

Working Out Loud

A Strategy for Engaging Online Groups

If you facilitate an online professional community or group, this strategy can help you increase the engagement, trust, and sharing of your group. Begin each week with a “Work Out Loud” prompt.

1. On Monday morning, post a prompt to group members asking them to share what they are working on for the upcoming week – Encourage them to simply list what they are doing. A prompt might be:

“Share one to three things you are working on this week. List a project you are working on, a meeting you will be attending or a conversation you are planning. Make it simple, you don’t need much detail. I bet there are others in this group who are thinking about and working on something similar.”

2. In advance of posting, find a few people who will agree to respond to your prompt -- this sets an example and encourages others to participate. Repeat every Monday morning.

3. Once participants begin to share what they are working on, the facilitator should monitor the flow and respond to opportunities to follow-up:

- Encourage participants to connect with others working on similar projects
- Share relevant resources or encourage participants to
- Follow-up and ask someone, privately or publicly, about how a particular project is progressing.
- Celebrate successes when participants share them
- Help participants overcome challenges they share with the group
- Many participants find this public sharing to be helpful in supporting their own progress and accountability

4. It may take time to get started, but over time momentum builds

- participants begin to feel more comfortable sharing
- they get to know more each other's work
- they learn from each other
- they begin to rely on each other
- they collaborate and create and innovate together

If you would like to learn more about Working Out Loud, below is a link to a short article from the Community Roundtable, an organization I am affiliated with.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/community-roundtables-work-out-loud-framework-rachel-happe>