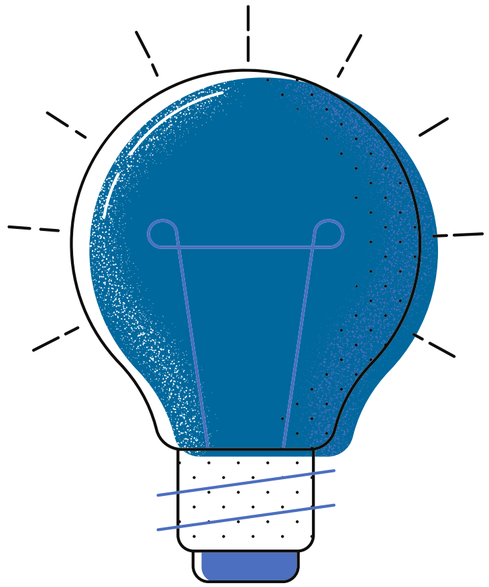


Directs Work

mark s kenny

In Pairs



Think of a time when you or someone you saw stepped in to just do the work instead of directing it. What happened? What was the impact?

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Directs Work

Giving clear direction, delegating appropriately, and staying engaged to make sure the work gets done.

mark s kenny

Directs Work: Skilled Behaviors

- ✓ Provides clear direction and accountabilities.
- ✓ Delegates and distributes assignments and decisions appropriately.
- ✓ Monitors progress by maintaining dialogue on work and results.
- ✓ Provides appropriate guidance and direction based on people's capabilities.
- ✓ Intervenes as needed to remove obstacles.

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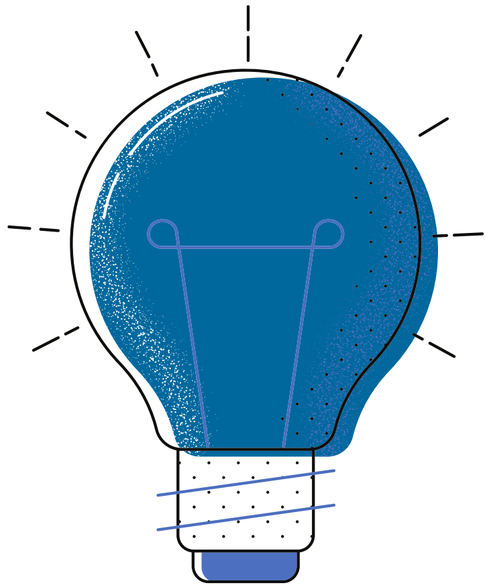
Directs Work: Less Skilled Behaviors

- Provides incomplete, vague, or disorganized instructions.
- Delegates work to people without giving them sufficient guidance.
- Sets goals and objectives so easy to achieve that people are demotivated in the process.
- Saves high-profile tasks for self.

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At Your Table

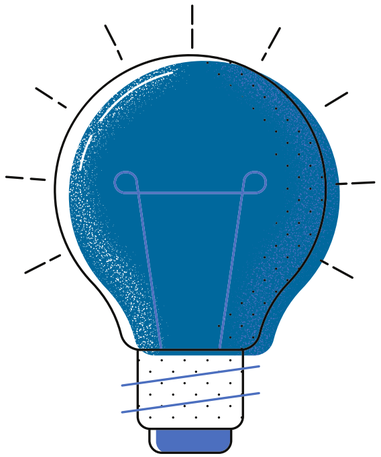
Answer these questions:



1. Which skilled behaviors do you already demonstrate?
2. Which less skilled behaviors creep in for you?

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In Pairs



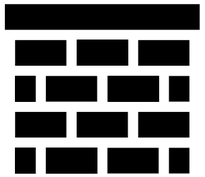
Scenario: You’re short-staffed on a shift. Something needs to get done quickly. You assign it to someone on your team. They say: ‘Yeah, I’ve got it.’ An hour later… it’s not done. And now it’s becoming a bigger issue.

Answer:

1. What would you actually do in that moment?
2. Is that DO, DUMP, or DIRECT?

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Our Agenda



Barriers: Why We Fall Into Do or Dump



What Directing Well Looks Like



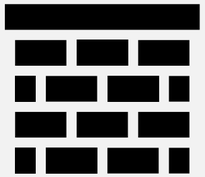
Scenarios



Commitments and Wrap-ups

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Our Agenda



Barriers: Why We Fall Into Do or Dump



What Directing Well Looks Like



Scenarios



Commitments and Wrap-ups

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Do / Dump: Common Causes

- ✓ Trust
- ✓ Control
- ✓ Time
- ✓ Avoiding Uncomfortable Conversations

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Micro Strategies

The Don’t Rescue Rule

When something starts going sideways:

Don’t jump in and take over.
Ask: What’s your next step?

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The One Task Release Rule

If you’re holding too much, release one task per shift:

Ask: what’s one thing I’m doing that someone else could do?

Delegate just that one task.

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The How to What Rule

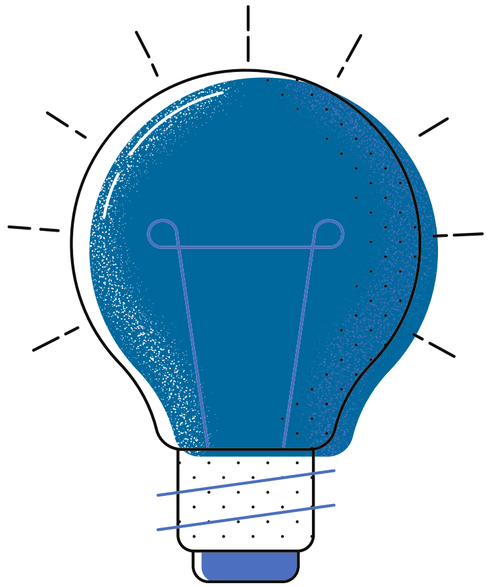
Don’t tell them how to do it, be clear on what needs to happen and what success looks like.

Let them own the approach.

Frees you from control and builds their capability.

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In Pairs



Answer the following questions:

Which barrier gets you the most?

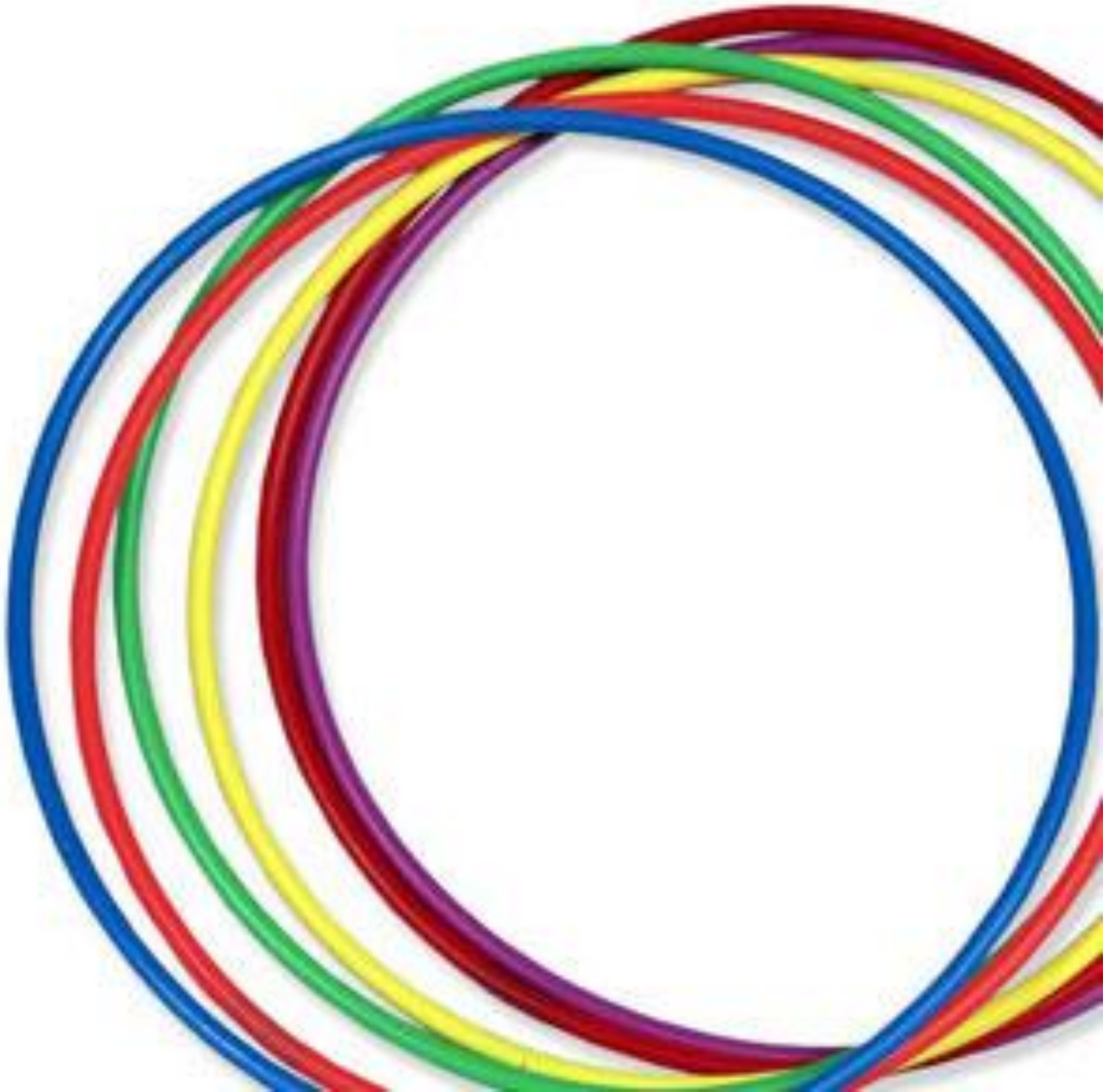
Which micro-strategy can help you move past it in your role?

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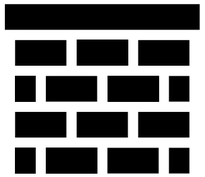
Do / Dump: Common Causes

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Our Agenda



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Scenarios



Commitments and Wrap-ups

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SET

What to Delegate

- Delegate work that others can own, including opportunities to develop their capabilities
- Consider their experience, abilities, and the level of responsibility they can handle
- Delegate decisions and responsibilities within their authority, not just routine tasks

How to Delegate

How to Delegate: Why This / Why You

- Why this work matters
- Why you’re asking them to do it

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How to Delegate: Core Questions

- What does success look like?
- Who owns it?
- When is it due?
- And how will we know it’s done well?
- When will we check progress?

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How to Delegate: Confirm Understanding

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How to Delegate: Adjust Direction Based on Capability

- Less experienced: Explain the steps, demonstrate if needed, and check in more frequently.
- More experienced: Clarify the outcome, boundaries, and deadline. Give them room to determine how to get it done.

How to Delegate: Steps to Delegate

- I do it. You watch.
- I do it. You help.
- You do it. I help.
- You do it. I watch.
- You do it. Someone else watches.

Credit: John Maxwell

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Mini-Tools

Ask Them What You Should Delegate

“What do I do that you could help me with?”

“What do I do that you could do with a little help from me?”

“What do I do that you could do by yourself?”

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The One Task Release Rule

If you’re holding too much, release one task per shift:

Ask: what’s one thing I’m doing that someone else could do?

Delegate just that one thing.

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The One Degree More Clarity

Whatever you said, make it 10% to 20% clearer.

Add one more sentence.
Give one example.
Clarify one expectation.

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SET > SUPPORT

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Agree on Checks Up Front

New employee, unfamiliar task

Experienced employee, familiar task

High-risk or safety-critical task

Employee repeatedly missing expectations

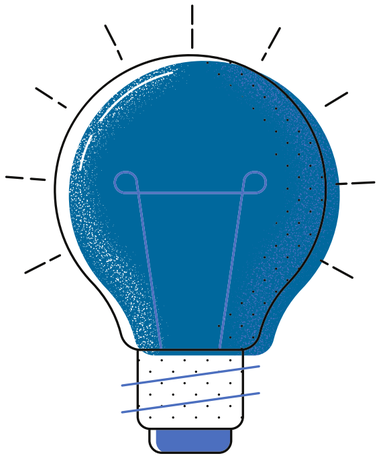
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Accountability Conversation

- Clarify the expectation:
  "Here's what we agreed needed to happen.“
- Name the gap:
  "Here's what I'm seeing that's different.“
- Invite their perspective:
  "What's getting in the way?“
- Agree on the next step and follow-up:
  "What needs to happen now, and when will we check back?"

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In Pairs



Scenario: You assigned a responsibility to an employee. They agreed to complete it, but it hasn't been done. This isn't the first time. When you follow up, the employee acknowledges that they haven't completed the assignment and explains that other priorities have gotten in the way.

Partner A: Supervisor. Practice the four steps.

Partner B: Employee. Respond realistically, including some pushback.

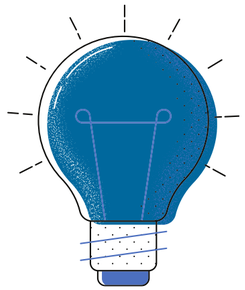
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SET > SUPPORT > SOLVE

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From “Why?” to “How?”

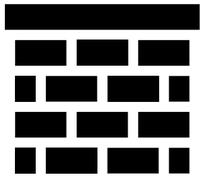
Flip the Script



A sudden policy change is announced with a 30-day compliance deadline.

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Our Agenda



Barriers: Why We Fall Into Do or Dump



What Directing Well Looks Like



Scenarios



Commitments and Wrap-ups

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Scenarios



1. **Reality Check**
    - What would you be tempted to do?
    - Would that be DO, DUMP, or DIRECT?

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2. Direct: SET

- Now Direct It, but SET only
  - What needs to be clear?
  - How would you confirm understanding?



3. Direct: SUPPORT

- Now assume you've delegated it.
- How will you stay engaged without taking over?
  - How will you monitor progress?
  - What would you say during your next check-in?



4. Direct: SOLVE

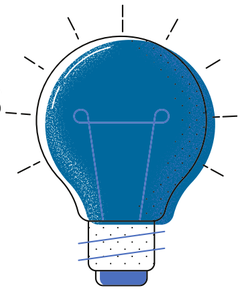
- Now something gets in the way.
  - What can you help remove, and what remains their responsibility?



5. Accountability

- Something still isn’t where it needs to be.
- What would you actually say to the employee using the four-step accountability conversation?
- Practice what you would actually say.

Scenarios



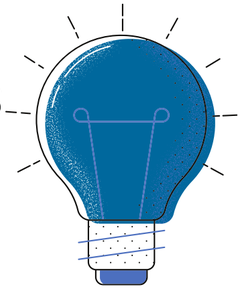
Scenario 1

An experienced employee is assigned a routine responsibility but repeatedly pushes back, complaining that others aren't doing their share. The supervisor is tempted to handle it personally because that would be easier.

For this scenario, answer the questions in your handout.

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Scenarios



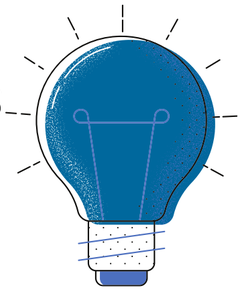
Scenario 2

A relatively new employee is assigned an important responsibility. They agree to handle it, but you aren't confident they understand what's expected. You're already stretched thin and don't have much time to supervise.

For this scenario, answer the questions in your handout.

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Scenarios

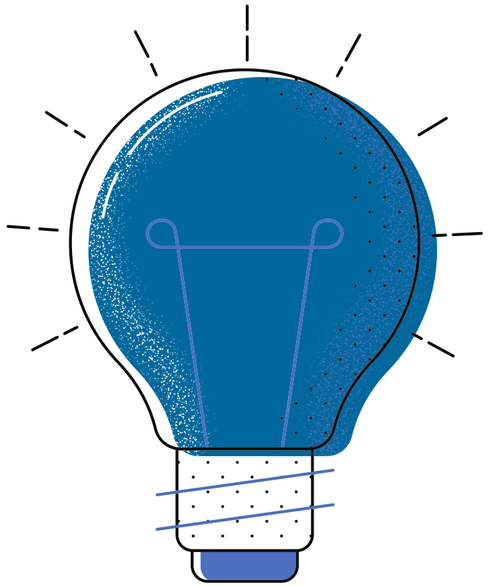


Scenario 3

Staffing is short, several priorities compete for attention, and an assignment hasn't been completed. You're tempted to jump in and take over, even though doing so means neglecting your own responsibilities.

For this scenario, answer the questions in your handout.

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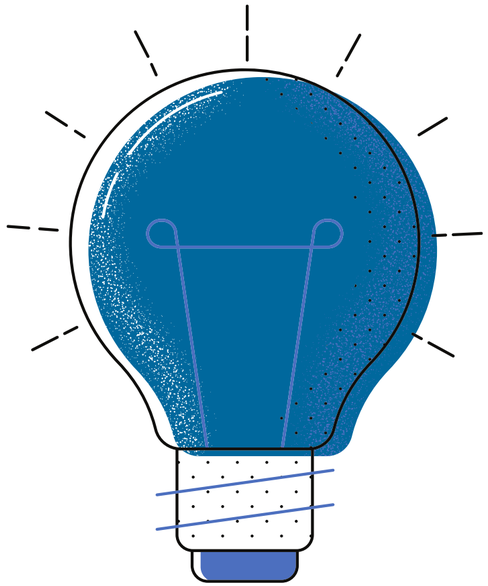


How to Get Good Feedback:

1. Solicit advice rather than criticism.
2. Be directed towards the future rather than obsessed with the past.
3. Couch it in a way that suggests you will act on it – you are indeed trying to get better.

Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*

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How to Get Good Feedback:

"How can I do better?"

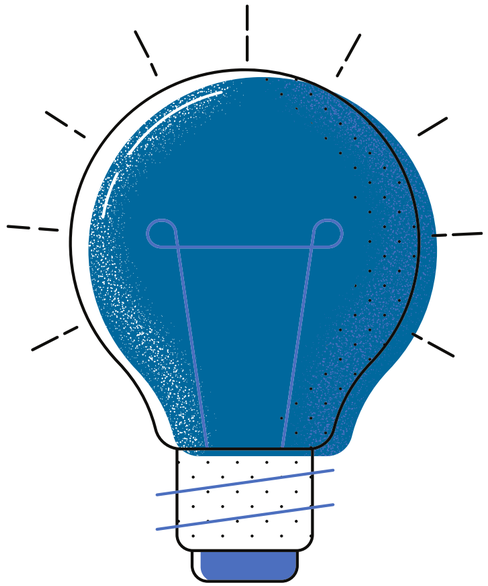
Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*

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Behaviors: Obstacles

- Blame others (instead of taking responsibility)
- Make up excuses
- Too direct / say things that cause problems
- Don’t speak up / stay quiet
- Overstate negative views
- Shade the truth
- Sarcastic
- Showing your feelings instead of sharing your feelings
- Viewed as a loner
- Pushing narrow / personal interests
- Don’t listen
- Hedge on tough questions
- Try to make everyone happy
- Indicate little or no concern for others
- Nervous or freeze with upper management
- Dis-engage: reject politics

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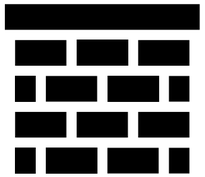
Feedforward

1. Find one other person.
2. Describe the one behavior you would like to change (from your self-assessment).
3. Ask them for two suggestions for the future that might help you achieve a positive change in your selected behavior.
4. Do this with two different people.
5. Be prepared to share one suggestion you heard.

Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*

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Our Agenda



Barriers: Why We Fall Into Do or Dump



What Directing Well Looks Like



Scenarios



Commitments and Wrap-ups

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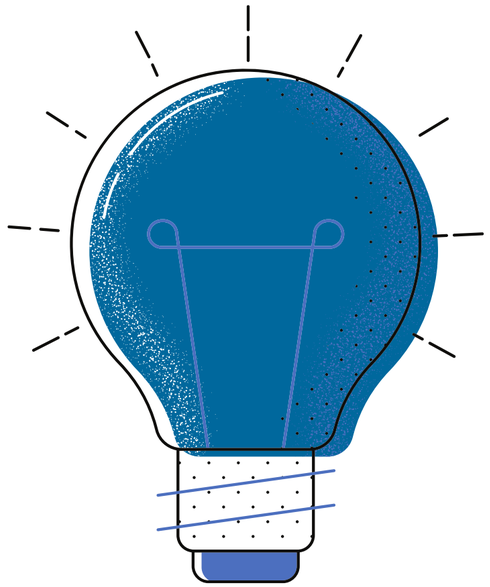


You are what you do, not what you say you'll do.

Carl Jung

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Takeaways

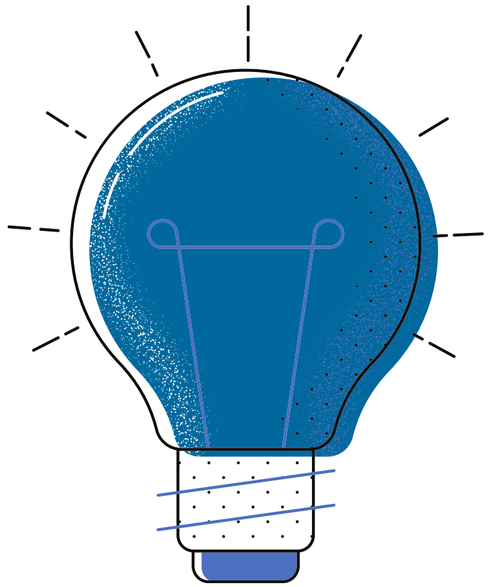


On your own, write down the following:

1. One insight you want to remember from today.
2. Where will you stop doing… and start directing?
3. Where will you be tempted to DO, and what will you do instead?

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Takeaways



Share what you wrote down with 2 other people:

1. One insight you want to remember from today.
2. Where will you stop doing… and start directing?
3. Where will you be tempted to DO, and what will you do instead?

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