



Activity: Communicating as a Learning Experience

This activity will promote thinking about how we communicate and be a foundational exercise that can be referred to throughout the mentoring relationship. It will encourage reflection, planning and communication moving forward in a project.

Purpose: This activity will give the mentor and mentee an opportunity to each practice communication and listening skills in a low-stress environment. It may highlight strengths and points of improvement in communication, and inform partner communication moving forward.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: 2 chairs, a writing utensil, paper, and 2 objects, [Slides: Communicating as a Learning Experience](#) (optional)

Who: Mentor and Mentee

What:

1. Sit back to back. One person with an object; the other with paper and pen.
2. The person with the object assumes the role of speaker and the other assumes the role of listener.
3. The speaker should take 3 minutes to describe the object.
4. The listener should use that description to draw the object.
5. Have a conversation, reflecting about the experience. Explore what you learned about yourself and the other person:
 - What were the assumptions you made in describing and listening? How do these assumptions relate to your lived experience?
 - What did you find particularly helpful about the description?
 - What would you do differently next time?
6. Repeat the steps above in the opposite role with a new object.
7. How might these reflections help you with communication in your relationship?

Tips:

- Perform this early in your mentoring relationship or project, because it can be a foundational experience to refer back to throughout.



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- The listener should not ask questions, and should instead be focusing on the speaker's word choice and communication.

Link(s) to Materials: [Slides: Communicating as a Learning Experience](#)
(<https://tinyurl.com/SlidesCommunicatingExperience>)