

TEACHING MOMENTS

Great leaders don't just give orders—they mentor, guide, and empower others to grow. A truly effective mentor knows that learning is about experience, discovery, and growth, not just following instructions. Knowing when to step in and when to step back is a powerful leadership skill. Well-timed teaching moments inspire confidence, build independence, and turn small challenges into lifelong learning experiences. This activity helps participants explore mentoring styles and adapt their approach to better support others.



Conversation Starter: What is a teaching moment? Think about a time when someone taught you a new skill. What did they do that made learning helpful or frustrating? What did they do that made learning easier or harder?

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Recognize and apply teaching moments to help others learn.
- Understand when to guide, when to step back, and how to support growth.
- Identify key qualities of effective mentorship and teaching.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Craft Supplies (choose one or provide a variety based on the group's needs):
 - Examples: Origami paper, colored paper, scissors, glue sticks, tape, markers or colored pencils, pipe cleaners, straws, paper clips, string or yarn.
- Timer
- Optional: Sample completed craft for demonstration
- Optional materials: Blindfolds

CATCH THE TEACHING MOMENT

Instructions

- Form small teams of 5–6 participants. Each team will work together to complete the task.
- Explain: “Your goal isn’t just to finish the task—it’s to ensure that everyone in your group succeeds. If someone is struggling, offer help in a way that supports their learning without taking over.”
- Select a simple hands-on activity such as making paper airplanes, origami, or another basic construction project.
- Set a timer for 10 minutes.
- Optional Challenge: Add an extra difficulty to encourage teamwork and creative problem-solving.
 - Partial Instructions – Give only part of the directions and let participants figure out the rest together.
 - One-Hand Challenge – Halfway through, tell the group they can only use one hand to complete the task.
 - Blindfold Challenge – Select one or more group members to complete the task without sight.
 - Team Relay – Each participant completes one step before passing the project to the next person.
- Once the time is up, each group will present their final product to the larger group.
- Discuss how they overcame challenges and helped each other succeed.

FACILITATION TIPS

Let mistakes happen. Sometimes the best learning comes from trial and error. Instead of stepping in immediately when someone struggles, encourage them to explore, problem-solve, and ask questions. A little struggle can build confidence and deeper understanding.

REFLECTION

- Please share how you were helped or if you helped another. How did it feel?
- What makes a good teacher in moments like this?
- What made someone's help feel supportive rather than controlling?

APPLICATION

- How can we recognize when someone truly needs guidance versus when they just need time to figure things out?
- What makes a good teaching moment? (Think about things like keeping it short, asking guiding questions, and offering encouragement.)
- Dive Deeper: What's the difference between guiding someone to find an answer versus just giving them the solution? Why does figuring something out on your own lead to deeper learning?

CHECK UNDERSTANDING

-Did the participants recognize and apply the concept of a teaching moment during the activity?

-Did participants experience moments where they had to support someone without taking over?

KEY TAKEAWAY: Great mentors don't just provide answers—they create opportunities for learning. They guide, encourage, and adapt their teaching to fit the learner's needs, fostering confidence and independence. The best mentors recognize that real growth happens not by simply giving answers, but by creating space for learning through experience.

