

10 ways to self-direct your learning

1. Set meaningful learning goals

- ◇ Consider your learning goals – both short and long term
- ◇ Share your goals with a trusted friend/colleague/coach, focus on your current reality, obstacles and the way forward
- ◇ Write them down with a plan of how you will achieve them, including your timeline

2. Build a daily learning habit

- ◇ Work out your daily learning goal – this could be keeping up to date with your industry /profession or regular time spent each day to practice a new skill
- ◇ Spend 20-30 minutes daily working on your daily learning goal
- ◇ Promote daily learning to others – share your learning/practice
- ◇ Regularly review your daily learning goal, mix it up periodically

3. Lead by example

- ◇ Discuss your self-directed learning needs at every 1-2-1, or PDP/development conversation
- ◇ Seek regular feedback from your peers, direct reports, and line manager
- ◇ Give regular feedback to your peers, direct reports via 'win's and great practice'
- ◇ Make sure you review and evaluate all work projects via 'lessons learned for next time'

4. Guide and facilitate

- ◇ Give your team dedicated time to explore and reflect on their learning practices
- ◇ Encourage wider discussion about self-directed learning and share what works
- ◇ Involve stakeholders so they are aware and support actions
- ◇ Continue your own self-directed learning and development; be a role model

5. Create connections

- ◇ Create an infrastructure in your team/department/organisation to support networking and sharing
- ◇ Join a professional learning community – this could be online or face to face
- ◇ Create networking opportunities, relationships and connections; informal and formal
- ◇ Find a mentor – you can have more than one too, but be clear on what you need them for

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6. Leverage technology

- ◇ Read online articles, blog posts or abstracts
- ◇ Try out a new technology tool to support learning at the point of need (eg video, podcasts, a newsfeed)
- ◇ Create something to share your learning – make a video with a mobile device, create a podcast, article, or blog

7. Signpost expertise

- ◇ Check out who you are following on social media (twitter/LinkedIn) – are you following the right experts to give you what you need?
- ◇ Check out what resources are available at your workplace
- ◇ Share with others when you read a good book, article, or listen to a podcast

8. Communicate clearly

- ◇ Think about what you want to learn, what you're interested in, not just work-related
- ◇ Have a conversation with a peer about what you want to learn and how you want to learn
- ◇ Define what would help/hinder you
- ◇ Share your goals for self-directed learning

9. Build sustainable learning support

- ◇ Take advantage of any coaching opportunities via your employer
- ◇ Develop curiosity, analysis, study and research skills
- ◇ Talk to other self-directed learners to find out what works for them
- ◇ Set up a Working Out Loud Circle (visit www.workingoutloud.com)

10. Reflect on experiences

- ◇ Write about your experiences in a journal – this could be hard copy or a digital tool
- ◇ Create mind-maps to make sense of complex topics or large amounts of information
- ◇ Share your learning via a blog – eg the LinkedIn 'Articles' tool or a regular blogging platform