

THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEMBER GUIDE



A private peer council for independent experts, built on the model Benjamin Franklin perfected nearly 300 years ago.

This guide explains what the Council is, what membership requires, and how to determine if you're a fit.

A Note from Our Founder

I believe you should know everything there is to know about The Council before you decide to join.

The Independent Expert Advisory Council is designed for a specific kind of business. All members operate essentially the same business model - the monetization of expertise.

I've built this group to the standards put forth by Benjamin Franklin's Junto and my own experience facilitating and being a member of similar groups.

Through decades of practice I have found that most B2B service firms and independent professionals face the same core challenges. The IEAC brings experienced peers to bear to provide honest feedback and collaboration so members can make better decisions, faster.

Pete Monfre, Founder

The Independent Expert Advisory Council



What This Council Is And What Makes It Different

The Independent Expert Advisory Council is a one-off, private, facilitated peer advisory group.

What The Council is, stated plainly, is a collaborative group of founders of B2B services practices, working through a variety of problems in a structured, confidential and high trust environment.

Members bring problems to structured sessions, and the group works through them with candor, confidentiality and discipline.

This is not a networking or leads group. The Council exists to solve business problems, not to generate introductions, though introductions happen naturally in any room of capable people who trust each other.

This is not a seminar or training. This group doesn't just think - we collaborate with each other and take decisive action. And we sustain that over a period of time.

This is not group consulting or coaching. The expertise in the room is among the members. The facilitator's job is to make sure the right people are in the room, establish standards and practices and ensure productivity during monthly sessions.

It is not a sales funnel. There is no selling - whether by members or the facilitator. This standard is enforced without exception.

It is not a corporate offering. Other groups are built to scale, feature generic curriculum and are open to almost anyone. This is a private, single cohort.



Why This Group?

Peer groups exist on a wide spectrum. Some are free, some cost as much as \$50,000 annually or more. Some are facilitated and some are not. Most are built around a loose affinity rather than a shared business model.

Almost all are built for scale. This one is built purposefully with just ten seats available. There is only one group.

The Council is different in a specific way: every structural decision was made with one operator in mind. The size of the room limits the group to people who will actually know each other's businesses over time. The screening process exists to protect that room, not to create the appearance of exclusivity.

The facilitation model ensures that every session produces something, regardless of who shows up with a problem that day. And the investment required is part of the design, because groups where membership costs nothing tend to produce exactly that.

Most peer groups will take anyone who can pay. This one will not. Everyone goes through the exact same process to qualify for membership.



The Philosophy Behind It

Independent professionals who sell expertise routinely undervalue themselves, often lack clarity on business challenges, and are isolated by the nature of their work. A practice that was supposed to provide freedom begins to resemble a demanding, underpaid job.

The Council is based on the structure and principles of Benjamin Franklin's Junto - a collaboration of the best minds of the time and the original mastermind concept. It exists to help members take the next step to a more profitable and stable business.

Profitability and stability means a business that works for you - not the other way around. During a time when A.I. and offshoring are hitting experts hard, the IEAC is the human alternative that delivers a symbiotic group of trusted experts to make better decisions, faster.

The Council is a force multiplier for solo operators and founders of small services firms.



Who Belongs Here

The Council is designed for established independent professionals who sell expertise, including consultants, advisors, coaches, fractional executives, solo principals, and founders of small firms. Members must have been operating as a founder for a minimum of three years and carry direct authority over their pricing, positioning and client selection.

Beyond credentials, what matters most is disposition. The right member contributes as much or more than they receive, is comfortable with candid challenge and is committed to building a durable, well-capitalized practice.

This Council is not structured for early-stage operators, employees without economic agency or professionals primarily seeking leads, referrals, or tactical instruction. Room integrity takes priority over filling seats.

The Role of the Facilitator

The facilitator's role is to ensure the right people are in the room, manage the process, ensure every member receives and delivers value to the group, while setting and maintaining the standards that make the room worth being in.

The accumulated expertise and experience of the members, each bringing complementary skills and perspective, is brought to bear on each member's real problems. The facilitator's contribution is the discipline and structure that makes that exchange happen.



What Membership in the Council Looks Like

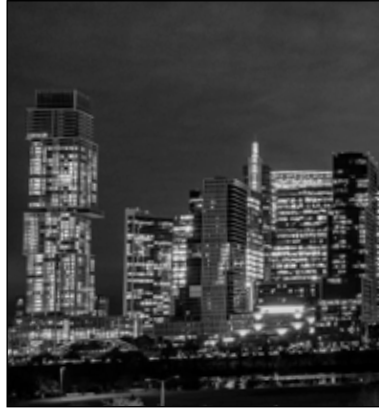
The Council meets monthly on the first Thursday of each month from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Central Time. Each session is structured, timed, transcribed, and professionally facilitated.

Up to ten members arrive prepared to share a brief monthly update and, if relevant, a problem or decision they want the group to work through. Issues are then prioritized and the remaining time is allocated across the problems in order of priority.

Sessions are conducted via Zoom - a deliberate choice that eliminates travel, respects members' time, and makes consistent attendance achievable regardless of geography.

There are no video recordings. A written transcript is made available to members only after each session.

Between sessions, members have access to the group via email for time-sensitive questions, quick input or issues that cannot wait for the next session. Members are encouraged to connect directly with one another between sessions for mutual advisory, informal input or collaborative problem-solving.



Confidentiality. What It Means in Practice

Confidentiality is a condition of membership and central to our charter.

What is said in the room stays in the room without exception. Members do not discuss other members' identities, business situations, challenges, or decisions outside the session, including with spouses, business partners, or colleagues. The closed-door standard applies to everything shared in session, in writing, or in any communication connected to Council business.

Unlike many groups, we formalize this aspect. The depth of conversation that makes this Council valuable depends entirely on every member's confidence that the room is secure. All members sign a confidentiality agreement.

The Commitment and Why It Matters

Members are committed to continuous improvement and growth. The conversations that produce genuine value require relationships built over time. Consistent attendance is expected (see FAQ). This standard protects every member's investment in the room. All members must meet the same standards and agree to the same terms - with no exceptions.

Frequently Asked Questions

How is this different from other groups?

Most peer groups are either expensive structured programs built for scale, or free networking groups that trade rigor for access. The Council is neither. The room is small by design. Most groups optimize for volume - they need more and more members to meet corporate KPI's. This group has a maximum of 10 seats and is a one-off cohort.

I've been in a mastermind group before and it was a waste of time. Why would this be different?

The word "mastermind" covers a wide range of experiences. If your previous group was heavy on motivation and light on substance, run by someone selling their own services, or filled with people at incompatible stages of business, the experience you may have had is common. You are right to be skeptical. That is why we have published this Member Guide so you have all the information you need to decide if it's right for you.

I'm already successful. Why do I need this?

Perhaps you don't. That is for you to decide. The Council is designed for successful operators who recognize that the isolation of independent practice is a structural problem that inhibits profitability and stability. The question worth asking is not whether you need it, but whether you would benefit from a trusted room of peers who know your business in detail and have no agenda beyond seeing you succeed.

Who else is in the room?

Member identities are confidential. That standard protects you as much as anyone else in the room. The vetting process guarantees that every member is a peer in the precise sense: an independent professional or small firm founder, in business at least 3 years, who sells expertise, with direct authority over their business and the disposition to contribute as much as they receive.

Will my competitors be in the group?

No. The Council maintains a strict no-compete policy. Members derive significant value from a room with distinct areas of expertise, each directly relevant to operating an independent practice.

How much time does this require?

The monthly session is three hours, over lunch, via Zoom. There is no required participation or preparation beyond this. Members who engage between sessions and act on what comes out of them get more from membership. That is entirely their choice.

What if I have to miss a session?

Members may miss no more than two sessions in any six-month period before forfeiting their seat. Consistent attendance is what makes the accumulated trust and value of a peer group possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of results or deliverables can I expect?

That depends on you. The Council is not a course, a coaching program or a consulting engagement. The value depends entirely on what members bring to the room and what they choose to do with the advice given. What the Council provides is clarity and accountability. Each member will have different objectives. If there is something specific you want to achieve, let's discuss if it is something membership can deliver. If you are looking for someone to promise outcomes, a consultant is a better fit.

How is this different from hiring a business consultant or advisor?

A consultant works on your business from the outside, with limited context and a billable hour to protect. The peers in this room have no financial stake in your decisions and have no incentive to tell you what you want to hear. That combination is difficult to replicate at any price.

Why does membership require a fee when there are free or lower-cost groups available?

Free groups are free for a reason. The investment in the Council selects for members who treat their business seriously and ensures that everyone in the room has made a deliberate decision to be present. Most members belong to more than one group.

What if I join and decide it isn't the right fit?

That question is best resolved before you join, which is why the admission process includes this detailed Member Guide and a direct conversation about mutual fit. Members who arrive with a complete understanding of how the Council works and what it requires rarely find cause to revisit that question.

Can members do business with each other?

There is no prohibition on members conducting business with one another outside of sessions. What is prohibited is using the session itself as a selling environment. The room is for solving problems, not for pitching wares.



About Pete Monfre

Pete Monfre has spent nearly four decades facilitating teams for global clients and smaller, growing firms - guiding groups toward concrete, actionable strategies. That work requires the same skill set that makes a peer advisory group function:

- The ability to harness the collective intelligence in a room
- Provide structure and processes for decision making
- Keep the group moving toward the stated objectives

He has built and led his own companies, worked in a direct advisory capacity with leadership of Fortune 100 companies, and operated as an independent expert his entire adult life. He knows the transition from isolated solo operator to sustainable, profitable practice from the inside.

He has also participated in peer groups as a member and led them as a facilitator. He lives outside of Austin, Texas with his wife and German Shepherd Dogs.



The Investment

Membership is \$792 a month. Your seat is reserved for the full year after four payments of \$2,375, billed every 30 days.

Next Steps

The facilitator will reach out directly to set a short Zoom call to discuss mutual fit. If both parties are satisfied, you will receive confirmation of your seat, confidentiality agreement to sign and an invoice for the first installment.

[Set a Time for a Call with Pete Monfre Here](#)

Seats are limited to ten. Current capacity may vary. When the Council is at capacity, qualified applicants are placed on a waiting list contacted when a seat becomes available, in the order they applied. Admission remains open year-round for candidates who meet the Council's standards.