



The Power of Circles

Reflect. Rethink. Revise. Recharge.



Why a Communication Strategy Circle — and why now?

Alone

Blind-sided

Ambiguous

Frustrated

Pressured

Uncertain

Complex

Volatile



We're working in a VUCA world (volatile, uncertain, complicated and ambiguous).

- ◆ The Circle is a place for conversation and consultation, a place for slowing down, listening and being heard. It taps into the wisdom and creative thinking of the group, which is so needed in this time of rapid business transformation and disruption. No professional can afford to be an island in today's VUCA world.

Knowledge is everywhere but insights are not.

- We're drowning in information on the Web, but short on clarity and insights.
- Research shows we learn best "on the job" solving real-world problems, voicing issues, ideas and challenges among peers.
- Professionals need to develop relationships with individuals who can help them refine their thinking and develop ideas to take back to their situation.



It's very hard to beat a good conversation.

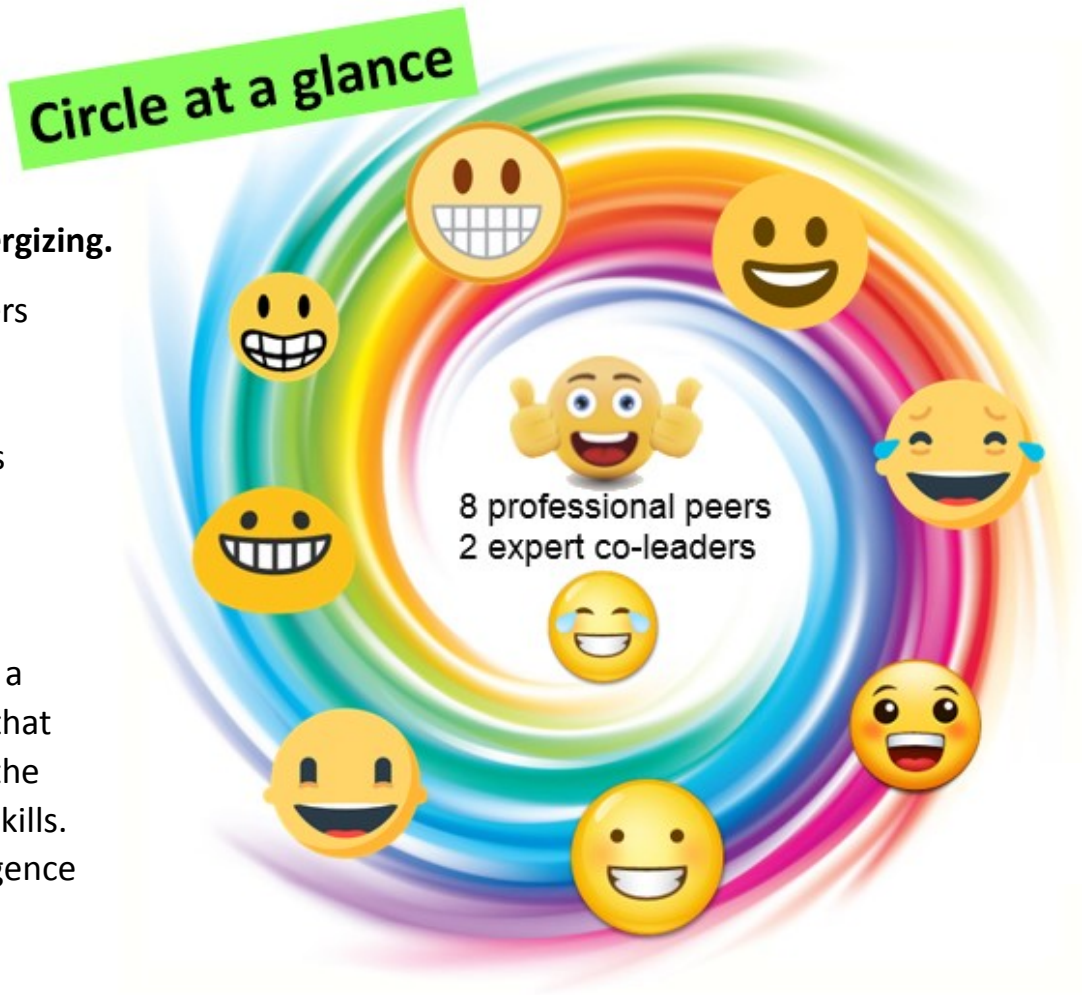
- The best way to make sense of the volatile work world we're working in is to speak about real-world issues with smart peers.
- The Circle brings together like-minded professional peers in expert-facilitated conversations that raise and help find answers to real-world problems. Members benefit from this supportive and low-risk sounding board and gain insights that jump-start innovations.

What's a Communication Strategy Circle?

Circle meetings are unscripted, engaging and energizing.

Strategy Circles bring like-minded experts and peers (eight maximum) together to share, learn and strategize. The format includes six bi-weekly web meetings over three months where the agenda is focused on the most challenging work issues members are facing. You can join on any mobile device from anywhere.

Our expert leaders use facilitation techniques and a rapid problem methodology to guide discussions that surface “aha” insights and practical solutions. At the same time, members also sharpen critical career skills. It's the classic win-win, proving the Communitelligence motto: “All of us are smarter than one of us.”



What your Strategy Circle membership includes:





- ✓ **Six 75-minute web meetings over three months, facilitated by two expert leaders** (attend from your office or any mobile device).
- ✓ **Access to the private online Circle community on Communitelligence** with meeting recordings, resources and discussions.
- ✓ **Camaraderie with peers in your Circle** plus other Circle alumni. Your Circle is ever-expanding.
- ✓ **Three months free membership to [Communitelligence Premier](#)** with access to more than 100 of the best corporate communication courses (\$1,295 annual value).
- ✓ **Communitelligence Strategy Circle Badge of Completion** and potential to earn 10 points toward maintaining the Communication Management Professional (CMP) certification of the Global Communication Certification Council.





Communitelligence



9 ways Strategy Circles are better than a conference

Features	Strategy Circle	Conference
<p>Agenda</p> 	<p>Set together by expert leaders and all Circle members</p>	<p>Set by organizers, usually months in advance</p>
<p>Relevance</p> 	<p>Each member presents an issue they're dealing with and gets ideas and suggestions from the group; also ability to ask each other questions</p>	<p>Except for hallway conversations, there is little or no chance to get individual questions answered.</p>
<p>Level of Engagement</p> 	<p>Lean in – you're actively engaged and listening to give and receive ideas and enjoy the conversation</p>	<p>Lean back – you're listening and perhaps, taking notes, but are not expected to contribute</p>
<p>Emphasis</p> 	<p>You're focusing and dealing with multiple real-time, real-world issues that you and your peers care enough about to bring to the Circle. You truly have your finger on the pulse on what's going on</p>	<p>You're hearing some best practices and case studies that may or may not be relevant to you and your organization</p>

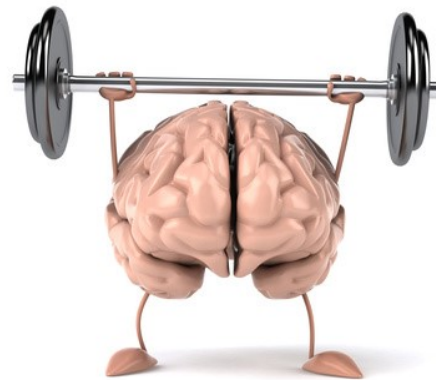


Features	Strategy Circle	Conference
<p>Skills Developed</p> 	<p>Listening, strategic thinking and consulting, collaboration, future-casting and advising</p>	<p>Listening</p>
<p>Relationships</p> 	<p>By the end of your Circle, you and your Circle peers are co-collaborators and ready to be BFFs (Best Friends Forever)</p>	<p>By the end of the conference you've met a handful of peers whom you probably won't ever talk to again</p>
<p>Time</p> 	<p>Attend six 75-minute web conferences from your office or any mobile device over three months</p>	<p>2-4 days out of office, with work both interrupting and stacking up while you're away.</p>
<p>Cost</p> 	<p>\$695 for six sessions over a 3-month period</p>	<p>\$2-8,000 for registration and travel</p>
<p>Added Bonus</p> 	<p>Energizing time for thinking and having insights; at end of each session, can return to work refreshed</p>	<p>Energy draining, because you're alternating between feeling like you're drinking from a fire hose from so much content, or you're being subjected to Chinese water torture from the slow pace of irrelevant material</p>
<p>Bottom Line</p> 	<p>The most individual help, learning, skills development and networking for the least time and cost commitment</p>	<p>Only best if you just want a good excuse to get out of the office and travel</p>

6 ways a Strategy Circle will benefit you and your organization

It's all practical and real world

Unlike a conference or webinar where the content is pre-set by presenters, the Circle is built around real-world issues you and your peers are dealing with. You can bring to a Circle meeting the most pressing challenges you and your organization are facing. We use a rapid problem-solving tool to quickly surface valuable feedback and ideas for action.



You will sharpen the critical skills you need to succeed today

As a Circle member, you are expected to contribute your best ideas and feedback to other members. This means meetings are “lean-in.” You’re actively engaged to give your best ideas to other members. In this process, you will sharpen these skills:

- Listening
- Strategic Thinking
- Presenting
- Consulting
- Coaching
- Collaboration and brainstorming
- Future-casting

You will gain practical insights and guidance that will advance your organization and career

The agenda for Circle meetings is set together by the two leaders and Circle members. Besides individual challenges, meetings include a discussion of key industry and professional trends and issues. You truly have your finger on the pulse on what’s going on.



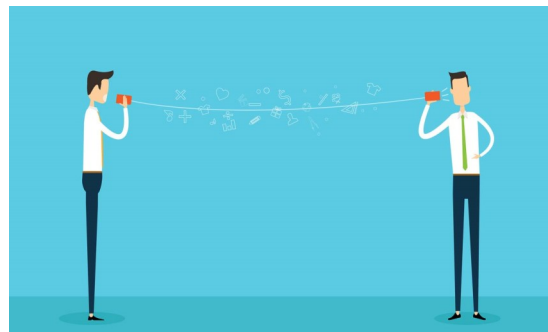


You gain influence as a trusted strategist and adviser

Being able to present and get feedback from trusted peers allows you to clarify and solidify your ideas for change and innovation. The Circle experience allows you to gain confidence for presenting your ideas and proposals to others.

You will have your finger on the pulse

Because Circle members are openly sharing their issues and problems (with confidentiality agreements in place), every meeting reveals trends and actions that are either happening or will soon be happening in your organization. Being able to discuss them among peers gives you a great heads up for discussions you can lead in your own organization.



You build new relationships with peers you respect and trust

The open sharing and collaborative design of the Circle assures that you will make lasting friendships that you can continue to call on for feedback and advice.

Strategy Circle member testimonials

- ***“The Communication Strategy Circle is a safe place to discuss business challenges with leaders like yourself. It’s confidential, cordial and collaborative. I get new ideas and motivation from every meeting.”*** (Circle member from global financial advisory firm)
- ***“It’s really been helpful to have this group. All of us have a tremendous amount to share. The more we talk, it gets richer and more valuable, even though our professional worlds are very different.”*** (Circle member from multinational technology company)
- ***“It was hard to realize there was an end point for the group. It got better and better as sessions went on. It was a great opportunity for me to take 75 minutes and really focus on someone else, which was refreshing. It helped sharpen my listening skills and focus on feedback that would be of most value to the group.”*** (Circle member from one of the largest universities in the U.S.)
- ***“The feedback and various viewpoints with fresh perspectives were most valuable. The program was very well structured and organized and I think we became a team with great spirit.”*** (Circle member from a multinational banking and financial services company)



Letter from the Director



John Gerstner. ABC and IABC Fellow, is founder and CEO of Communitelligence. He has career experience as an internal communications and intranet manager (at John Deere and Florida Blue) web developer, video producer, book author, magazine editor, photo-journalist, conference producer, marketer, consultant and public speaker.

From the minute I first saw a Netscape web browser in a John Deere IT meeting in the mid-1990s, I have been a huge advocate of using technology for organizational communications.

I started Communitelligence in 2000 as a web portal that brought together corporate communication, marketing, PR and HR professionals to learn and share best practices. Our slogan then and now is: "All of us are smarter than one of us."

I still evangelize technology, but experience has taught me that when it comes to knowledge sharing, organizational communication and change, there is great value in simply connecting people to talk with one another. Nothing beats a good conversation.

The Communication Strategy Circle plays on this idea directly. [Liz Guthridge](#), my Circle co-leader, and I conceived the Circle program to help communicators connect to sharpen their thinking and leadership skills with minimal cost and time commitment.

We facilitate bi-monthly web meetings with small cohorts of peers. The agenda is set by members and each one has their day to present an issue, problem or challenge that they're facing for group input.

We listen, ask questions and then go through a rapid solution building process that surfaces the essence of the challenge and possible innovations and next steps to achieve success.

We also discuss big-picture topics suggested by the group such as leading change, communicating to the new workforce and being a trusted adviser. Again, this is a facilitated discussion guided by "thinking questions."

Our meetings are unscripted, intense and very engaging. You lean in instead of back. You feel you have your finger on the pulse of what's really happening in other organizations, in different industries and locations.

Each Circle also has a private meeting place on Communitelligence where meeting recordings, free webinars and resources are archived. There is a discussion forum to continue conversations. All combined, members get to know on a deeper level some of the leaders in the profession, so the Circle continues.

Call it immersive training, the flipped classroom or peer-to-peer learning, I believe this is where professional knowledge sharing and development is headed. Yes, "all of us are smarter than one of us."



What's the cost of not attending a Communication Strategy Circle?

- Strategy Circles are like conferences and webinars on steroids. They give you the most practical and efficient learning and development for the least time commitment—just eight hours and no out-of-office travel.
- Strategy Circles cost \$695 for six sessions over a 3-month period. That's about \$115 / Circle hour.
For that you get:
 - Personal access to two consultants (7.5 hours x hourly rates = est. \$7,500)
 - Free access to private Circle community on Communitelligence where you can network and continue to discuss issues with other members, access recordings of each meetings and learn from a continually growing Circle resource archive. (value = ?)
 - Free 3-month access to Communitelligence Premier, featuring more than 100 courses on the most important topics taught by the most experienced and knowledgeable business communication professionals. (\$1,295 annual value)
- **Now think about the cost of not taking time to reflect and discuss what's happening in your job, profession, your role and the challenges you're facing?**

Next steps.

- Go to the [Communication Strategy Circle page](#) on Communitelligence
- [Register](#) for the Strategy Circle of your choice.
- Book the Circle meeting times in your calendar and look for further communications as the start-date draws near.
- Start thinking about the key work challenge you would like to bring to your Strategy Circle.
- And get ready to reflect, rethink, revise and recharge.

