

Managers Encourage Personal Growth

As a manager, you have a unique position within your organization to support the team by working directly with staff as well as bring your knowledge and seniority to organizational decision making. However, being a manager within a Learning-Centered Organization is different. You are essential in modeling the core principles of your organization. You are also responsible to model what it means to be a contemplative practitioner.

Consider the following tips to help staff be contemplative practitioners:

1. **Model it yourself.** You cannot expect others to do something that you don't embrace yourself. Decide on a helpful practice, be disciplined, and share with staff from time to time. Make yourself vulnerable so others can do the same. The more we learn about ourselves the stronger our work will be.
2. **Make time for others, regularly.** One cannot underestimate the importance of holding regular one-on-one meetings with your team. Ideally, you will have a protected time each week to sit and offer your undivided attention to each member of your team. By protecting this space, you can strengthen your relationships, gain insight into challenges staff face, and offer support.
3. **Use an intentional structure for your time together.** Part of being a contemplative practitioner is making space for dialogue and learning. You expect your staff to use their time intentionally and effectively so you should do the same. Take the time to create an agenda or template ahead of your meetings and include space to discuss personal growth and learning.
4. **Use a reflective technique in staff meetings.** Structured techniques for sharing will help ensure each person has a voice and is heard. Starting each staff meeting in this way can help increase what others know about themselves and what you know about others. Working at being vulnerable and open in this way, can strengthen the team and the work. A few possible questions connected to being a contemplative practitioner are:
 - *What did you learn about yourself this week that we need to know in working together?*
 - *What action did someone on the team make that really helped you in your work this week?*

- *What did you do (or not do) this week that helped you have more joy in your work?*
5. **Check in during performance reviews.** These are times for celebration, looking back and planning forward. As such, ask staff to take some record of their contemplative practice with them to these sessions. It can be important and meaningful to hear a reading from their journal, sharing a drawing or hearing about what a colleague said about their work.