

Learning Environment Design Tactics for Scaffolding Self-Direction



Pillars of Self-Directed Learning at Work

INDIVIDUAL QUALITIES	LEARNING SKILL	ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERISTICS
<p>Motivation. Learners value the development of a particular knowledge base or skill and are willing to invest in learning more.</p> <p>Self-Awareness. Learners have wherewithal to assess their own strengths and opportunities.</p> <p>Persistence. Learners are likely to push through any barriers and continue developing themselves over time.</p> <p>Resourcefulness. Learners have the capability and savvy to locate and vet resources that are relevant and useful.</p>	<p>Attention. Learners know specifically what is important to learn and know what to look for when they engage with learning resources.</p> <p>Intention. Learners know where they will be applying their knowledge or skill.</p> <p>Reflective Practices. Learners have capacity to make meaning from the resources and activities they encounter.</p>	<p>Relationship Strength. Learners know who they can trust for assistance, and those people are willing to help.</p> <p>Engagement. Learners have access to materials and activities that are relevant, interesting, interactive, and memorable.</p> <p>Time. Learners have time to pursue learning during the workday.</p>

Adopted from: [Challenges of learning in the flow of work: Scaffolding self-directed learning.](#)
By Catherine Lombardo (2016) *International Journal of HRD Practice, Policy, and Research*

Tactics for Scaffolding Self-Directed Learning

INDIVIDUAL QUALITIES	
To cultivate:	Try these tactics:
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drawing connections between knowledge, skills, work tasks, and success. ▪ Enlisting support of formal and informal leaders to actively promote importance. ▪ Assigning projects and responsibilities that stretch people’s skill sets
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing self-assessment tools with recommended next steps ▪ Supporting learners in articulating goals for learning and application ▪ Offering an activity guide for new-to-role learners ▪ Creating a checklist for on-the-job training and coaching
Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting expectations that promote longer term development goals ▪ Promoting the use of interim learning goals (core, intermediate, advanced skills) ▪ Recognizing skill development (e.g. informally, through certification, in reviews)
Resourcefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing curated resources or ecosystems that are robust and easy to use ▪ Promoting the use of tools and techniques that are already being utilized ▪ Teaching internet search skills

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LEARNING SKILL

To cultivate:	Try these tactics:
Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pointing out what can be learned from specific activities and resources (annotations)▪ Advising learners on specific formal learning events for a given stage in their development▪ Suggesting reflection questions for readings and activities▪ Offering resources in learners' preferred formats (e.g. video, podcast, books, articles)▪ Providing different views of materials depending on role or level of experience
Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Categorizing resources by what people might be trying to do▪ Selecting resources that are specifically relevant to learners' role or industry▪ Suggesting next steps when an activity is concluded▪ Providing application suggestions and exercises▪ Using contextualized examples, role plays, and simulations.
Reflective Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Providing reflective questions to accompany learning materials▪ Setting the expectation to discuss learning with peers or managers

ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERISTICS

To cultivate:	Try these tactics:
Relationship Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Introducing learners to subject matter experts or to each other▪ Identifying people to follow on social media and suggesting specific social media tools, shared repositories, and hashtags▪ Recommending professional organizations and conferences▪ Providing an expert directory▪ Enabling profile pages that give learners the chance to share both facts and personality▪ Offering guidance to ensure developer-learner pairs have effective interactions with one another
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Selecting resources and activities based on level of engagement▪ Ensuring at least a subset of resources and activities provide deep interaction and interpersonal communication▪ Taking an active role to generate discussion among learners and with experts▪ Leveraging experience as a rich playing field for learning
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Incorporating resources into systems employees need to do the work (integrated performance support)▪ Creating a resource portal to make searching for resources more efficient▪ Allocating sufficient time for learning when needed

Adopted from: **Learning Environments by Design** (chapter 3). By Catherine Lombardozzi (2015) ATD Press.

**Learning is not attained by chance;
it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence.**

~ Abigail Adams

For more, see www.L4LP.com/learning-environments