

LEAN IN



LEADERS CONFERENCE CIRCLES DISCUSSION GUIDE

Stacy Brown-Philpot: Authentic Leadership

Overview

INSTRUCTIONS

Individually or as a group, watch the video of Stacy Brown-Philpot, CEO of TaskRabbit, talking to Lean In president Rachel Thomas about authentic Leadership (available at leanin.org/stacybrownphilpot). Use the questions below for a group discussion on the themes and ideas shared in their talk.

ABOUT THIS VIDEO AND GUIDE

Stacy Brown-Philpot is the current CEO of TaskRabbit and a member of the board of directors of HP, Nordstrom, and Black Girls Code. She was named as one of *Fortune's* 40 Under 40 in 2015. In this video she talks about why it helps to bring your whole self to your job and how to go about it. This discussion guide helps you brainstorm ways to be more authentic at work.



Meeting Guide

1 Check-In

Warm up, catch up, and get going

🕒 Approx. 15 minutes

STEP 1: ICEBREAKER

👥 Group activity

🕒 5 minutes or less

An icebreaker is a powerful tool to help us become present with one another and ourselves.

Use this icebreaker to see how your Circle members feel about being authentic at work. Read out the statements below and have members raise their hand if they relate to the experience.

Raise your hand if

- You've ever felt you had to hold back from revealing your true self at work
- You've ever revealed something about your authentic self at work and felt that you were taking a risk

STEP 2: MEMBER UPDATES

👥 Group activity

🕒 1 minute or less per member

Once you're warmed up, go around your Circle and share personal updates. As a general rule, personal updates should be brief and focus on big changes and important decisions in your life. (It's OK not to have one every month!)

If you have a One Action Update, share that with your Circle at the same time. (A One Action is one concrete action you committed to take at your last meeting; the goal of a One Action is to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.)

For example, a member update might go like this: *"Since our last meeting, I asked my boss for a big assignment and got it. I'm thrilled but a little nervous [personal update]. For my One Action, I asked that coworker I've been struggling with out for lunch. She immediately said yes, and I was surprised by how easily we got along. I can see it helping in the office, and we're going out for lunch again next week—her invite! [One Action Update]."*

2 Education Activities

Learn from experts and one another

🕒 Approx. 35 minutes for both activities

Activity 1: Discuss your reactions to the talk

🕒 Approx. 15 minutes

1. What most surprised you about Stacy's talk?
2. Did any of the experiences she describes really resonate with you? What were those experiences, and how do they relate to your life?
3. Have you ever revealed something about yourself at work and had it go better than you expected?
4. What's one key takeaway from her talk that you'd like to share with someone else? With whom would you share it?

Activity 2: What do you want men to know?

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

Stacy gives examples of how she started bringing her whole self to work. For instance, she wore her hair naturally, talked about foods she liked, and expressed her reaction to news stories about Black people who were killed by the police.

She also explains why it's a good idea to bring your whole self to work: it makes for a happier, more productive, more inclusive workplace.

These exercises are designed to help you think about how you might bring your whole self to work and feel comfortable doing so.

Before you begin, remind the group that your Circle is a place of confidentiality. Trust is critical, so what happens in your Circle should stay in your Circle.

1. Share with your Circle

- Individually, take a few minutes to write down three things that are important to you that you've never talked about with your Circle.

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- Then, go around the room and have everyone share one thing from their list with the entire Circle.

2. Brainstorm one thing to share with your colleagues

- Think about the colleagues you work with every day. Is there anything you'd like them to know about you that they don't already know?
- Write down at least three things.
- Pick one and share it with your Circle.

3. Plan a space for sharing at work

- Stacy talks about the value of creating safe spaces at work—such as Lean In Circles—where people can be their whole selves.
- Write down a few ideas that could work for you:
 - » Examples: Give a lunchtime talk about a favorite leisure activity, create a group chat for colleagues focused on a hobby like cooking or rock climbing, start a book club
- Share one of your ideas with your Circle.

3 One Action

The little push you need to go for it

🕒 Approx. 5 minutes

We recommend you close every meeting by committing to a “One Action”—one concrete thing you’re going to do before your next Circle meeting to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.

This month, you could commit to sharing something about yourself at work or creating one of the safe spaces you brainstormed in **Activity 2**. Next time you meet, update your Circle on what you did and how it went.

SHARE YOUR ONE ACTION WITH YOUR CIRCLE

One by one, go around your Circle and complete the following statement:

- Over the next month, I commit to sharing _____ with my coworkers.

OR

- Over the next month, I commit to creating a _____ [lunchtime talk/group chat/regular coffee meet-up] for coworkers interested in _____.

Move quickly from member to member, and consider cheering one another on as you go.

4 Wrap-Up

What's next and a few final words

🕒 Approx. 15 minutes

STEP 1: FINALIZE LOGISTICS OF YOUR NEXT MEETING

👥 Group activity

🕒 Approx. 10 minutes

Before you break, make sure you have the basics covered for your next meeting, including day and time, location, and food and drink responsibilities. Decide what you're going to do when you get together or who is going to send out ideas. You may also want to talk through what worked—and what didn't—in today's meeting so you can brainstorm improvements going forward.

STEP 2: CLOSE ON AN ENERGETIC AND INSPIRATIONAL NOTE

👥 Group activity

🕒 5 minutes or less

Think of one small moment of joy you can plan for this week. Go around your Circle one by one and share what you'll do.

CONGRATULATIONS ON A GREAT MEETING.

About Lean In Circles

Lean In Circles are small groups that meet regularly to learn and grow together. They're a place for sharing ideas, gaining skills, seeking advice, and showing solidarity. Most of all, they're a place where we help one another become our very best selves. Starting a Lean In Circle is one of the best ways to build your skills while helping others. To find out more visit leanin.org/circles.