporate dropout turned lifestyle designer and blogger. Her love for building communities and helping people made her a great fit to put together mastermind groups for large communities, such as [How to Connect with Anyone](#) from Live Your Legend.

She has put together 48 mastermind groups for the How to Connect with Anyone Community (with nearly 300 members from 25 countries), not including her own mastermind by collecting responses from over 200 people from around the world.

In addition to building mastermind groups, Liz runs a blog called [A Life on Your Terms](#), where she writes about the limitless potential every individual possesses, and how to capitalize on that potential in yourself. Her mission is to create an international movement where people everywhere are rediscovering their love for life and taking care of themselves physically, mentally, professionally, and emotionally.

Find out more about Liz [here](#), and for more about A Life on Your Terms and how it can change your life, [click here](#).

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**Scott Dinsmore**

Scott is the founder of [Live Your Legend](#), a community and movement dedicated to changing the world by helping people find work they love and build a career around it.

The power that our surroundings have on one's career and success recently lead Scott to create the interactive How to Connect with Anyone course. He was fortunate enough to cross paths with Liz in the process, who proceeded to change the lives of every member of the course by offering her mastermind brilliance.

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## NEED MORE HELP SURROUNDING YOURSELF WITH THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE?

You might enjoy having a look at our hands-on interactive course, *How to Connect with Anyone*. As part of the course Liz and Scott interview every member and create custom mastermind groups for each person based on their goals, experience and geographic location.

A natural and proven framework for surrounding yourself with the world-changing people necessary to build your ideal career.

The course will be open again in the next two weeks to the first 150 to join, so be sure to [\*sign up for the waiting list on this linked page.\*](#)



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Here's to surrounding yourself with the people who can change your world!

-Scott Dinsmore, Liz Seda and The Connect with Anyone Team



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