

Theme 1: The Change-Ready Leader

Redesigning Your Ecosystems for Greater Impact

Builder | Pillar 3: Cultivating Your Support Ecosystem

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Guiding Question: How can Builders design an ecosystem that sustains their growth, expands their opportunities, and supports their leadership, without increasing complexity or personal load?

Anchor Resource: This session utilizes the [Business Ecosystem Design](#) (Deloitte) to help Builders intentionally shape and assess the strategic networks, partnerships, and platforms necessary to scale growth beyond their individual capacity.

Key Moments:

1. (If this is your M1 or you are welcoming new members) Use the [M1 meeting facilitation guide](#) or welcome members using one of the [New Member Introduction](#) activities here.
2. Members begin by brainstorming what makes up their ecosystems, including the people who challenge and support them, as well as the partners, platforms, and pathways that shape how their work moves into the world. The rest of the session builds off of this one, so don't skip the brainstorming portion. If you want to move through this section quickly, shorten or skip the debrief.
3. Then, members take a closer look at one area of their ecosystem that is leaking energy and could benefit from redesign. After a series of reflection questions, you'll facilitate either a structured peer exchange, peer advisory, or a small-group discussion. A good portion of your time can be spent here.
4. Lastly, members will identify one high-impact action or next step they can take to redesign one part of their ecosystem. The goal is for members to leave with one small yet impactful step they can take that leads to greater alignment, leadership capacity, and business impact.

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Topic Overview

Business ecosystem design emphasizes that sustainable growth is a product of intentional architecture rather than isolated effort or inherited networks. By shifting from ad hoc connections to a strategically designed ecosystem, Builders can map an inner ring of personal support (comprising mentors and allies who replenish leadership energy) and an outer ring of business infrastructure (platforms and distribution channels that amplify market reach), ultimately transforming isolated efforts into a scalable engine for sustainable growth and long-term impact.

This approach moves beyond mere contact accumulation, focusing instead on optimizing the flow of time, focus, and capital to ensure these resources generate compounding returns. Ultimately, by acting as ecosystem architects, Builders transition from operating in isolation to presiding over a resilient, purpose-driven network where growth is supported by collective alignment rather than individual capacity.

Meeting Objectives: During this session, members will:

- Construct a comprehensive ecosystem map to visualize the people, platforms, and communities currently influencing their professional environment.
- Evaluate their existing network to distinguish between high-leverage relationships that sustain their work and energy-draining structures that require strategic adjustment.
- Commit to a single, high-impact strategic move to be executed within the next month.

Meeting Materials:

- [Meeting presentation deck](#) (optional)
- Additional Resources:
 - [Business Ecosystems Come of Age](#) | Deloitte
 - [To Succeed in a Business Ecosystem: Change Your Mindset](#) | Wharton
 - [Your Friends Are an Asset \(In Business and in Life\)](#) | Building Solo
 - [Why Investing in Women Entrepreneurs is Key to Social Impact: an Interview with International Finance Corporation's Hela Cheikhrouhou](#) | Harvard Center for International Development

High-Level Meeting Outline

Timing	Topic	Details
0-30 mins	Meeting Kickoff	If this is your group's M1: Use the link below to facilitate the first 30 minutes of your meeting: Introduction to Core Facilitation Guide If you are welcoming new members to your group AND this is <u>not</u> your M1: Use the link below to facilitate the first 30 minutes of your meeting: New Member Introductions If you are <u>not</u> welcoming new members to your group AND this is <u>not</u> your M1, choose one of the following options: 1. Begin immediately with the Intro and Framing, and use the full time allocated

		for each activity. 2. Allocate approximately 30 minutes of the meeting time for (1) group rituals such as brief member updates or quick community building exercises, (2) following up on commitments, experiments, or next steps from the previous meeting, (3) brief rounds of peer advisory to support timely or emergent member support needs, or (4) Core Candor exercises to gather feedback (recommended every 4-6 meetings).
50-80 mins	Dive Deeper	Welcome Question - 5 mins What is a resource or connection you have in your “toolbox” that you think everyone else in this room needs to know about? Why? Ecosystem Mapping - 15-20 mins - Support Ecosystem (inner ring): Who supports me as a leader, thinker, and decision-maker? - Business Ecosystem (outer ring): What partners, platforms, and pathways shape how opportunity reaches me? Assessing and Evaluating an Ecosystem - 20-40 mins Assessing Your Ecosystem + Evaluating (Peer exchange, peer advisory, or discussion) Which relationships, partnerships, platforms, or communities... - consistently expand your clarity, confidence, or growth opportunities? - leak energy, and how does it feel to maintain them? Redesigning One High-Impact Action - 10-15 mins One High-Impact Action Identify one item in your inner or outer ecosystem that is leaking energy and could benefit from a new approach. What could you gain from redesigning it, and what is one small step you could take in the next 30 days to action on your redesign?
10 mins	Wrap Slides + Closing Reflection	Wrap Slides In order to collect the most comprehensive feedback from our members - to ensure ongoing satisfaction <i>and</i> provide Guides with real-time insights on what’s working and areas for improvement - <u>we are testing a new CSAT mechanism for all Core Journey meetings.</u>

		Please ask members to complete an anonymous feedback survey by sharing the unique survey link you received via email with the SL: "Important Core Journey CSAT Survey [ACTION NEEDED]": - <i>This survey link is unique to you, so please don't share it with other Guides.</i> - <i>Members will be required to input the Group Number to complete the survey. Please share this number with the group to ensure they complete the survey accurately, either by typing it into the Zoom chat or using the Wrap Slides. This will help tie feedback to the appropriate Group/Journey.</i> Questions (choose one): - What support are you ready to allow in? - What relationship or structure are you ready to redesign? - Where can you redirect your energy for a greater return? - What is one ecosystem shift that "future you" will thank you for?
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Detailed Facilitation & Speaker Notes

Meeting Kickoff

- **If this is your M1**, begin your meeting with the [Introduction to Core Facilitation Guide](#) (30-45 mins), then move into the Welcome and Session Framing section below.
- **If this is not your M1 but you are adding new members** to this meeting, begin one of the activities listed in the [New Member Introductions](#), then move into the Pillar Intro section below.
- **If this is not your M1 and you are not adding new members**, welcome members to the meeting by creating a warm, inviting space, then move directly into the Welcome and Pillar Intro section below.

Welcome and Session Framing - 5 mins

Create a meaningful transition into the conversation, whether from the welcome activities above or kicking off the session. If you anticipate being short on time, skip the question and deliver only the session framing.

(optional) Welcome Question

Welcome members as they join the meeting, creating a warm and inviting space, and prompt them to answer the welcome question in the Zoom chat.

(optional) Copy and paste in the Zoom chat:

What is a resource or connection you have in your "toolbox" that you think everyone else in this room needs to know about? Why?

Session Framing

Talking points: Growth is rarely constrained by effort alone. More often, it is shaped by the ecosystem around you: the relationships you rely on, the partners you collaborate with, and the platforms and communities that amplify or limit how opportunity reaches you.

Whether we design it intentionally or not, every leader operates within an ecosystem. Left undesigned, it tends to reflect history and convenience. Designed with intention, it becomes a source of impact, resilience, and sustained opportunity.

Today is about stepping into the role of ecosystem architect. You will leave with a clear picture of the environment supporting your leadership, insight into where small shifts could create disproportionate return, and one ecosystem action you can take in the next 30 days.

Optional framing: This is not about networking. It is about directing time, attention, and relational investment toward structures and relationships that compound value rather than drain it.

Ecosystem Map - 15-20 min

This section helps members visualize how support, opportunity, and influence currently flow around them. By mapping both their support ecosystem and business ecosystem, Builders move from seeing relationships as individual connections to understanding them as an interdependent system.

Ecosystem Mapping

Members will map who supports their leadership and decision-making and what structures and relationships influence how opportunity flows.

Talking points: An ecosystem is the environment that enables growth. Your ecosystem includes the people who challenge and support you, as well as the partners, platforms, and pathways that shape how your work moves into the world.

Mapping your ecosystem reveals clear patterns: where support is strong, where opportunity bottlenecks exist, and where energy is being invested with little return.

Prompt: Draw two concentric circles, and label the inner ring “Support Ecosystem” and the outer ring “Business Ecosystem.”

Now, take a few minutes and fill out each ring, using these prompts as a guide:

- Support Ecosystem (inner ring): Who supports me as a leader, thinker, and decision-maker?
- Business Ecosystem (outer ring): What partners, platforms, and pathways shape how opportunity reaches me?

Brainstorm as many responses as you can for each circle. The goal: Identify and record every person, platform, or project that influences your flow of time, energy, and opportunities. For now, focus on making the entire landscape visible rather than evaluating its current effectiveness.

Copy and paste in Zoom and/or display the corresponding slide:

- Support Ecosystem (inner ring): Who supports me as a leader, thinker, and decision-maker?
- Business Ecosystem (outer ring): What partners, platforms, and pathways shape how opportunity reaches me?

(Pause for 4-5 minutes as members brainstorm their responses. Remind them that the goal is to generate responses, not judge whether each is valuable or effective.)

Facilitation note: Share examples as needed, such as:

- Support Ecosystem (inner ring): Mentor, peer advisory group, business coach, friend, etc.
- Business Ecosystem (outer ring): LinkedIn, Substack, Industry-specific communities, strategic referral partnerships, automation tools, etc.

Debrief

Invite members to share what they noticed when mapping their ecosystems. Keep it focused and brief (members do not need to share their entire map). Use one of the methods below or another of your choosing:

- Chat prompt: Prompt everyone to complete this sentence in the chat, “*One thing I noticed about my ecosystem was...*” Then highlight themes, or ask a few members to elaborate on their responses.
- Breakout rooms: Place participants in pairs for 5 minutes to share a few highlights from their maps. The listener reflects patterns, not advice.

Key takeaway: By mapping both their support ecosystem and their business ecosystem, members can recognize how energy, opportunity, and influence actually flow around them today. Every leader has a finite amount of energy. Knowing where yours goes helps you lead by design, not default, focusing on the work, relationships, and decisions that truly make the greatest impact on your personal capacity and your business.

Assessing and Evaluating an Ecosystem - 20-40 mins

This section invites Builders to shift from awareness to strategy by evaluating your ecosystem for leverage, identifying where relationships, partnerships, and platforms provide high-value nourishment versus those that create operational drag through habit or obligation.

Transition statement: *Now that you’ve mapped your ecosystems, let’s assess what’s working and what might benefit from a redesign.*

Assessing Your Ecosystems

Members will identify where their ecosystems are strong and where energy leaks.

Talking points: *Your ecosystem either multiplies your leadership or quietly taxes it. Many Builders inherit their ecosystem over time: relationships form organically, partnerships evolve informally, and communities accumulate as the business grows.*

This next activity is about shifting from natural accumulation to intentional design. This is not an exercise in judgment or pruning for its own sake; it is about awareness and intentional investment.

Prompt: Think about where your time, attention, and relational energy are producing momentum, and where they may be producing friction, obligation, or stagnation. Take a few minutes to reflect on your inner and outer rings by identifying:

(optional) Copy and paste in the Zoom chat:

Which relationships, partnerships, platforms, or communities...

- consistently expand your clarity, confidence, or growth opportunities?
- leak energy, and how does it feel to maintain them?

(Pause for 1-2 minutes while members write their answers to the reflection questions. If you'd like, ask for a few members to share their response to one of the questions above and/or an insight they gained while answering the reflection questions. Keep the shares brief, highlight themes or commonalities, or dig deeper into member responses to begin revealing the costs of misaligned effort or attention to themselves or their businesses.)

Evaluating an Ecosystem

Members turn their reflections into actionable next steps through structured peer exchange, peer advisory, or breakout-room discussions. For some groups, you might choose to stay here a little longer.

Choose one of the following facilitation strategies:

- Peer exchange: In breakout rooms (3-4 members each), one member will share their responses to the previous prompts (no more than 2 minutes). For listeners: Their role is to reflect patterns, not to offer advice. Helpful reflections sound like:
 - "What I hear is that this relationship creates opportunity but also dependence."
 - "It sounds like this structure made sense before, but your role has changed."
 - "I notice a tension between loyalty and leverage in what you're describing."
- Peer advisory: As a whole group or in small groups, facilitate a few brief rounds of peer advisory. You might choose this method if you notice similar themes or challenges in member shares, or you want to highlight the power of the "board of advisors" that Core provides. If you choose this route, give members ~1 minute to identify their challenge and a specific ask for support before launching into peer advisory. Examples of challenge/ask include:
 - I'm receiving conflicting expert pressure to scale aggressively, while my personal goal is to optimize for profit and peace. How do you handle an influential advisor whose vision for the company no longer aligns with your own?
 - Our current fulfillment process is entirely dependent on my manual oversight; what specific framework or hire did you use to move from a person-dependent workflow to a truly system-dependent one?

Remind members that the goal of peer advisory is to leverage the collective intelligence of a trusted circle to surface blind spots, challenge limiting assumptions, and accelerate high-stakes decision-making. It is not to give unsolicited advice.

- Breakout room discussion: Move members into breakout rooms of 3-4, prompting them to discuss one or more of the questions below:
 - Who consistently leaves you with more “mental shelf space” and clarity after engaging with them? Who do you feel a “sunk cost” obligation toward, even though the alignment has clearly vanished?
 - Which platform or community currently feels like a performance you have to keep up, rather than a resource that fuels you? What could be unlocked for you or your business if you changed your relationship with it?
 - If you reclaimed the energy spent on your most misaligned ecosystem, what high-leverage project would finally get your full attention?

Facilitation note: Help members see that chronic relational strain is usually a structural misalignment rather than a personal failing, allowing them to prune outdated loyalties without guilt. Remind them that true impact isn't found in increasing their volume, but in the radical alignment of their ecosystem with their current growth stage. Misalignment drains a Builder's limited resources by forcing them to fight market frictions, incompatible tools, and poor-fit audiences, leading to stagnant growth and rapid burnout.

Key takeaway: Ecosystem strain often signals a structural misalignment long before it's consciously named. Identifying these energy drains helps you reclaim your focus, allowing you to scale your impact without sacrificing your personal capacity.

Redesigning One High-Impact Action - 10-15 mins

This section helps members shift from analysis to action by choosing one focused action that reallocates their energy, time, and focus from more volume to one focused high-impact action. This reinforces that leadership growth isn't about carrying a heavier load, but about designing an environment that carries the work for you.

Transition statement: *Next, we'll shift from diagnosis and analysis to tactical action planning.*

One High-Impact Action

Members will identify one action they can take to redesign their relationship with one relational or structural item from either their inner or outer ecosystems.

Suggested talking points: *Choose one action you can take to redesign or strengthen your ecosystem(s) that will make a big impact. This might involve deepening an existing relationship, clarifying a partnership, initiating a collaboration, or creating a simple structure to reduce friction and increase shared capacity.*

You are not redesigning your entire ecosystem. You are choosing one action that will change how energy flows. It should feel supportive, realistic, and aligned with your current capacity. If an action feels heavy or overwhelming, it is likely too large or too vague.

(optional) Copy and paste in the Zoom chat:

Identify one item in your inner or outer ecosystem that is leaking energy and could benefit from a new approach. What could you gain from redesigning it, and what is one small step you could take in the next 30 days to action on your redesign?

Facilitation note: Pause for 1-2 minutes while members write their responses. As needed, share an example with the group, such as:

- Consultant: My custom proposal process is a major energy leak, costing me 5+ hours of unpaid labor every week. Redesigning this into a paid strategic diagnostic would reclaim two full days a month and instantly filter for higher-quality, committed clients.
- Fractional CFO: I have three clients whose messy data forces me into manual cleanup. Redesigning my onboarding to require a certified clean-up partner would reclaim 10 hours a month for high-fee strategic modeling and proactive tax planning.

(optional) Debrief/Share-out

Prompt members to share their responses. Choose one or more of the following share-out strategies, depending on the amount of time you have:

- Zoom chat: Prompt members to share their responses in the chat, then highlight themes or commonalities, and/or ask a few members to come off mute to share more details about their responses.
- Accountability Partners: Pair members up in brief breakout rooms to share their responses. Encourage listeners to (1) reflect on the clarity and feasibility of the action, rather than offering advice or additional ideas, and (2) determine if, when, and how they can check in with each other on their progress before the next meeting.
- Group Insights Harvest: Reflect together on what surfaced today (whole group or breakout rooms). Keep responses brief and reflective rather than explanatory. Questions might include:
 - Where did you notice a shared challenge or common pattern across the group?
 - Did someone else's ecosystem insight or action help you see your own situation differently?
 - What impact might redesigning even one part of your ecosystem have on the business you're building?

Key takeaway: Intentional ecosystem design happens through focused, well-placed moves. Over time, these small shifts reshape the ecosystem itself, creating conditions for sustainable leadership and focused capacity.

Wrap Slides - 5 mins

Take a brief moment to review the [Wrap Slides](#), align on upcoming meeting dates, and complete the CSAT*.

*In order to collect the most comprehensive feedback from our members - to ensure ongoing satisfaction *and* provide Guides with real-time insights on what's working and areas for improvement - we are testing a new CSAT mechanism for all Core Journey meetings.

Please ask members to complete an anonymous feedback survey by sharing the unique survey link you received via email with the SL: "Important Core Journey CSAT Survey [ACTION NEEDED]":

- *This survey link is unique to you, so please don't share it with other Guides.*
- *Members will be required to input the Group Number to complete the survey. Please share this number with the group to ensure they complete the survey accurately, either by typing it into the Zoom chat or using the Wrap Slides. This will help tie feedback to the appropriate Group/Journey.*

Closing Reflection - 5 mins

Close out the meeting with intention by prompting members to reflect on insights and translate the discussion into personal or collective meaning. This ensures that members leave grounded, motivated, and ready to apply what they've gained.

Individual Reflection.

Close out the meeting by giving members space to share final reflections and takeaways, and to meaningfully transition out of the Core space.

Suggested talking points: *As you move forward with your ecosystem redesign, notice how small, intentional shifts begin to change how support and opportunity show up around you. With clearer ecosystems and more intentional relationships, you are no longer carrying growth alone. You are designing an environment that sustains your leadership and strengthens your impact (both for you and your business) over time.*

Questions (choose one):

- What support are you ready to allow in?
- What relationship or structure are you ready to redesign?
- Where can you redirect your energy for a greater return?
- What is one ecosystem shift that "future you" will thank you for?

Resource Highlight

Lastly, highlight any additional reading, thought leadership, or resources members can use to delve deeper into the theme. Some suggested resources are listed below. You are encouraged to add to the list by drawing on your own toolkit and/or by sharing any resources mentioned by members during today's meeting.

(optional) Copy and paste in the Zoom chat:

Resources:

- [Business Ecosystems Come of Age](#) | Deloitte
- [To Succeed in a Business Ecosystem: Change Your Mindset](#) | Wharton
- [Your Friends Are an Asset \(In Business and in Life\)](#) | Building Solo

- [Why Investing in Women Entrepreneurs is Key to Social Impact: an Interview with International Finance Corporation's Hela Cheikhrouhou](#) | Harvard Center for International Development

Facilitation note: Have a go-to article, framework, or resource related to the theme? Add it to the list! Don't think one of these resources will land with the group? Don't include it! Did a member mention a resource on this topic during the meeting? Ask them to share the link! Did you see an upcoming event on the Chief platform relevant to this topic? Share it!

Appendix

Suggested Group Communications

Use the copy below to send the pre-meeting agenda and post-meeting summary via the Guide portal on Chief.com. We also recommend sending an email to the group 2 days before the meeting to encourage attendance and build enthusiasm about the conversation. Please adjust the tone and details to reflect your voice and the group dynamic, and address any relevant and timely needs of members and the group.

Pre-meeting agenda:

Hi G{#}! I'm looking forward to seeing you all at our next Core meeting on [date and time] at [insert Zoom meeting link or meeting location], where we will explore how to cultivate the support ecosystems that support you and your business.

Growth is shaped by your environment as much as your effort, so designing your ecosystem with intention is key to sustainable momentum. Before we meet, reflect on where you feel most supported versus where you are carrying an unsustainable load.

We'll be diving into this conversation and more! See you there!

Post-meeting summary:

Hi G{#}! Thank you so much for [insert detail from the meeting, such as how the members showed up to support one another, their vulnerability in sharing their challenges, the commitment they showed to the group and one another, etc.].

We discussed what it means to lead from your core. [insert very high-level summary of the points of discussion. Be sure not to include overly specific member details, and as a result, we [insert a takeaway, next step, or intention stemming from the meeting].

As I shared at the end of the meeting, I'm sharing a few resources related to our discussion:

- [Business Ecosystems Come of Age](#) | Deloitte
- [To Succeed in a Business Ecosystem: Change Your Mindset](#) | Wharton

- [Your Friends Are an Asset \(In Business and in Life\)](#) | Building Solo
- [Why Investing in Women Entrepreneurs is Key to Social Impact: an Interview with International Finance Corporation's Hela Cheikhrouhou](#) | Harvard Center for International Development

What else are you reading, watching, or learning? Share it in the group chat!

Next Session Preview: In our next meeting, we will explore how you protect your business from risk by building the strength and capacity to pursue growth boldly.

Pre-meeting reminders for Guides:

- **Log onto Zoom ~10 min before the session.** If you run into any technical issues, please first ensure you're logged in to the Zoom account registered with Chief, and then contact guides@chief.com with 'URGENT' in the subject line if you need support.
 - **Set up your tech to best support you.** Turn off notifications and prepare your screen(s) so you can easily access your facilitation materials and see members' faces in gallery view.
 - **Rename yourself on Zoom** to include your full name and pronouns.
 - **Take notes.** Whether you take notes during the session or immediately after, it's essential to note key moments and themes from the meeting so you can refer back to them in your meeting summary message and/or during future meetings.
 - **AI Notetaker policy:** Please note, AI Notetakers will not be allowed to join Core group meetings and Identity-based Community Conversations due to confidentiality. View Chief's AI Notetaker policy [here](#).
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Wrap Slides Review Guidance:

Take a moment to align on a few key aspects of the Core experience: attendance, feedback, and maximizing the Chief experience. You can use this opportunity to discuss:

- **Core meeting schedule:** review the upcoming 2-3 meeting dates and times, and remind members to block that time on their calendars. You can use this time to remind them of their commitment to themselves and to the group, and encourage them to share as early as possible if they have a known conflict for a future Core meeting.
- **Feedback:** remind members that they will have many opportunities to share feedback with Chief, whether through the post-meeting feedback survey (CSAT), by connecting with the Concierge team, or through other surveys they receive throughout their Chief membership. Also, encourage them to share feedback directly with you so you can make sure they're getting the most out of their Core experience.

- **What's Happening at Chief:** build excitement about events, programming, and resources that Chief has to offer outside of Core. Display the Wrap Slides and/or share event descriptions or links in the Zoom chat. You can also ask members to share what Chief events they attended last month or what they're looking forward to attending this month.