

**MASTERMIND YOUR  
WAY TO SUCCESS**

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**Published by**

Fahncke and Associates

[www.fawnkey.com](http://www.fawnkey.com)

## Introduction

I stand trembling in front of the room. The twenty members of the audience sit on the edge of their seats, with their steely-eyes studying every move I make, my slightest hand gesture, and each facial expression. Their pens are poised over their papers, wielded like swords, ready to cut me to shreds with the critique that will come from the notes they take. I take a deep breath, and present to them a 30 minute keynote address that I have been working on for several weeks. The ears of my audience members catch every word I utter, their hands feverishly scribbling notes on paper. As I'm presenting, I see heads moving, some nodding in approval, others shaking back and forth in a silent "tsk, tsk" that rattles my composure. But I keep speaking, pushing through the nervousness. Speaking is my "happy place", and I almost never get nervous. But this time I know what's coming next . . .

*After I complete my speech, I remain standing in front of this audience for one full hour listening to my critics as they point out every flaw and mistake I've made. When that hour is over, I feel like a Marine who has just completed basic training. The "Drill Sergeants" in my Mastermind group have torn me and my speech to shreds, layer by layer removing bad habits and unnecessary words until nothing is left but the raw essence of my presentation. Then, just like they do in the military, after tearing me down, the group starts to build me up. They add idea after idea to help me improve my speech. Passions run high as even the smallest detail is brainstormed, analyzed and debated by the group. When it's all over, I walk out of the room with a smile, knowing that I'm ready. Ready to present this speech to over 1,000 students and their parents at a university just one week later.*

*I do indeed deliver this speech and, as I expect it to, it goes fantastic. So well in fact, the Dean of the school invites me back to speak again to an even larger audience. I'm presented with a beautiful plaque in recognition of my achievement, and best of all, upon stepping down from the stage, I'm flooded with students and parents telling me I have "inspired them". And that's what it's all about.*

*So who were these stone-cold, ruthless people in the first audience? The ones who were so eager to critique?*

*They were my Mastermind group.*

*And their critique and stinging remarks were all delivered with caring, compassion, and a thorough desire to see me succeed. They are my mentors, cheerleaders and friends. And most of all, they helped me as a professional speaker take a "good" speech and make it "Great".*

~ ~ ~

Thank you for reading Mastermind Your Way To Success. In this book, I hope to motivate you to explore this powerful and often misunderstood secret some of the most successful minds in history have used to build empires. Benjamin Franklin, Andrew Carnegie and Napoleon Hill are just few who have leveraged the power of the Mastermind to reach the pinnacle of success.

In "Mastermind Your Way To Success", you'll learn why Masterminding is so powerful, what direct benefits you will gain from Masterminding, and how you can get started benefiting from a Mastermind group quickly and easily.

Enjoy ...

# The History of Masterminding

In Philadelphia, approximately the year 1730, Benjamin Franklin started what he called a *Junto*, which was a group of friends that he gathered to provide a structured forum of mutual improvement. Franklin's group initially had some twelve members, according to an entry from his personal diary:

*In the autumn of [1727 or 1730], I formed most of my ingenious acquaintances into a club of mutual improvement which we called the Junto. We met on Friday evenings. The rules that I drew up required that every member in his turn should produce one or more queries on any point of morals, politics or natural philosophy to be discussed by the company and once in three months produce and read an essay of his own writing on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president and to be conducted in a sincere spirit of inquiry for truth and without fondness for dispute or desire for victory; and to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions or direct contradiction were after some time made contraband and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.*

The group, according to Franklin's own words, needed to be a positive and truthful one. There were no winners; no losers. The gatherings were meant to encourage thoughtful discussion, and foster a spirit of mutual improvement. For young Franklin, that goal was achieved, as he was able to leverage the support of his Mastermind into a successful career as one of the most influential politicians and statesman of all time.

Andrew Carnegie, arguably one of the most successful industrialists of the entire Industrial Revolution, was also a huge fan of the Mastermind group, **and credited the power of the Mastermind group with enabling him to become one of the richest men in America.** He eventually disclosed the power of it to Napoleon Hill, who wrote about it in his 1937 book *Think and Grow Rich*. In the book, Napoleon Hill defines a Mastermind as a “*coordination of knowledge and effort in a spirit of harmony between two or more people for the attainment of a definite purpose*”. According to the author, “*Mr. Carnegie’s Mastermind group consisted of a staff of approximately 50 men with whom he surrounded himself with a definite purpose of manufacturing and marketing steel. He attributed his entire fortune to the power he accumulated through this Mastermind.*”

Napoleon Hill and Andrew Carnegie were able to see the benefits of the Mastermind group:

- Having a group of people available to help you succeed
- The benefit of differing perspectives, input and feedback
- Resources and connections that you might not otherwise have on your own
- Accountability and inspiration from the group

Napoleon Hill even went so far as to suggest that there was a mystical quality created when a Mastermind group was formed when he said, “*No two minds ever come together without thereby creating a third, invisible, intangible force which may be likened to a third mind.*” In other words, one’s ability to create things in this world is increased by having that invisible third mind of the Mastermind group.

# The Mastermind Group Defined

Unlike the larger Mastermind groups formed in the times of Carnegie and Franklin, a Mastermind group in this day and age generally consists of about six to eight people, though up to twelve members is acceptable. It has been said that a Mastermind group is simply an alliance of two or more individuals dedicating themselves to a specific goal. Andrew Carnegie's Mastermind intention, for example, was to create, manufacture and distribute steel. Your group should likewise have some sort of a theme or a goal. That does not mean, however, that everybody in the group should have the same exact job.

To truly benefit from the power of Mastermind group, a diverse group with a common interest must be formed. For example, if you're in the real estate business, don't form a Mastermind group with just real estate people. Gather, instead, people who are *involved* in your industry but who aren't necessarily direct competitors: an insurance person, a title person, a mortgage person, an appraiser; People whose contributions to the group will complement those of the other members.

Members of a Mastermind group are dedicated to supporting each other, and this is a really important feature of the process. They are there to help each other develop personally, and to grow each other's businesses. There needs to be a commitment among the members that they will support each other.

Lastly, and most importantly, a Mastermind group is a safe place. You've heard the old saying, "what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas." Well, what happens in a Mastermind group stays in a Mastermind group. You want to make sure that your Mastermind group is comprised of people who you very much trust because being open and honest and completely transparent in your group is a major part of the process. You need to know that the information, knowledge,

problems, concerns and stressors you share there will go no further than that group unless it's specifically dictated otherwise.

# Types of Mastermind Groups

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Most Mastermind groups are created to foster accountability. At each meeting, members are required to state a specific goal they will accomplish before the next meeting. Perhaps they will sell a certain number of products, make a certain number of cold calls, or write an article for their newsletter. When each meeting rolls around, the group members hold you accountable and ask you how you did with your goals and what your results were. If getting things done is an issue for you, then an accountability Mastermind group can be very beneficial.

## **CREATIVITY**

There are some Mastermind groups whose goal is more creativity than accountability. Members get together for the purpose of brainstorming, problem solving, being creative about new ideas, new business objectives, et cetera. For some, this type of group is more fitting to their specific needs. A group whose format is creativity, for instance, may start each meeting with each person in the group announcing any “wins” they have experienced since the last meeting. Acknowledging and celebrating those updates can be followed by a discussion of upcoming happenings related to each person’s business. This could include bringing to light any problems or struggles each member is experiencing, which often results in an open forum meant to help each one resolve their issues. Occasionally, each member of the group gets the opportunity to give a 15-minute presentation on their area of expertise.

## **PURPOSE-ORIENTED**

The Mastermind group I mentioned in this book’s Introduction is an example of a Purpose-oriented Mastermind group. This particular group (the “Masters”) is made up of professional speakers who meet once per month to help each other hone their professional presentations. However, the format is quite different than the groups

types outlined above. Instead of a “round table” format where everyone in the group shares or is held accountable at each meeting, the meeting is set up so that each month just ONE member gives a speech, then all of the the other members spend the rest of the meeting critiquing and helping the speaker improve their presentation. This format has worked wonders for the Masters members, and the tough-love format has helped them hone their craft to levels of quality they might never achieve on their own.

Now that you know more about what a Mastermind group actually is, and the kinds of Mastermind groups that exist, what are the benefits of being a part of one?

Let’s consider that in our next section.

# The Benefits of Masterminding

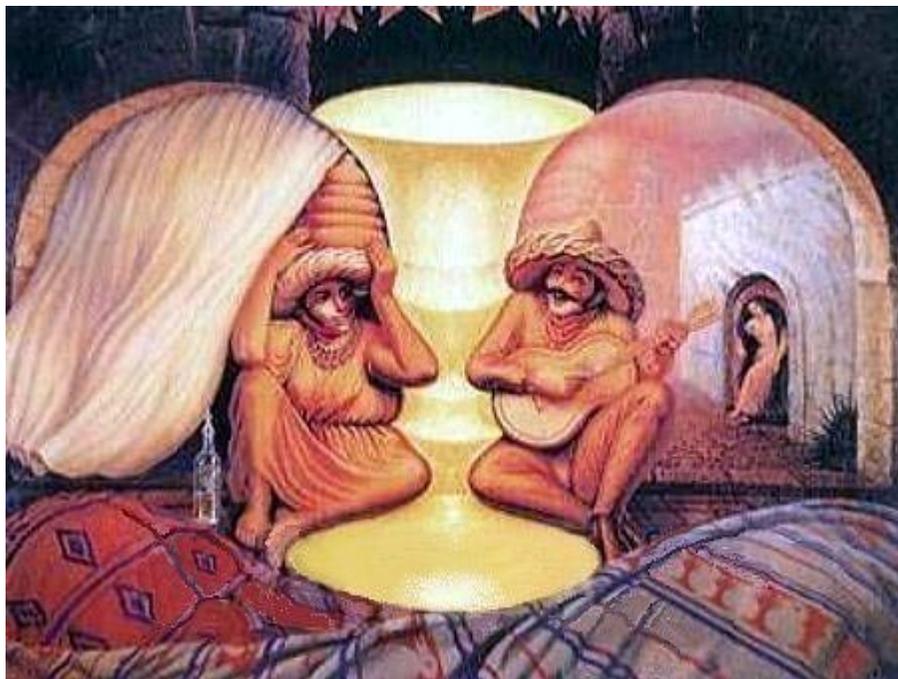
One of the biggest benefits of being part of a Mastermind, most members will agree, is that it gives each member a different perspective of their business. When a person is looking at a problem in their business or in their life, they probably only see that problem one way, with only one solution. Other people can have different perspectives that can be incredibly valuable.

Take a close look at this picture of a Bengal tiger, for example. There is at least one hidden tiger in this picture, possibly more. How many do you see?



In reality, there is only one tiger in this picture. But if you look closely, you will see the words “hidden tiger” spelled out in the stripes of the animal.

Let’s try another. Make a note of what you see in this picture:



At first glance, you may see an old man and woman wrapped in Mexican blankets, staring at each other in an intimate embrace. But upon closer inspection of the old man’s face, you’ll also see a man in a *sombrero* playing a guitar and singing. The street is behind him, and a lady is coming out of a doorway. And if you look more closely at the old woman’s face, you’ll see a younger woman, seated; a pot of some sort on her head and a bottle of oil beside her. You may also see a fountain.

It’s all about perspective. Using this illustration, you can see how different perspectives are important when you’re considering a problem or exploring a way to grow and propel your business

forward. Imagine how powerful it would be if every time you had a question, you had a “board of advisers” to which you could bring it and get several different perspectives. **Imagine having a group of people you can bring your problems to and they not only can see something you don’t, but they have an interest in you and your success.** According to Pauline Wallin, an entrepreneur and colleague of mine who participates in a Mastermind to grow her business (<http://drwallin.com>), being a member of a Mastermind group, in a sense, raises your IQ. Pauline has been known to say that she feels that the power of the group raises her IQ points to a *thousand*, because it gives her the means to tap into and leverage the combined IQ and collective intelligence of the entire group.

Yet another benefit of a Mastermind group is that members have the opportunity to get to know each other’s businesses very well, and look for opportunities to refer new clients and customers to each other. Obviously, business referrals are necessary to grow a business and you get a built in referral system with a Mastermind group.

Collaboration is another effective way to grow a business. Members of a Masterminding group may find, in getting to know each other and learning about each other’s businesses, that there are ways they can work together in a collaborative effort that benefits all the parties involved.

Finally, Masterminding is free. While there are those groups that do require a fee to be involved, there are many more so that do not. Most people agree that there is really no benefit to being in a paid Mastermind group over being in a free one, because it’s really all about the people involved. And if you get the right mix of people involved, you won’t need to pay a moderator, an organizer, or anybody else to run the group for you.

Now that you know how you can benefit from being in a Mastermind group, let’s get started on making a group that suits your needs.

# Interview With A Masterminder

*Below is an interview I conducted with one of my Mastermind members, Linda Allen of Just a Minute, LLC. (<http://www.justaminutellc.com>) I felt the information and perspective she shared was quite valuable, so I'm sharing the interview transcript with you so you get the information just as Linda shared it . . .*

Now I'm going to open up the line here to one of my Mastermind members, Linda Allen, and I would like to ask her a little bit about what she gets out of being in a Mastermind. She is a member of a couple of different Mastermind groups and most people I know are. I'm in two Mastermind groups. I think she's in two and most people who really understand the power of Masterminding are in more than one Mastermind group at a time. So Linda, are you there?

Linda: I am. Hi.

Marty: Linda, thanks for joining me today.

Linda: Oh, it's my pleasure.

Marty: So tell me, Linda. I've talked a little bit about the history of Mastermind and how they work and the benefits of Masterminding. What can you tell me about the reasons that you are involved in Masterminding and the benefits that you get out of it.

Linda: Oh, I absolutely love my Mastermind group. I get so many new ideas on how to look at things. For example, every once in a while in our Mastermind, we have a presentation time where each person does a little presentation, just one at a time. Like, we have one person give a presentation and then about six weeks later, we have another person give a presentation. I

remember when Felicia (<http://feliciaslattery.com>) gave a presentation about giving your signature speech. I got so much out of that and I was able to create, with her help from our Mastermind, my signature speech for my company. I also love the new ideas that I got from Pauline when she gave the psychological aspect of marketing. So, like you would talk different to a biker than you would to a doctor.

So I get a lot of new ideas. We help each other with our marketing, we critique each other's websites and marketing materials and help with that, because sometimes we're just emotionally too close to our own businesses and we can't see what can be improved.

But one of the very best things is when you're going through hard times, you have friends and you have friends that are in an upward momentum. You have friends that are progressive instead of some of the people that you may be around sometimes who kind of try to bring you down a little bit. But in a Mastermind group, you have friends that keep you in momentum with all their different businesses, their different ideas, and like the IQ thing that you mentioned, the thousand points of IQ really helps. It's just great!

Marty: How long have you been Masterminding?

Linda: Probably about 10 years now.

Marty: Wow! That is amazing. I didn't know you have been participating that long. Could you put a dollar value on your participation in Masterminds?

Linda: Oh, no. It's worth more than anything.

Marty: Would you say it's more than six figures or more than seven figures?

Linda: Absolutely. You cannot put a worth on it. I would not be who I am without my Mastermind groups.

Marty: That's a great testimonial right there and Linda, you are a part of a Mastermind group that I participate in and your information – you're a self-proclaimed propeller head which means you're kind of a tech geek and I learned more about technology and hardware and software and shopping carts and internet applications from you. It has just been incredible. We've been Masterminding for probably four years now and maybe even five and I echo that. It's awesome having all these different personalities and perspectives and knowledge all in one place. So it's really cool.

Linda: I like it how at the end of each Mastermind, we ask, "How can we help you?" and then if the person in the Mastermind, one or two or three needs help, then we're able to help too and that's really wonderful.

Marty: Definitely. Got a question from the audience for you, Linda: How did you find your first Mastermind group 10 years ago?

Linda: Well, it was interesting. Ten years ago, I signed up for a financial group and we went to this live seminar and she put us in Mastermind groups and I have never heard of Masterminding before. So she put us in and interestingly enough, my other Mastermind that I have is one from 10 years ago.

Marty: So it's the same – you're still in the same group that you've been doing a Mastermind for 10 years.

Linda: A couple of them have dropped out but yes.

Marty: Wow! That is awesome. That is really awesome.

Linda: Another thing is as being an entrepreneur, sometimes it's lonely and this way, you can reach out and you have friends all over the United States and it's amazing.

Marty: I hadn't even thought of that. Well, that's a great benefit. I should put that on my slide, just creating relationships and friends everywhere. You're absolutely right. From coast to coast, we've got people in our Mastermind group, don't we?

Linda: Right.

Marty: Well, that's great. Anything else you want to add about Masterminding or the benefits or encouraging people whether they should form or join a Mastermind group before you sign off?

Linda: Well, I just think it's an amazing way to get quality lifelong friends. I just love it.

Marty: Awesome. Thanks for joining us, Linda.

Linda: You're welcome.

# How to Get Started Masterminding

Inviting the right mix of people into your group is key. So, your first step is to select quality Mastermind partners. Jim Rohn, a trailblazer in the self-help and personal development industry (and an oft-quoted wordsmith), famously said, ***“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.”*** These words couldn’t be more true. If you’re spending time with five other people and they’re all, well, *losers*, then you’re probably going to be a loser as well. And if you’re spending time with five people who are winners, who are successful, who are motivated individuals, who are doing big things and making big things happen, then you are going to be that type of person as well.

So you should always look for Mastermind partners who are, in your opinion, better than and smarter than you because they will lift you up to their level. As you can see, selecting good quality Mastermind partners is important.

Below are a few options for getting started Masterminding:

## **Option #1: START YOUR OWN MASTERMIND**

Starting your own Mastermind group can be as simple as finding six or seven people and saying, *“Hey, I’m going to start a Mastermind group. Would you like to join me?”* If they say, *“What’s a Mastermind group?”* share a copy of this ebook with them. Tell them to take some time to read it and, if they find that it’s something they want to do, come and join you.

Next, it’s important to set some ground rules when you form your group. Decide when, where and how often the group will meet. If the members are local, perhaps the group can get together at a coffee shop, or take turns meeting at each other’s offices or homes. If the group has nationwide members, technology makes it easy to meet

over the phone, or even online. You'll also need to decide on the type, format, leadership structure and intention of the group.

**Pros:** Since it's "your" Mastermind, you may have complete control over who is in the group, and what the format might be. You can custom-tailor all aspects of the group to suit your needs. If cost is an issue, you can ensure that your new group is affordable or even free to participate.

**Cons:** Starting a Mastermind group on your own can be an intimidating and time consuming process. I've heard stories of people who asked and got rejected many times by potential members. There can also be a feeling of overwhelm and being slightly intimidated by the process.

## **Option #2: JOIN AN EXISTING MASTERMIND**

If you'd rather not go through the time and hassle of starting your own Mastermind group, you could find and ask to join an existing one. Mastermind groups evolve and change; life and/or career changes cause people to leave the group. So a Mastermind, as long as it is not already too large, is usually open to having new members because they usually bring fresh ideas, new perspectives, and renewed energy to the group. If you know of someone who already has an existing Mastermind group, simply ask them if they have an opening, and if so, can you join.

**Pros:** The group you join will already be established, with clear direction, format and members who are comfortable supporting each other.

**Cons:** Feeling like the "new kid" might be intimidating for some. Because it's been around a while, there may also be aspects of the group that don't fully fit your goals or needs. Changing those things might be difficult or impossible if the existing members are happy with everything the way it is.

### **Option #3: JOIN A PROFESSIONALLY MANAGED MASTERMIND GROUP**

Professionally managed Mastermind groups are generally formed by an influential speaker, author or expert for the purpose of helping their audience gain benefit from the material they present. However, there are a few people (like me) who start and manage Mastermind groups simply because they understand the power of Masterminding, and want to see others succeed.

**Pros:** All of hard work is done for you. The groups are established, coordinated and filled with high quality members, and all you have to do is show up. Most professionally managed Mastermind groups charge a fee to belong. It can be as low as a hundred dollars a month to as high as \$30,000 annually. When you consider that only those people who are VERY serious about success will be joining a PAID group, you are ensuring that your Mastermind group will be filled with the very best and brightest business people who are smart enough to invest in themselves and their business.

**Cons:** Cost. Professionally managed Mastermind groups almost always have a fee involved. However, the efficiency of getting the group up and running properly, the oversight of a third party to keep things running smoothly, and diversity of membership usually more than offsets the cost.

(If you are interested in joining a professionally managed Mastermind group, please feel free to contact me at [marty@fawnkey.com](mailto:marty@fawnkey.com). Because of my success in Masterminding, I work with hundreds of top-notch business people from around the world who are interested in joining a Mastermind, but don't want to start one on their own. We have Mastermind groups forming of every type, so I'm sure we can find the right one for you.)

# Conclusion

In reading “Mastermind Your Way To Success”, I hope you've found that a Mastermind group is an incredibly powerful business-building tool. My hope is that you will make this investment of time for your business because it is probably the single most important thing you will do to gain momentum in your business.

Don't delay. Start or join a Mastermind group today. The longer you wait, the more benefits you will be missing.

HAPPY MASTERMINDING!

# About the Author

An expert in multi-channel direct response marketing with over twenty-five years of experience, Marty M. Fahncke brings a unique and proven track record of success to his audiences. Having been involved in marketing campaigns that have generated over one BILLION dollars in sales, Marty has seen what works...and what doesn't.

As President of FawnKey & Associates, a consulting and marketing management firm, Marty has generated hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue for his clients using direct response television, the telephone, and the internet.

As a Professional Speaker and trainer, Marty presents to audiences across the country on topics related to internet marketing, social media, affiliate marketing, direct response television and more. He blogs (once in a while) at his blog "My Perspective", which can be found at <http://www.MartyFahncke.com>.

Marty recently started a weekly free webinar series where he "gives back" by providing business and marketing advice to a live audience to help their businesses grow. It's called "Midweek Momentum", and can be found at <http://MidweekMomentum.com>.

