



Working Out Loud Circle Guide

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Week 3: Work your lists

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What to expect this week

In Week 3, you work on managing your time and on offering other simple gifts to people on your relationship list. You may well refine your goal or even change it. That's fine. The key is to keep practicing by doing the exercises each week. Each small step matters.

Related reading from *Working Out Loud*

Chapter 12 - Working your lists

Blog post: johnstepper.com/2013/01/12/the-most-successful-person-in-babylon/

Blog post: workingoutloud.com/blog/when-someone-doesnt-respond-to-you

Suggested agenda

These exercises are particularly important, so leave yourself enough time for them.

Thing to do	Approx. time
Check-in	10 mins
Exercise: Pay yourself first	10
Discuss how you manage your time to work out loud	5
Exercise: Other universal gifts	15
Discuss your range of contributions	15
Checkout for Week 3	5

Check-in (10 minutes)

Each person should speak for just a few minutes about what they did since the last meeting. If they didn't do anything, there's no judgment. It's helpful to admit it and talk about it so you can all discuss adjustments you might make the next time. It's a natural part of the learning process and developing a new habit.

Exercise: Pay yourself first (10 minutes)

One of the biggest barriers to developing yourself and your career – and one of the themes of modern life – is being busy. People simply don't have the time to do the things they know would be good for them, whether that's exercising or eating right or, ahem, doing the exercises in between these meetings.

Read the suggested blog post above about “The Most Successful Person in Babylon.” Then “pay yourself first” by taking a look at your calendar and making appointments with yourself over the next week for doing the activities relating to your goal and working out loud toward that goal. Write down the slots you picked.

The group discusses how you manage time (5 minutes)

Have a short, open discussion about how you manage time related to working on their goal. Do you have a specific schedule? What challenges do you have? See if members can help each based on what works for them.

Exercise: Other universal gifts (15 minutes)

In your first meeting, you offered the universal gift of recognition by following someone. Another universal gift is gratitude. Pick someone on your list and offer thanks for something they've done via email, Twitter, text or any other channel you like. A genuine public *thank you* is a wonderful gift. Give one now and update your relationship list with the date and gift next to that person's name.

If you're like me, you're somewhat haunted by all the unsent thank you cards in your life. So here's a chance to make some amends. Pick someone on your list and offer a *private* thank you via email. Just two or three sentences that say you've been thinking

of them and wanted to thank them for something they did or said. Everyone would love to get such a note. So send one now and update your relationship list with the date and your gift next to that person's name.

Discussing contributions among the group (15 minutes)

Talk about your contributions. Did you have trouble coming up with ideas for certain people? If so, others in the group should offer suggestions. This is where the learning happens so try to include everyone in the discussion over the 15 minutes.

Throughout the discussion, try and focus on how you *feel* when you made the contribution and how you think the recipient might feel.

Checkout for Week 3 (5 minutes)

1. Confirm the time and place for the next meeting.
2. Remind each other to read the Week 4 circle guide and suggested reading.
3. Ask: "What will you do this week?"

Before the next meeting, keep working on your relationship list and on the contributions you would make for each person on it. Try making at least three of those contributions. Also, this week's bonus exercises can be quite fun.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I offered my contribution and they didn't respond.

Don't expect a reply. Remember that real gifts don't have strings attached and that "small gifts, freely given" are most appreciated. For further ideas on what to do next, read the suggested blog post, "When someone doesn't respond to you."

Bonus exercises

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

Show public appreciation on Twitter for someone's work. You can also do this at work on your intranet or enterprise social network. Don't do it to get a reply. Instead, think of it as a nice thing to do, and that it will be a bonus if someone does reply. Below, for example, I shared how much the weekly newsletter of Austin Kleon, best-selling author of *Steal Like an Artist* and *Show Your Work*.

If you like something, say something.



John Stepper
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Here's a newsletter I love. It's a weekly dose of serendipity with goldilocks portions of creativity, wit & wisdom

austinkleon.com/newsletter/



RETWEETS

4

FAVORITES

13



8:35 AM - 20 Dec 2014



Reply to @johnstepper



Austin Kleon @austinkleon · Dec 20
@johnstepper that's very kind of you :)



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

Google yourself. It's called a "vanity search," and people do it all the time. Wherever you happen to be now, use your phone or favorite Internet device to find yourself. Are the results you're looking at what you would like others to see? How much of your best work is visible?

Now play Internet Detective and search for people you find particularly interesting, people whose work you admire as opposed to celebrities. What is their online presence like? Is it easy to find them and their work?