

Open Sharing in Learning Circles

Goal

The goal is to learn about each other's progress in workforce retention and thereby gain ideas that can help in your own journey. Learn a way of sharing that enables everyone to learn from each other.

Description

Learning Circles provide a structured way of conversation that ensures everyone is part of the sharing. In a learning circle, everyone has the opportunity to speak once before anyone speaks again. In the first round of speaking people share their own experiences and perspectives rather than commenting on what they've heard from others. After everyone has had an opportunity to speak once and have their own ideas heard, then everyone in the group is free to explore and discuss what they have heard from each other.

Follow these steps for learning circle success:

1. Have each person keep his or her initial comments to about two minutes.
2. Invite anyone who feels so moved to be the one to start the conversation by sharing his or her own experience.
3. Have the person to the right or left take their turn next, sharing their own experiences in approximately two minutes.
4. Follow around the circle with each person speaking in turn, about his or her own experience, for about two minutes.
5. If anyone wants to pass, they can.
6. After the group has gone full circle, go back to anyone who passed and ask if they would like to speak.
7. Then open the conversation up for anyone to add to what they have said, ask each other questions, comment on what they have heard, and generally engage in discussion.

Discussion

Often in a group discussion, some people feel more easily able to jump in and others tend to shy away from participation. Through use of a learning circle, the group gets the benefit of everyone's experience and perspective.

Time needed:

For a group of 8 people, a learning circle needs at least 30 minutes to allow for everyone to speak and for discussion and exploration of what has been said.