



Working Out Loud Circle Guide

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Week 1: Choose a simple goal & list people related to it

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What to expect this week

In your first week, you'll get to know your other circle members, pick a goal you care about, and take your first steps towards that goal by creating a relationship list.

You may feel uncertain - about your goal or about sharing things. As a sense of trust develops among people in the group, you'll feel more encouraged and empowered.

Related reading from *Working Out Loud*

The introduction to *Part III Your Own Guided Mastery Program*
Chapter 10 - A practical goal and your first relationship list.

Blog post: workingoutloud.com/blog/if-youre-doing-it-right-it-feels-like-this

Suggested agenda

An hour can go by quickly, especially for five people. Sticking to this high-level agenda will help. Details for each topic are on the next page.

Thing to do	Approx. time
Start with why	15 mins
Exercise: Your goal for the next 12 weeks	5
Share your goals	10
Exercise: Create your first relationship list	10
Discuss your lists	15
Checkout for Week 1	5

Start with why (15 minutes)

Each person should speak for a few minutes on why they joined a Working Out Loud circle. Was it a desire for something more? A reaction to an event at work or in your life? Avoid a dry introduction of where you work and your corporate title. Instead, make it personal, and focus on what motivated you.

Your goal for the next 12 weeks (5 minutes)

Write down your goal for the next 12 weeks now. Keep it to just a sentence or two and less than 25 words. Here are some common goals:

- Get more recognition at my current job
- Find a job in a new company or location
- Explore possibilities in a new field
- Find people with the same interests
- Learn more about something I care about
- Get better at what I do

Share your goals (10 minutes)

Each person in turn should share their goal. Questions and discussions about individual goals are good but limit this section to ten minutes.

Create your first relationship list (10 minutes)

Be the Internet detective. Start searching for people and organizations related to your goal. Try to find 10 people. If you find a group and a role but can't yet find the name, that's okay. Just write down whatever information you have. For now, the most important thing is the searching itself.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Discuss your lists (15 minutes)

Someone should talk about their list. What kind of people did you pick? Did you have trouble with the exercise? If so, could others offer suggestions? There's no need for each person to share their entire list. The goal of the discussion is to ensure everyone understands how to build one.

Checkout for Week 1 (5 minutes)

1. Confirm the time and place for the next meeting.
2. Make sure everyone knows each other's email address and phone number, and talk about how you would prefer to communicate online in between meetings.
3. Remind each other to read the Week 2 circle guide and suggested reading.
4. Talk about the commitment for the next 11 weeks.
5. Over the course of the week, think about your goal and other people you might add to your list. Consider doing the bonus exercises below.

Commitment for the next 11 weeks

Before the next meeting each person should decide whether they will commit to being in the circle and participate for the next 11 meetings. That's important to establishing trust between members of the circle. Remind each other of this. If anyone decides they can't make that commitment, they don't need to specify a reason. They can simply send the group a short note and bow out gracefully.

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some common questions people have after their first circle meeting. You can ask questions yourself in the community on Facebook. (Just search on Facebook for "working out loud" and join the private group.)

Q: What if I don't know my goal?

Abraham Maslow, the psychologist famous for defining our hierarchy of needs, said, "It isn't normal to know what we want. It is a rare and difficult psychological achievement." If your goal isn't clear, consider one of the six common goals listed above. Your goal doesn't necessarily have to be a career goal. It could be anything you care about and want to get better at, even your favorite hobby or raising money for a good cause.

The key for the next twelve weeks isn't so much that you pick the best goal. What's important is that you practice working in a more open, connected way that helps you build relationships. Having that experience and developing the habit of working out loud will better equip you to pursue any goal in the future.

Q: What if I pick the wrong goal?

There is no right or wrong when it comes to goals, but people often do change their goal as they go through the twelve weeks.

A good goal is clear, something you care about, and is something you can make meaningful progress toward in twelve weeks. Some people are especially ambitious and try to set more than one goal for their circle. That can work, but focus and practice are more important than ambition. If you find yourself overwhelmed at all, make your goal less ambitious and more fun.

Bonus exercises

Easy: Something you can do right now in less than a minute

Scan your list for someone you like but haven't interacted with in some time. (You can also choose a friend or relative.) Send them a short text or email to say "I've been thinking of you and hope you're well." Think of how you would feel if you received such a message.

More challenging: Something you can do in less than 10 minutes

If you don't have a Twitter account already, create a basic one now. Even if you never tweet yourself, having an account is a tremendous asset in purposeful discovery. It allows you to learn about and interact with a wider range of people than was ever possible before. You can pick a photo and add other details later. If you already have an account, install the Twitter app on your phone and scan your Twitter stream.