

ON BEING A PRACTICE GROUP LEADER

Terms of Engagement Questions

1. What is my minimum-maximum requirement for the amount of non-reimbursed time that I should devote to group leadership activities?
2. Can we agree what my rights are, as group leader, to interact with group members (and their clients)? What's acceptable, and what's not?
3. To what degree can I be assured that my compensation will be based, entirely or in large part, on my effectiveness in helping the group succeed?
4. Can we agree that I will be allowed to provide individual performance appraisal input on each member of the team and that my input will be accorded serious consideration irrespective of that individual's personal production?
5. Can we agree that firm management will communicate internally that activities conducted with non-reimbursed time are valued, monitored, and considered an essential part of each person's performance appraisal – and that group leaders will be called upon to provide their input?
6. Can I have the assurance of firm management that my efforts as group leader will be supported by:
 - a) a clear articulation of the importance of strong groups within the firm, and a clear articulation of my mandate and powers as a group leader
 - b) active encouragement provided to everyone to get them on board with the initiative
 - c) the attendance of firm leaders at periodic meeting of the group
 - d) an ongoing and visible demonstration of acknowledgement to those groups making progress
 - e) the initiation of a group leaders' council to facilitate communications and information sharing
 - f) the scheduling of periodic progress reviews

Ways a Coach Adds Value

1. Creates Energy and Excitement
2. Source of Creative Ideas
3. Forges Teamwork
4. Solves Problems/Breaks Down Barriers for Team Members - Makes it easier for them to succeed.
5. Acts as a Sounding Board - Helps People Think Through Their Issues
6. Enforces Standards (deals promptly with non-compliance)
7. Be a Conscience (“Gentle Pressure”)
8. Be a Source of Encouragement

How would you rate yourself at each of these?

How would those you lead rate you?

What a Leader Could Spend Time On

1. Spend unscheduled, informal time with individual people (senior and/or junior), serving as coach, to help them develop themselves and their practice.
2. Be knowledgeable about the development of junior people and be ready to suggest reassignments between projects in order to build skills and advance their careers.
3. Be in touch with other group members' clients to help them grow relationships, and to monitor client satisfaction and act as a conscience for everyone to excel at client satisfaction.
4. Help members of the team differentiate themselves from other competitors in a meaningful way that clients recognize and value.
5. Help people to stay current with the trends affecting the client industries they serve, the changes that will affect these clients, and their demand for the group's services.
6. Monitor the profitability of assignments conducted by group members and discuss results with them.
7. Devise methodologies to capture and share knowledge acquired while serving clients both within the group and across the firm.
8. Help the group explore new and innovative ways of using technology to better deliver services and reduce costs to clients.
9. Spend time recruiting, interviewing, and attracting potential recruits (junior and senior).
10. Spend time following up and actively helping members of the group execute their planned activities.
11. Initiate and run regular meetings to collectively plan the group's activities and initiatives for the coming quarter.
12. Conduct formal performance appraisals of other (senior) people in the team for purposes of compensation.
13. Conduct counseling sessions with people on the basis of these performance appraisals.
14. Celebrate individual and group achievements – the minor wins, not just the home runs; the good tries, not just the successes.

Some Rules to Build a Great Relationship

1. You need to be available as a sounding board to your romantic partner. You don't need to be critical. Listen before you react.
2. Work really hard at listening and understanding
3. Do the unexpected occasionally; don't take each other for granted
4. Discuss your common values
5. Communicate honestly, openly and frequently
6. Spend time with each other, with no agenda
7. Show your appreciation regularly, but not in a formulaic way
8. Find ways to have fun together
9. Don't let problems fester. Catch them and discuss them early
10. Show Interest
11. Understand
12. Spend time off the issue
13. Give of yourself

Some Self-Diagnostic Questions

1. How many of those that you have the responsibility to coach would consider you their trusted advisor?
2. Do you actually like the people you are coaching – and do they know you like them?
3. Do the people you are seeking to coach actually view you as being someone who cares about others?
4. Can you help your people to visualize and articulate their dreams?
5. Are you investing time toward building a strong relationship?
6. Do people feel comfortable admitting their flaws to you?
7. Do you always act and offer your advice in the best interests of your people?

Feedback to the Group Leader

To provide feedback to the group leader, please complete the following questions. Indicate your agreement or disagreement, using the following scale: *1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Somewhat Disagree; 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 = Somewhat Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree*

THE GROUP LEADER.....

1. Causes me to stretch for performance goals
2. Is concerned about long-term issues, not just short-term profits
3. Provides constructive feedback that helps me improve my performance
4. Is a source of creative ideas about our business
5. Helps me to grow and develop.
6. Conducts team meetings in a manner that breeds involvement
7. Makes me feel that I am a member of a well-functioning team
8. Emphasizes cooperation as opposed to competitiveness within the group
9. Is prompt in dealing with underperformance and underperformers
10.Helps me understand how my tasks fit into the overall objectives for the group
11.Keeps me informed about the things I need to know to perform my role properly
12.Actively encourages me to volunteer new ideas and make suggestions for improvement of the group
13.Encourages me to initiate tasks or projects I think are important
14.Is good at keeping down the level of "politics and politicking"
15.Is more often encouraging than critical
16.Is accessible when I want to talk
17.Is fair in dealings with people
18.Is consultative in his/her decision-making
19.Acts more like a coach than a boss
20.Is publicly generous with credit
21.Is effective in communicating

