



Secrets of Starting a Successful Writers' Group:

Mary-Kate Mackey



Founding a Writers' Group – 3 Steps

Values – What's important to the participants?

Vision – What are the group's goals?

Mission – How will the group achieve them?

Considerations for a Mission –

- Name
- Meeting location
- Day and time
- Leader or not
- Critique process
- Number of participants
- Results – The process of retrospection

Successful groups have –

- A clear system of feedback
- Equal time for all
- Opinions of equal importance
- No conflict about advice
- Support for strengths

Critique process – Vision rules all

1. Writer asks for objectives.
2. Pages read aloud.
3. Members write notations.
 - Velcros
 - Boggles
 - Fixes
4. Members critique in turn.
5. Writer receives silently—except. . . .
6. No arguments on advice.
7. THE WRITER ALONE DECIDES.

Success = Safety

The heart of any critique – how to go from useless to useful – Ask, WHY?

Group Benefits –

- Helping others helps you more
- Mistakes are solvable puzzles
- Free education



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