



LEAN IN

Universal Circle Meeting Guide

Getting started

How to use this meeting guide

This guide is designed to help you plan and lead a meaningful Circle meeting from start to finish based on the topic of your choice. It includes an agenda, timing, and discussion prompts that can be adapted to fit your Circle's needs.

Before you get started:

- Read all the way through this meeting guide so you know what to expect. You can print this guide for reference, or keep it open in a window on your computer.

Choose your meeting topic:

Start with a topic from our Lean In [education library](#), a resource library for Circles focused on tried-and-true Lean In topics like empathetic leadership, overcoming imposter syndrome, and giving and receiving sponsorship.

Alternatively, you can bring your own topic to the meeting—such as an article you've read, a podcast you enjoyed, or something timely from the news.

Let your Circle know ahead of time what the topic will be so everyone has a chance to review or reflect before the meeting.

Meeting agenda

approx. 60 mins.

Member updates

10 mins.

Icebreaker

10 mins.

Discussion activity

Introduce meeting topic

5 mins.

Discussion activity

20 mins.

Write it down (optional)

5 mins

Wrap-up

One Action

5 mins.

Prepare for your next meeting

5 mins.

Before you start your discussion

Member updates

2 mins. or less per member

10 mins. depending on group size

Go around your Circle and share personal updates. Generally, personal updates should be brief and focus on significant 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.

Icebreaker: Choose a question

10 mins.

A good icebreaker sets the tone for your meeting and helps members connect on a personal level. When choosing an icebreaker, aim for something that's easy to answer, encourages reflection, and loosely relates to your meeting topic.

Here are a few go-to approaches to guide your selection:

1. Choose a question that ties into the meeting topic in a light or creative way.

Examples:

- If your topic is confidence: *What's something you're really good at but rarely talk about?*
- If your topic is burnout: *What's your favorite way to recharge after a stressful week?*

2. Ask a question that invites personal reflection. Examples:

- *What's one small win you've had recently?*
- *What's a value that guides you at work or in life?*

3. Choose something that helps people get to know each other better.

Examples:

- *What was your very first job—and what did it teach you?*
- *If you could have lunch with anyone (living or not), who would it be and why?*

Go around the room and have everyone share a response to your chosen icebreaker. Keep icebreaker answers to one to two minutes per person to make sure there's enough time for deeper discussion later.

Discussion activity

Introduce your meeting topic

5 mins.

Watch the video you've chosen or review the selected topic together. If members have already reviewed it before the meeting, use this time to highlight key points, share initial reactions, or provide a brief recap for anyone who didn't have a chance to review it.

Discussion: Facilitate a conversation based on your selected topic

20 mins.

Here are some sample prompts to get the conversation flowing—feel free to adapt or build on them based on your topic:

General reflection

- *What resonated the most with you, and why?*
- *Were there any surprising or unexpected takeaways?*
- *Was there a moment, story, or quote that stuck with you?*
- *Was there anything you disagreed with or wanted to explore further?*
- *What's one thing you're still thinking about after engaging with this content?*
- *Did this resource change the way you think about the topic? If so, how?*

Personal connection

- *How does this topic connect to real challenges or opportunities we face at work or in life?*
- *How does this topic show up in your day-to-day—either for you or those around you?*
- *How do your lived experiences shape the way you relate to this topic?*

Application and action

- *What strategies or takeaways would you want to try?*
- *Is there something you might do differently after this conversation?*
- *What advice would you give someone navigating this topic?*

Group insight

- *What patterns or common themes are coming up across the group?*
- *How can we support each other in applying what we've learned?*

Discussion activity

Write it down (optional)

5 mins.

Give members a few quiet minutes to reflect individually and connect the discussion to their own experiences.

Prompt:

Think about a challenge, goal, or opportunity you're currently navigating at work or in your personal life. Write that down.

Now, reflect on what you've learned from today's conversation or resource.

- *What strategies, insights, or ideas feel most useful for your situation?*
- *What mindset shift or next step would help you move forward?*

Make a quick list of actions or questions to explore after the meeting. These can become your One Action or simply something to revisit later.

Wrap-up

Commit to a One Action

5 mins,

Think about one concrete action (big or small) you'll do to step outside your comfort zone or try something new before the next meeting..

Your action might be inspired by the resource you discussed, something that came up in conversation, or a personal insight you gained during the meeting.

Example:

"Today's conversation made me realize I've been avoiding a difficult conversation at work. My One Action is to schedule time with that colleague this week to clear the air."

- Go around your Circle and **share your One Action with the group** (1 minute or less per member).
- Vocalizing your One Action to your Circle will help hold you accountable, giving you the little extra push you need to go for it.
- When you meet next time, you can check in on each other's progress.

Prepare for your next meeting

5 mins.

- **Before you break, make sure you have the basics covered for your next meeting:** day, time, location, and what topic you'll be discussing.
- **Decide who will lead your next meeting.** You can stick with the same Circle Leader each time or take turns leading month to month.
- **Encourage your Circle to stay connected between meetings.** Whether through email, WhatsApp, a text group, or social media. Share helpful resources, celebrate wins, and keep cheering each other on.
- If there's time, you may also want to talk through what worked—and what didn't—in today's meeting and brainstorm improvements going forward.

Notes

Notes