

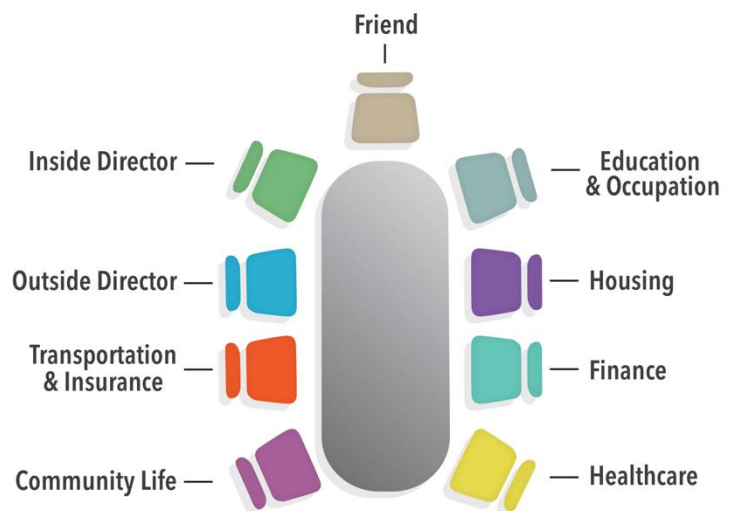


Frequently Asked Questions

What is Open Table?

Open Table is a model that provides the process, training and research to invest in individual and community transformation. The Open Table model trains faith, government, business, non-profit, education and other sectors to work together to transform the relational and social capital and personal networks of their members and employees into tools individuals and families experiencing economic or relationship poverty can use to develop and implement plans to achieve their vision for a better life. The model trains how to encourage everyday community members, either as individuals or small groups of people, to form communities called Tables. Table members invest their time, personal connections, and skills in the life of an individual or family.

OPEN TABLE® MODEL



How many people are on a Table?

Tables are usually comprised of 6-8 members to serve an individual (someone with no daily child rearing responsibility) or 9-12 to serve a family. "Positions" or roles are based on common issues or challenges people experience. Table members select an area in which they are willing to offer support. This is often not based on a person's professional experience (e.g. the finance chair need not be a CPA, but simply someone willing to offer support in creating a budget, balancing a checkbook, filing taxes, etc). While each Table member has a designated chair, all of the members work together on whichever issue the Friend prioritizes to address. Table members serve as "generalists" with all members identifying potential resources, connections and opportunities.

As a Table member, how much time is required?

The Open Table Organization Leader our Leadership Team is responsible for recruiting Table members, facilitating and overseeing the training process, and making sure the Table(s) get "launched." This

commitment is 3-5 hours per week until the Table starts, then approximately 2 hours a week during the 12 months Tables are in process. Table members commit to 1 hour weekly Table meetings for a year and an additional 1-3 hours per week for additional relationship building with the Friend outside of the formal Table meetings, for an average of 2-4 hours per week. Occasional missed meetings due to vacation, sickness, work schedules, etc. are expected. Tables end after 12 months of meetings or sooner if the Friend determines they are ready for formal meetings to end. This timeline begins with the first official Table meeting. However, an After Plan is developed with the intention of relationships continuing for a lifetime!

Why is the role of the Organization Leader or Leadership Team and why is this role so essential?

This role is responsible for building and leading the movement within their organization to use the Open Table model to bring together and co-invest the relational and social capital of the community for the common good. The Organization Leader/Team brings a broad set of skills to perform the tasks necessary to build an Open Table movement within the organization. The team utilizes their many talents and time to be networkers, relational connectors, detail-oriented learners, those to assist with technology to learn the Open Table model, and those who love to talk about the model.

What skills should an Organization Leader/Team have?

A Organization Leader should first be committed to the establishment and growth of the Open Table model within the organization. The skills needed are a basic ability to use a computer, to identify their own personal strengths and where they are lacking, identify others to join their leadership team who bring the requisite skills to perform the following functions: recruit volunteers, make presentations, perform administrative functions, attend to details, and able to learn the Open Table model through online learning. Open Table does not impose or require deadlines for completion of tasks throughout the training and Table launch process, so an Organization Leader should be a motivated self-starter who will take initiative.

How long is the entire commitment including training?

The Organization Leader/Team commits to learning the Open Table model which includes recruiting Table members, facilitating Table training and quarterly training sessions, monitoring all communications within the Table for fidelity to the Open Table model, and growing the Open Table movement within their organization. The Organization Leader/Team commitment will last at least 15-18 months: 3-6 months to complete the process of Organization Leader training, recruitment of Table members, and training of Table members, followed by 12 months supporting the Table.

Table members are trained to meet with the Friend by participating in approximately six to seven, two-hour sessions led by the Organization Leader/Team. Once trained, Table members commit to meeting as a Table with their Friend in formal one-hour weekly meetings for 12 months. High performing Tables are ones that also commit time outside of the formal Table meetings for relationship building with the Friend either as individuals or in small groups. Once the formal meetings conclude, the model intentionally requires the development of an After Plan to put into writing how ongoing interaction with the Friend will take place moving forward.

Who identifies people who can serve on a Table?

Licensees, which can be any organization, determine who serves on their Table and if individuals other than its members or employees may serve. They are also responsible for determining what type of screening is needed for these individuals to serve. Open Table provides a Table member application that can be used.

How do I recruit for the Open Table within my organization?

The Open Table model trains the Organization Leader/Team with extensive tools for recruiting Table members such as videos, brochures, informational meeting agendas, social media post ideas and suggestions for how and where to recruit Table members.

Most people will not feel qualified to help someone; how are they prepared?

Open Table prepares Table members through approximately 12 hours of interactive and online training. The training modules will educate Table members to understand economic and/or relationship poverty, building relationships, cultural differences, group dynamics, the impact of experiencing trauma and how to work respectfully with people who have been marginalized.

Who can Tables serve?

Tables work with individuals or families in the community who are experiencing life challenges such as: homelessness, economic hardship, young adults aging out of foster care or juvenile detention, refugee resettlement, seniors living alone, re-entry from incarceration, single parents, survivors of human trafficking, etc.

Does Open Table have to be only through a faith-based organization?

No. There are many different kinds of organizations (businesses, healthcare systems, non-profits, civic organizations, educational institutions, etc.) that have licensed the Open Table model and are implementing Tables.

Are there different types of Tables depending on the situations of Friends?

There is one Open Table model. The Table is comprised of varying numbers of Table members based on whether they are serving an individual or a family. However, depending on the circumstances/challenges of the person being served, there may be additional training offered to assist the Table to understand the needs of a particular population. An example is, when a Table will be working with young adults ages 18 to 24, there is additional training required for Table members to prepare them for the unique best practices of building successful relationships with transitional age youth. Open Table also trains referral partners to consider offering additional training for Tables related to the specific population they will be referring to Tables.

Why does Open Table refer to the person being helped as a Friend?

Open Table refers to individuals being served by the Open Table model as Friend or Family; however, communities are free to use a term that is culturally relevant to their own context. Whatever term you use,

Open Table recommends it does not imply that one is mentoring, teaching or has more authority over the other such as Teacher/Student or Mentor/Mentee. In Open Table, every member, including the Friend, has unique and valuable characteristics that contribute to positive outcomes for all. The relationships between Table members and their Friend are at the heart of the effectiveness of the model, and an environment of mutuality that allows the Friend to establish long lasting relationships with their Table members, and with other members of the community, is crucial to the Table achieving positive outcomes.

How are Friends identified?

Friends are identified through referral partners in your community. Friends complete both a readiness assessment (online – based on Prochaska’s theory of Stages of Change) and a written questionnaire with their referring organization to determine their level of openness to the Table process. If the results do not indicate the Friend is “ready,” then additional supports are recommended, and the assessment can be taken again in 6 months.

How do we access training and what materials are required to execute the Open Table model (i.e. computer, internet access, etc.)?

Open Table has a robust training platform called Open Table University that contains all the resources and training for both the Organization Leader/Team and Tables. The Organization Leader/Team must have access to a computer with internet connection in order to access the online training materials. They should also have the ability to print documents and be able to produce copies for meetings. The availability of reliable high-speed internet connection is needed for accessing and viewing all training along with a mechanism to display the training modules/videos so that others can view and hear the training comfortably as an entire group.

How much does it cost for an organization to implement the model?

Open Table provides training to meet the goals of the organization implementing the model. The cost of training is, therefore, customized to each project. Non-profit and religious organizations have lower costs than do for-profit organizations.

I have more questions, how do I contact you?

Send and email to info@theopentable.org and an Open Table staff member will get in touch with you.