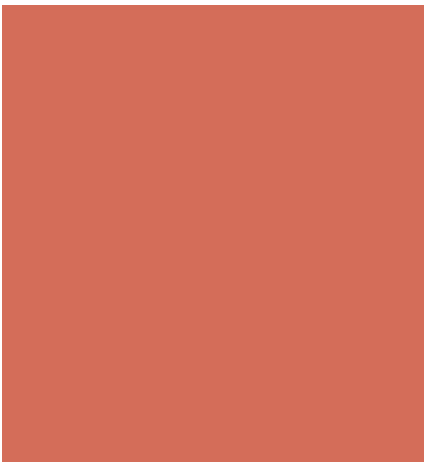
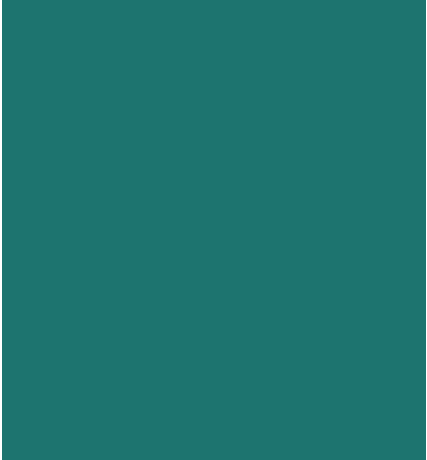


# MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM GUIDE



**LIFTING AS  
YOU LEAD**  
MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM



**DIRIGER EN  
SOULEVANT LES AUTRES**  
CERCLES DE MENTORAT PROGRAMME



# WELCOME

Welcome and congratulations on becoming a member of the Lifting as You Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) program. We are pleased to announce that as a new program, LLMC has launched with over 300 participants! As this is the first LLMC program of its kind, you and your continuous feedback and active participation are imperative to the development of sessions for 2022 and years to come.

LLMC will take place over five (5) weeks and is intended to provide a platform for employees to network with colleagues and leaders across the Public Service, improve leadership skills, and explore career development opportunities.

Each week, Circle members will meet virtually to tackle a new discussion topic. Topics were selected through an active consultation process in summer 2021.

Circles will consist of 6 to 10 participants who are intended to meet on a weekly basis.

The objective of this guidebook is to equip Circle Leaders with the tools to lead a mentorship circle. As a Circle Leader you will have a unique opportunity to inspire and provide members with a chance to build confidence, improve leadership skills, and engage in career development through active facilitation.



# OVERVIEW

## **Who is a Circle member?**

The mentoring circles are open to all Government of Canada employees. There are currently over 300 members – ranging from students to executives and everyone in between!

## **Program schedule**

There are five circle meetings over a five-week period. Specific dates and times are determined by each circle. We recommend Circle sessions take place after 11am EST to account for time zone differences.

## **Meeting schedules and Curriculum Themes**

- Confidence and Career Building
  - week of November 15, 2021
  
- Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion
  - week of November 22, 2021
  
- Leadership Essentials
  - week of November 29, 2021
  
- Negotiation
  - week of December 6, 2021
  
- Navigating Work and Life during a Pandemic
  - week of December 13, 2021



# OVERVIEW

## **Why participate?**

The LLMC program will develop leaders at all levels and foster a deeper sense of community and belonging for the people in our organizations. This is a great opportunity to make new connections with people who share common interests and learning objectives. Your active participation can also yield these results:

## **Build a stronger sense of belonging in the Public Service**

- community engagement
- mentoring across levels
- networking opportunities across departments

## **Build your skills**

- relevant discussion themes
- leadership opportunities within circle
- increased access to talent development programs

## **Networking for your future**

- developing relationships with diverse participants
- connecting with senior management across the Public Service
- sharing knowledge and opportunities



# VISION AND MISSION

## **Vision**

We are committed to taking major, measurable actions so that employees with diverse backgrounds and abilities are able to access opportunities, are accepted and valued for their differences, and can thrive in a welcoming, safe, secure, and inclusive workplace.

The Lifting as You Lead Mentoring Circle program is grounded in the 2020/2021 Deputy Minister Commitments on Diversity and Inclusion and strives to build on the Clerk's Call to Action to address anti-racism, equity, and inclusion in the Federal Public Service.

## **Mission**

LLMC aims to equip members with a toolbox of new skills and ideas, connect you with people across the public service and lift them higher.

Each week's session is constructed to provide empowering and challenging activities to amplify your voices, increase awareness of possibilities and bring people together.

## **Why a Circle?**

There's power in people coming together. Learning and developing is much easier when you are not alone. In fact, it is enriched when you are surrounded by a like-minded community focused on transformation.



# CIRCLE STRUCTURE

Circles are a safe space to share, listen, provide advice and guidance on dealing with difficult and challenging situations and celebrate each other's differences, successes and growth.

Circle participation is 100 per cent voluntary and free. As a Circle member, we ask that you fully participate and uphold the Circle fundamentals, principles and values.

## **Circle Size**

The optimal number is 6-10 members per Circle.

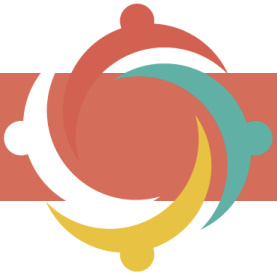
## **Circle Timeframe**

Each weekly session is 60-90 minutes long. Each meeting follows this formula for maximum collaboration and clear expectations.

## **Circle Toolbox**

Circle leaders and members are provided with the following resources to ensure that they are fully equipped to conduct mentoring Circles that will encourage maximum participation of members and the ability to provide support to their Circle.

- Weekly topic survey
- Post session survey
- Script to lead and close a Circle
- Agenda with Ice Breaker, Activities and Group Discussions
- Workbook with reflection questions and resource guide
- Office hours weekly from 11am to 12 noon EST
- Email communication



# CIRCLE EXPECTATIONS

## Circle Ground Rules

It is requested that the following are adhered to/respected in order to ensure that members feel secure and that they are in a safe space to share and participate openly and freely.

- **Confidentiality:** Trust is critical
- **Communication:** Be candid and honest - listen with empathy
- **Commitment:** Be fully present and attend all five week. No multitasking.

## Circle Values (What we believe in)

- **Equality:** Everyone is an equal member. Everyone has something valuable to share.
- **Substance:** Share what's important.
- **Openness:** Listen and avoid judgements. Lifting others as you lead is critical.
- **Respect:** Treat others as they would like to be treated.



# CIRCLE MEMBER

## Circle Member Expectations

People coming together is powerful. The better your Circle experiences, the stronger and more resourceful the Public Service becomes. In order to ensure that members walk away from from these sessions feeling enlightened and empowered it is expected that members encourage and demonstrate the following:

- Follow Circle ground rules and values.
- Be committed.
- Be respectful. If an unexpected circumstance occurs, notify your Circle that you are unable to attend the meeting or will be late (minimum 1 hour prior to meeting).
- Be camera ready. Seeing one another fuels one another.
- Upload your best photo on your MS Teams account avatar.
- Have a stable Wi-Fi connection. Consider using your personal device.
- Mute your microphone when you aren't speaking.
- Complete home assignments and be ready to report on your one action.
- Actively participate - speak, type, pass, circle back if you need more time.





# CIRCLE LEADER

## **Who is a Circle leader?**

A Circle leader is the host and facilitator of the session.

## **What is the role of a Circle leader?**

The role of a leader is to encourage the Circle members, to prepare for and engage them in the meeting activities. The Circle leader sets the tone.

How to be a good and effective Circle leader?

### **1. Bring positive energy**

As a leader, it is imperative to consistently display a positive and dynamic vibe while on camera. Being authentically enthusiastic about the program will create an atmosphere where Circle members feel welcome, at ease and it encourages participation and discussion.

### **2. Keep track of time**

The Circle leader is responsible for the time management of the meeting activities. If one segment runs over, see if you can recover by cutting some time off another segment. If one segment is too short, you can extend the following segment. Ultimately, you ensure that the meeting starts and ends on time.

### **3. Ensure the rules and expectations are observed**

You are responsible for managing the community. Facilitate a friendly and trusting atmosphere that makes members feel safe and respected.



# CIRCLE LEADER

## 4. Attend pre-session meetings

Save the date and time of pre-session training. You can ask questions and empower yourself with confidence and knowledge necessary to run a successful Circle.

## 5. Speed of speech

Make sure that the speed of your delivery is easy to follow. If you speak too slowly or too quickly, your audience will have difficulty following what you say. A tip to add life to your dialogue is to change the pace of your delivery. A slightly faster cadence might convey enthusiasm. A slightly slower pace can add emphasis or caution.

## 6. Build Rapport

We recommend you speak more like a coach or a friend than an instructor.

Wrap instructions into memorable and clear phrases to maintain mutual trust and respect with your Circle members.

<b>Engage</b>	Can you give me a hand?
	What can I clarify?
	What do you think?
<b>Encourage</b>	Let's ...
	We couldn't have done it without you
	I understand what you're saying
<b>Summarize</b>	If you're going to do one thing, it could be...



# CIRCLE EXPECTATIONS

## 7. Logistics

- Join the meeting early (at least 15 minutes ahead)
- Check the background noise so it doesn't interfere with discussion
- Have a list with participants' names at your fingertips. Learn/know how to pronounce them correctly.
- Choose a Circle assistant (back up for if your connection suddenly interrupts and you're kicked off the meeting, reminds you of timing, data capture)

## 8. Touch Points with Circle members

#	What	When
1	Orientation sessions all program participants (optionally)	1 week before the program launch
2	Send invites: E-mail the calendar invitation with the materials deck <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Workbook with week agenda, list of participants, resource guide</li><li>- Circle Member Guide</li></ul>	1 day before the meeting
3	Post-meeting event with thank you note and feedback form	The same day when meeting <input type="text"/>
4	Certificate + thank you note	Within one week after the program end



# CIRCLE ACTIVITIES

## Icebreaker

An icebreaker is a powerful tool to help us become present with one another and ourselves. Every Circle starts with an icebreaker. See discussion guides for examples.

## One Action

This is where we ask ourselves and the members: Starting today, what will we do to take this one step further? How will I commit to improving (fill in applicable session subject) ?

Every session includes a commitment to “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 is a public promise for accountability. Be ready to report on your “One Action” progress at the following Circle.

## Sample Agenda

#	Section	Time	
		Per member	Total
1	Opening remarks	-	1-2 min.
2	Ice-breaker, connection cards, sharing layers	1-2 min.	10-20 min.
3 a	Educational Activity	-	7-15 min.
3 b	Discussion	1-2 min.	15 min.
4	Group Activity		20 min.
5	One Action (take home assignment)	1 min.	10 min.
6	Closing (upcoming session update, questions)	-	5-10 min.



# CIRCLE ACTIVITIES

## Use of Technology

- Microsoft Teams is the platform to host virtual Circles.
- Videos and Jamboards will be used in some sessions. Jamboard links will be created for each Circle by the LLMC program office and shared with you.
- To avoid delays and buffering, do not rely on 3rd party applications to play videos. Please download the video from Google Drive and stream directly from your device.
- Practice playing videos and opening Jamboards before each session. Have another member in your Circle prepare the video on their device as back-up in case of technical difficulties.

## Wrap Up

- One Action. Bring attention to the workbook assignment and reflection questions.
- Housekeeping. Inform members about the next session topic, date and time.
- Recap. The leader assistant or the leader briefly summarizes the main points and asks the group to confirm. This is helpful in the subsequent analysis process. When the one-minute summary is completed, the leader invites questions, comments, amendments, or corrections. “Have we missed anything?”



## WHAT TO DO WHEN...

### **What to do when...**

Here are some suggestions and recommendations for situations that can come up unexpectedly:

#### **Nobody Shows up**

Review your calendar invitation to be certain you are at the right meeting link, date and time. Always have list of invited participants with their emails/phone numbers

#### **Only A Few Attend**

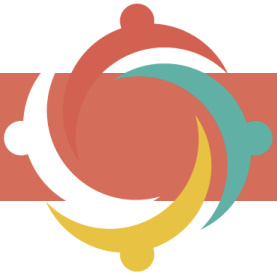
Conduct the session as planned. (You should always take note of who isn't present and share with the D and I team after each session.) After the meeting, check to be certain that all people received the follow-up letter and telephone reminder. Try to find out what kept people from attending.

#### **The Group Doesn't Want to Talk**

Consider calling on individuals or going around the group to answer a specific question. Ask participants for advice. Use your Circle assistant to help drum up conversation.

#### **You Are Short of Time**

Skip an activity.



# ZERO TOLERANCE CRITERIA

## **Zero Tolerance Criteria**

We value and champion equality, substance, openness and respect. Discriminatory feedback, consistent negative energy and insulting comments could result in blocked access to the rest meetings and other program sessions in the future. Ensure to inform the group as a whole that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated and can result in expulsion from the Circle and subsequent sessions. Try to have a one-on-one exchange with the disruptive member outside of the session either through discussion or email to advise of their inappropriate behaviour and subsequent consequences.



# THANK YOU

Thank you for participating in the Lifting as You Lead Mentoring Circle Program. Through your involvement as a Circle member and leader you are lifting others higher as you lead. Thank you for committing to take significant and measurable actions so that employees with diverse backgrounds and abilities are able to access opportunities, feel accepted and valued for their differences, and can thrive in a welcoming, safe, secure, and inclusive workplace. There's power in people coming together!

## CONTACT US

For more information about the Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles Program , contact the Materiel Group's Diversity and Inclusion office at National Defence: [DiversityandInclusion-Diversiteetinclusion@forces.gc.ca](mailto:DiversityandInclusion-Diversiteetinclusion@forces.gc.ca)