



ALL Program Resource Guide

How to Keep Your Relationship Going for Pairs

Feedback

Providing feedback is an important part of any relationship. Your mentoring relationship is no different. Below are a few tips for providing and receiving feedback. Check in with your leader or learner throughout your work together to gauge how things are going from their perspective.

Ask the following questions or any others that are relevant for you.

- Are we meeting at an appropriate frequency, and for the right length of time?
- Are you following up on our action items coming out of each meeting? Am I doing a good job of following up on mine?
- What do you like most about our mentoring relationship?
- What do you like least about our mentoring relationship?
- What could I do differently to help you get more out of this relationship?
- Are we meeting the goals and objectives set at the beginning of this relationship?
- Are there any changes we should make to help us get more out of our time together?

Keeping Up With Your Goals

Goal setting is important but executing and checking back in on your goals is equally, if not more important, is. Below are some ideas on how to navigate this process.

Staying on Track

- To keep your partnership moving forward, maintain a continuous dialog between the goals you set together and the practice you're doing. In most (or all) of your meetings:
 - Assess progress against goals since you last met
 - Reflect on the learner's experiences since you last met and any lessons learned
 - Develop or refine the learner's plan for what they will do between now and your next meeting
- A little pre-work can make your meetings that much more efficient. You might have the learner send their thoughts to the leader before you meet. Right after you meet, have them send any updates to that thinking. This shouldn't be a laborious, formal report. Rough notes are typically ideal—whatever works for the two of you.
- Since real practice is the way to build any meaningful, complex skill, the main job of the leader is to help your learner practice and learn from it. To keep your collective efforts focused on the right stuff, invest the time up front to make sure you have a clear articulation of your mentee's goals, acknowledging that they may evolve over the course of your relationship. Then, much like any other project you might run, return to the goals



regularly to stay focused and motivated and to track the progress you're making.

Practice Your Goals Safely

- How do you help your learner practice safely? Once you've met as a pair and helped the learner define their goals, it's time to help your learner figure out how to practice the skills they're looking to build. Which brings us to Aristotle's advice: "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them." So, as a leader, one of your key responsibilities is to help your learner figure out ways to learn by doing. The starting point is clear. Want to learn how to negotiate? Go negotiate. Want to learn how to challenge leaders? Go do that.
- Of course, if it were as easy as that sounds, no one would need a mentor. So, what is hard? The following bullet points highlight what mentoring pairs tend to struggle with when it comes to finding opportunities to practice:
 - **Opportunity:** Finding opportunities to practice at all
e.g., How can I practice flying a 747?
 - **Safety:** Making sure that any mistakes you make won't be catastrophic
e.g., How can I make sure I'm not at risk of crashing a real plane? How do I know when I'm ready to stop using the simulator and get in an actual cockpit?
 - **Preparation:** Finding the best resources to help you prepare for your practice
e.g., Can I go watch experts? Who should I talk to? Should I start with a flight simulator on my iPad? Should I read any manuals?
 - **Feedback and reflection:** Learning from your practice
e.g., What was I doing wrong when I crashed in the simulator? How should I adjust my approach so I do better (and/or learn more) next time?
- Think about your partnership so far: what does your learner need to practice? In your next meeting, work together to figure out how learner can practice the things they want to be able to do in a way that is safe and in a way that helps them learn from the experience.

Concepts in this document are adapted from materials created by Adam Neaman and Colin Schiller at [Everwise](#)