



CEO
ROUNDTABLES
GWINNETT CHAMBER

2025 HANDBOOK



Gwinnett Chamber



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The mission of the Gwinnett Chamber's CEO Roundtables program is to provide a venue for executive-level decision makers of local businesses to meet regularly with a peer group in an atmosphere that fosters entrepreneurial thinking and encourages teamwork to accomplish individual goals.

The strength of the CEO Roundtables lies in the open, mutual sharing of expertise from business leaders with diverse backgrounds representing the very best of Gwinnett County's business community.

Program Profile

The Gwinnett Chamber's CEO Roundtables program is designed to provide executive-level decision makers of small and medium size businesses with a confidential "board of advisors" who can assist with business challenges and opportunities by presenting solutions for discussion.

Roundtable Teams

Program participants are assigned to a team of 6 to 10 members, representing non-competing businesses and diverse industries. This arrangement results in unique team dynamics and creative approaches to problem solving and brainstorming. Each team meets once a month on a set day and time.

Team Members

Team members are the executive-level decision makers in their companies (i.e. c-level officers, presidents, vice presidents, or the executive director of an org). Interested individuals must complete an application to be considered for the program. They will be placed on teams at the beginning of the program year and will be members for one year. Program dues must be received prior to orientation for membership to be continued. New members may be added during the year if circumstances warrant the addition.

Team Lead

Serving as the liaison to the Chamber, the team lead is responsible for maintaining communication between individual roundtables as well as with the program coordinator. Consistent communication ensures that groups have the resources necessary to accomplish their goals as a team and are equipped to provide support to the individual program members. This open rapport also helps the program coordinator not only be aware of challenges, issues or concerns that each team may be facing but also facilitate a resolution.

Prior to the beginning of the program year, team leads are asked to serve for the upcoming year by program management. Throughout the following year, team leads are responsible for overseeing the team including scheduling presentations, taking attendance and facilitating program meetings by guiding discussions and focusing the group on specific goals.

Program Coordinator

The program receives support as needed from the Gwinnett Chamber's Membership Department, providing roundtable teams with the flexibility to operate without unnecessary interference. The program coordinator can be reached at any time with questions, concerns or ideas for the program.

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CEO Roundtables provides a venue for executive-level decision makers to meet monthly with their own peer group in an atmosphere that fosters entrepreneurial thinking and encourages teamwork to accomplish individual goals. The program is designed to provide participants with their own confidential “board of advisors” who can assist with business challenges through experience-sharing discussion.

Each roundtable group is made up of executive-level decision makers from 6 to 10 non-competing businesses and meets on a monthly basis. Additional educational and social events occur throughout the program year. The annual cost for Gwinnett Chamber Chairman’s Club members is \$250 and general members is \$650.

Confidentiality

- All matters discussed are to be held in the strictest of confidence, unless otherwise specified by the appropriate team member.
- Each member agrees to maintain the confidentiality of the group by participating in the program.
- Due to confidentiality requirements, we prohibit leaders from the same industry to be on the same team. If there is a misrepresentation of your business industry during the application process, it may result in removal from the program.
- Please note that the Gwinnett Chamber is not responsible for any personal or professional discussions conducted between team members outside of the official roundtable meeting dates and times.

Interruptions

- Taking phone calls, texting or emailing during meetings is unacceptable. All cell phones must be turned off or muted during program meetings.
- It is important that all team members stay on topic during meeting time. With each team meeting only once per month, it is crucial that topics are covered thoroughly. Team leaders may

schedule outside time to discuss other topics/questions or use these as suggestions for future meeting topics.

Mandatory Attendance

- Regular attendance is extremely important and expected.
- A commitment to attend all scheduled meetings and advance notice if a participant will be unable to attend, is crucial to the success of the program team.
- Each team member may miss two meetings a year. Should a second meeting be missed, the Gwinnett Chamber reserves the right to evaluate the circumstances and remove said member from the program.
- If a participant arrives 30+ minutes late or leaves 30+ minutes early, that will be considered an absence.

Business Solicitation

- It is not appropriate to use CEO Roundtables as a platform for selling products or services to other members.
- Soliciting products or services to fellow participants is not condoned.
- Members will be required to disclose any

business deals being started or conducted with fellow team members to maintain the integrity of the program.

Team Lead and Meetings

- For the benefit of each Team Lead, meeting space is typically available at the Gwinnett Chamber but must be reserved well in advance. Contact the program coordinator to reserve space.
- If meeting space is not available at the Gwinnett Chamber, the team lead will be notified.
- If a team chooses to meet offsite, the team lead is responsible for informing the program coordinator in advance.
- Hosting a meeting at a team member's workplace helps other team members better understand their environment, making it easier for them to relate to their input and issues in future meetings.

In order to ensure a successful program, meeting times, locations, and agendas are determined by the individual teams. Because members of the CEO Roundtables typically have demanding schedules, it is beneficial to establish a consistent meeting time during Orientation that suits everyone's calendar.

Every team is unique unto itself and has its own goals. Teams are encouraged to develop their individual meeting style that reflects their collective needs. However, a general format that has proved productive in the past has been provided as a tool to developing the structure for individual program meetings.

Recommendations for Successful Roundtable Meetings

- Use individual nametags at the roundtable meetings during the first few meetings as people are getting to know one another.
- Remain respectful of one another's business challenges and be open-minded to shared experiences from the group.
- Keep roundtable discussions to the agenda topics set forth for the meeting.
- Draw upon individual experiences (successes and failures) to enhance the roundtable discussions.
- Research and share business articles pertinent to roundtable discussions.
- Invite guest speakers to conduct a training session on a topic of mutual interest.
- Problem-solve specific challenges that roundtable members may be facing.
- Schedule team members for formal presentations to the group in their areas of expertise.
- Attend Gwinnett Chamber seminars or networking events together and discuss it at the next meeting.
- Share samples of management policies, procedures and systems.

- Review and evaluate business plans that are in the development phase.

Recommended Roundtable Meeting Format

Roundtable meetings generally last about one-and-a-half to three hours and typically have two primary components: 1) a team-led 5 minute life/family update from each member and 2) two presentations and discussions on the agreed-to business topics.

- As the members arrive, the team lead takes attendance.
- If meeting at a group member's place of business, they may choose to conduct a tour of the facility. A discussion may begin during the tour, as members ask questions and begin to get a clearer understanding of the company.
- The group returns to the meeting room to discuss planned business topics.
- At the conclusion of the meeting, the team lead makes a final announcement regarding the next scheduled meeting date, time, location and agenda topics. The team lead may also highlight upcoming Gwinnett Chamber programs and events that may be relevant to the roundtable discussions.

Sample Meeting Topics

The most productive discussions result from topics chosen by roundtable members. Focusing on issues facing business today allows the team to gain practical insight on real challenges and solutions.

The subject matter is virtually unlimited, as shown by the following examples. Determine, as a group, the topics that best reflect the needs of the team members.

- Developing strategies to enhance customer service and satisfaction
- Establishing overseas marketing representation
- Using technology-based marketing techniques
- Using the most effective marketing tools with limited resources available
- Attracting new business/identifying new markets and focus areas
- Pricing of products and services
- Increasing market share with new and existing products
- Avenues for employee training and development
- Attracting and retaining quality employees
- Addressing issues of employee morale and job satisfaction
- Specific challenges with employee-relations (employee theft, poor work ethic, negative attitude)
- Exploring team building opportunities for the workplace
- Dealing with challenges in business partnerships/relationships
- Developing presentations to secure high-profile clients
- Delegating key projects to employees
- Stock options for key employees
- Commission/Salary ratios
- Developing a competitive salary and benefit plan
- Commissioned representatives versus an in-house sales force
- Determining the appropriate time to expand business (employees, products, additional locations, mergers, acquisitions)
- Managing company growth and facility expansion
- Creative methods to improve profitability
- Handling public relations in a crisis situation
- Employment law (hiring and termination practices)

Monthly roundtable meetings typically take place at either the Gwinnett Chamber or a team member's place of business. Meeting space at the Chamber is reserved at the beginning of the program year. The team lead must notify the program coordinator at least 24 hours prior to the meeting if they plan on using media equipment.

A group member may choose to meet at their place of business. Please notify the program coordinator at least two weeks ahead of time if you will not need the Chamber meeting space. In addition to confirming meeting space, the team lead should develop an agenda and send out a meeting reminder to the fellow team members. The more organized the team lead is in preparing for the roundtable, the more the team lead and team members will benefit from the meeting.

Meeting Agenda

The team lead is responsible for developing a written meeting agenda.

Agendas should reflect items that the roundtable team previously decided to discuss. The more effort that goes into the agenda, the more productive the meeting will be.

Reminder Notice

The team lead should send a reminder notice to the roundtable team providing information about the meeting; meeting date, time, location, and directions as well as an agenda at least one week prior to the meeting. Team members should R.S.V.P. to the team lead three to five business days prior to the meeting to provide the team lead with an accurate number of attendees.

Presentation Outline

Presenting at a roundtable meeting is an opportunity for a CEO Roundtables member to share information about their company as well as receive advice on challenges the company is facing. It should not be a sales pitch for your company's products and/or services.

The following are types of questions you should consider and address during your presentation:

- What is your company and your passion for your company? Why are you in the business/industry that you are in?
- What background experience or interest do you have that supports your work in your industry?
- What are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing your business and its industry?
- How is your organization structured?
- What is your product/service?
- What is your customer base?
- How does your company operate?
- What is your five-year vision for your company? Where do you see your company going?

Due to strong competition for spots in the CEO Roundtables program and the unique value each member brings, the Chamber enforces strict attendance requirements to ensure full participation and team unity. Attendance at all meetings and events is mandatory. Consistent tardiness or early departures are considered absences.

The Importance of Attendance

- At all Roundtable meetings, several important management, leadership, and/or organizational issues are discussed, each having the potential of being important to several team members. If not in attendance, the member gains nothing from their team membership. The greater a member's involvement, the greater their potential benefits.
- When a team member is presenting their business opportunity, issue, or problem for fellow team members' comments and advice, the presenter has the right to expect that they will have the benefit of all team members' knowledge, experience, and wisdom.
- Each selected CEO Roundtables applicant represents an opportunity denied to another. When a team member fails to attend meetings, the team loses the value of full participation, and a deserving applicant misses the chance to contribute and benefit from membership.

The time commitment for the program is serious, and participants not complying with the attendance requirements will be dropped from the program.

It is understood that life is unpredictable; and because of that, you have a grace opportunity of two absences. The team lead must be notified within 48 hours of the missed meeting.

After your first absence, your team leader will have a discussion with you about your attendance and emphasize your next absence will lead to

automatic dismissal from the CEO Roundtables program.

It is highly suggested that you seriously consider the attendance criteria for the CEO Roundtables program. If you cannot adjust your work schedule to meet the rigid attendance requirements, you are advised to postpone applying for CEO Roundtables membership until your schedule will allow you to become a full participant in the program.

During the coming program year, you are expected to attend all the monthly meetings scheduled in their entirety as part of your CEO Roundtables commitment. If a scheduled meeting or event must be changed by the Chamber or your Team Leader, you will be notified by e-mail in advance. You are advised to put these dates on your calendar as soon as possible.