

[Contributed by John Griffith, physics faculty at Mesa Community College, Mesa AZ. 9/2011]

Rules of The Circle

Different situations call for different kinds of communication practices. The time you spend communicating with each other in the circle (and the time you spend working in groups) is not social networking time. It is, rather, closer to the kind of communication and interaction you will have in business meetings when you are on the job. Below are some things to keep in mind as you interact in the circle:

- Everyone must be in the circle and the group must make a circle in order for participation in the circle sharing session to count toward your grade. All whiteboards must be viewable by all members of the circle.
- All communication occurs between and among the people within the circle. Do not direct communication to anyone (even your instructor) if that person is not a part of the circle.
- Only one person speaks in the circle at any one time. This means that everyone else in the circle is listening (an important communication tool!). To help organize the flow of verbal communication in the circle, we will use a small (and very soft!) ball:
 - The person with the ball has the floor and should not be interrupted while speaking, unless they ask for questions from the group.
 - Once the person is done speaking, they choose the next speaker by tossing them the ball.
 - You may not toss the ball back to the person who tossed the ball to you, unless you asked them a question.
- When sharing with whiteboards, make sure your group has written legibly and large enough that everyone in the circle can see and read what is written or drawn on the whiteboard.

Please note that side conversations within the circle as well as non course-related discussions within your smaller groups may adversely impact your participation grade in this course.