



## MasterMind Groups

### The Fundamental Principles of Success and Achievement

Why are some people successful and others struggle without ever finding the reward they deserve? A key answer is **Support**. Whatever the field of human endeavour, successful people don't go it alone. They have support teams, and that means not just staff ministering to their needs. It means, above all, a team of peers and mentors who bring their knowledge and expertise to the table. These teams are called **MasterMind Groups**.

**MasterMind Groups** were first described by **Napoleon Hill** in a work commissioned by **Andrew Carnegie**. He introduced Napoleon Hill to 500 leading businessmen, inventors and civic leaders. His task was to learn their unique secrets and principles of success. Napoleon Hill condensed his findings into a book called ***Think And Grow Rich*** (first published in 1937).

In this article, I provide a bullet point summary of the concept of MasterMind Groups developed by Napoleon Hill and subsequently expanded by various other sources. My summary should be used as a brief introduction and checklist. It is not a substitute for reading Napoleon Hill's classic ***Think and Grow Rich***.

Napoleon Hill's goal was to unlock the principles of Business Success. However, what he discovered were the Fundamental Principles of Success and Achievement that apply to any field of human endeavour: commercial, academic, artistic, intellectual, athletic. For this reason, I'll use the term "enterprise" in its widest sense instead of Napoleon Hill's term "business." Dictionaries give the following definition of

**enterprise** (n.) –

1. An **undertaking**, especially one of some scope, complication, and risk
2. A business organization
3. Industrious, systematic **activity**, especially when directed toward profit
4. Willingness to undertake new ventures; **initiative**

Let's delve straight in:

Here are Napoleon Hill's **major findings**:

- **All** successful people he interviewed had **MasterMind** support surrounding them.
- All of them used this support **massively** and **deliberately**.

Here are a few examples of MasterMind Support throughout history:

- King Arthur and the Round Table
- Ben Franklin (he called his mastermind Junto)
- The Founding Fathers - Declaration of Independence
- Aristotle, Socrates and Plato
- MasterMinding is one of the top strategies of successful business people. All large corporations, private or public, have a **Board** of Directors, **Board** of Advisors, **Board** of Management.
- Edison, Ford, Harvey Firestone and Luther Burbank (biologist), all were surrounded by high powered support groups.

***"Whatever your mind can conceive and believe  
it can achieve."***

*Napoleon Hill*

### **What is MasterMinding?**

Napoleon Hill defines MasterMinding as the "coordination of knowledge and effort, in the spirit of harmony, between two or more people, for the attainment of a definite purpose."

MasterMinding brings together multiple perspectives, different degrees of maturity, diverse experiences and wisdom from multiple fields of endeavour. We come together to collaborate, to focus, to combine laser like attention on you, your enterprise, and to improve its performance, profitability / effectiveness and impact.

MasterMinding is a scientific, practical, repeatable, and pragmatic principle; it is a strategy and skill for:

- Reaching Your Goals
- Achieving Success
- Finding Solutions/Remedies
- Massive Innovation
- Optimisation of Business or Any Other Enterprise.

## What is the Value of a MasterMind Group?

MasterMind Groups **multiply and leverage** the brainpower of the **entire group** to create opportunities to grow and advance your enterprise, project or revenue.

## What is the Objective of a MasterMind Group?

The objective of a MasterMind Group is to provide advice, direction, constructive critique, to evaluate and examine; to reduce risk and cost; in a nutshell: to not go it alone.

## What are the Benefits of MasterMind Groups?

The benefits of MasterMind Groups are straightforward. MasterMind Groups:

- **model the success of others** directly and immediately;
- are **guided by a group of mentors** that have been there, done that;
- provide exposure to a **wide source of ideas**;
- **shorten time required** to take a project from concept to reality;
- **streamline** the problem solving process;
- create your own **personal board** of directors/advisors;
- create more **accountability** for your goals;
- develop **strong relationships**;
- help **achieve results**: make more money, create more wealth; they help achieve any other goal in any enterprise you choose;
- allow you to **share** your dreams and desires **in a safe environment**.

## Why Don't More People Use MasterMind Groups?

MasterMind Groups require that participants in a group **understand what they know and don't know**, and that they are **open to suggestions** while **accepting help** from like-minded people. When MasterMind Groups fail, they fail because individuals:

- don't appreciate the value or understand the impact a MasterMind Group can have on their enterprise
- don't feel they are worthy of being helped

- are afraid to share their problems, fearing it will make them less of a success in their own eyes
- believe they can solve their problems themselves
- think they have nothing to give in return
- are afraid of people stealing their ideas
- don't appreciate the perspective, wisdom, ideas of other people. They 'know' that they have a better way.

## Why Do Mastermind Groups Succeed?

MasterMind groups succeed if the participants, that is **you**, believe:

- that **knowledge, information, experience** and **wisdom** are the most important assets of any enterprise and
- that you need an **endless source of ideas** to further your cause, whatever it may be
- that both the **quality and quantity of ideas** are necessary to transform an enterprise
- in the **power, perspective and significance** of other people to enhance your own perception of yourself and your enterprise
- when **multiple ideas** are presented at the same time, you can look at all the hybrids, derivatives and tangential possibilities and ideas
- you will be given the opportunity to **take off your blinkers**
- that **people want to contribute and help** support others in their commitment to success.

## What are the Critical Success Factors for a Mastermind Group?

Certain things must happen for a MasterMind Group to be successful:

- The group must encompass a **diversity of people and opinions** (from non-competing enterprises).
- Different opinions are **critical**.
- Participants are **sharply focused** on a **specific** opportunity, problem, or project.
- Participants realise that **every meeting, every perspective is important**.
- The group meets on a **consistent** basis.

- The group has a **facilitator**, not a leader but someone who keeps the group moving forward and redirects it as necessary.
- **Everyone** gets something of value.
- The group holds people to high **standards of excellence**. Participants demand the best of every individual.
- The group creates an **environment to support you** in your quest for the best you can be.

## Do You Belong in a MasterMind Group?

### If you believe:

- that **people are the key to your success** and that you can't know everything,
- that **other people can help you** leverage experience, position, industry and career and that people help each other,
- that meeting people can help you who are **not** normally in the universe of people you come in contact with everyday,
- and if you are willing to **contribute selflessly and candidly**,

**then MasterMinding is for you.**

## How to Run a Mastermind Group

There are obviously a number of ways of running a MasterMind group. Here are three approaches.

**The first type of group** is suitable for beginners. By this I mean those who either have never participated in a MasterMind Group before or those who are starting a new enterprise.

To ensure the success of the group, it has to start from a common basis. For instance, agree that everyone who wants to participate has read Napoleon Hill's ***Think and Grow Rich***, or another fundamental book on MasterMinding. In my view, you can do a lot worse than starting with Napoleon Hill's classic as he covers the whole field.

Meetings of this type of group should take between 60 and 90 minutes, depending on the number of people attending. 4 to 6 participants is an optimal size. Any smaller and there won't be a sufficient breadth and depth of ideas and support; any larger and the attention will drop for and by those whose turn would be towards the end of the time allocated for

the meeting. This type of group would meet at regular but not too frequent intervals, say fortnightly or once a month.

The participants sit in a circle, facing each other at a comfortable distance.

Each person is **in turn** the centre of attention. Take up to 15 minutes per person.

Each person whose turn it is raises **only one** issue. The meeting proceeds as follows:

- 5 minutes: **Describe** the project/business and the issue in question.
- 5 minutes: the others question you for **clarification**; after that
- 5 minutes: **listen quietly** to suggestions and **take notes (no discussion)**. All contributions should be made to be helpful, constructive, inspirational and supportive.

Depending on total time available and to give every participant a fair shot, time can be reduced down to 2 minutes for each section (total of 5 to 6 minutes per person).

- Finally, each MasterMind group needs a chairperson whose task is to ensure that time is kept to guarantee fairness and deviation from the proven method is kept to a minimum to ensure effectiveness of the group.

**The second type of group** is suitable for more frequent, regular meetings of the MasterMind Group. This group would typically meet weekly, and the group would already be well established.

The set-up is similar to that of the first group but instead of everyone taking their turn at every meeting, in this group **one** person is the focus of attention for the **entire** session. The rest of the structure remains the same:

- 5 to 10 minutes: **Describe** the project/business and the issue in question.
- 10 minutes: the others question you for **clarification**
- 40 to 45 minutes: **listen quietly** to suggestions and **take notes**. You may occasionally ask questions for clarification but there should be **no discussion**. All contributions should be made to be helpful, constructive, inspirational and supportive.
- This MasterMind group, too, needs a chairperson whose task is to ensure that time is kept to guarantee fairness and deviation from

the proven method is kept to a minimum to ensure effectiveness of the group.

**The third type of MasterMind Group** is a high-powered MasterMind weekend or even week. Groups in this category meet two or three times a year. Once you reach a level that you need such a group, advice on how to run it will readily be available.

Members of MasterMind Groups at this level are leading exponents of their field: high powered businessmen or women, leading thinkers, activists and politicians. Participation in these groups does not come cheap.

The best advice on how to set up and run a MasterMind Group is simple: find **like-minded** people, follow the instructions set out above, and **get started**. Then things will happen, and you'll be set on your way to success.

**Resources:**

MasterMind Resources will be updated regularly online. Check back at [http://www.IntelligentChoicesLtd.com/articles/Mastermind\\_Groups.html](http://www.IntelligentChoicesLtd.com/articles/Mastermind_Groups.html)