



Role-Playing Guide for Mentors of Youth Apprentices

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Role-playing helps mentors to youth apprentices anticipate how they might respond to different situations that could arise with their apprentices at work or school.

This role-playing guide offers mentors the tools to navigate the following scenarios:

- exclusion in the workplace,
- knowing when to elevate challenges to mentors and supervisors,
- workplace harassment, and
- academic challenges.

This guide describes what mentors will gain from preparing for each scenario, and offers strategies for using reflective questioning, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving (box 1).

How do the role-playing exercises work?

Role-playing works best in small groups. Ordinarily, two people act out a scenario that four to ten other participants observe. When role-playing with a larger group, consider dividing into smaller groups, each working separately and then coming together to share insights at the end. Discussion is where the value lies: asking observers to think about what they learned from the role-players can help them navigate future challenges with their apprentices because it compels them to think about how they might have handled the situation.

BOX 1

What are the three teaching methods?

- **Reflective questioning:** Questions that cannot be answered with a yes or no and are instead designed to stimulate the apprentice's thinking.
- **Constructive feedback:** Comments, suggestions, or recommendations about what an apprentice says or does that are affirming and encouraging.
- **Joint problem-solving:** Mentor and apprentice working together on a project or issue with shared decision making and agency.

Note: For examples of these teaching methods, see the Urban Institute's fact sheet "Mentoring in Practice: Supporting Mentors in Registered Apprenticeship for Young People," available at <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/mentoring-practice>.

Inclusion in the Workplace

The Scenario

Your apprentice is the only Black person where you work. He seems to be thriving, but you've noticed that some of your coworkers aren't as welcoming to him as they are to most new employees. For example, usually coworkers invite a new employee out to lunch in the first couple weeks, and they have not done so with your apprentice. You don't want to assume the motivations of your coworkers, but it's part of your job as a mentor to help him become part of the team.

What You'll Learn

Participants in this role-play should gain ideas about how to help an apprentice whose identity (e.g., race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, or age) differs from that of their coworkers. They will be able to describe how to use reflective questioning, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving as mentoring techniques in similar situations.

Instructions

STEP 1: ASSIGN ROLES

Participants in the role-play session should be assigned the following roles:

- mentor
- coworker
- observers, and
- *youth apprentice (optional; see optional steps after Step 6).*

Note: Some people enjoy role-playing, but others don't. Let people choose to play a role or be an observer to avoid putting anyone on the spot.

STEP 2: MENTOR AND COWORKER ROLE-PLAY

Before you get started, remind the mentor that reflective questions, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving are effective strategies for better understanding a situation and then supporting your apprentice.

The mentor initiates a discussion with a coworker who hasn't seemed as welcoming as usual to the apprentice, and the coworker responds. If the mentor needs a jumping off point, provide this as a possible opening question: "I noticed that you haven't connected with the apprentice yet. Is there a reason why?" The coworker can choose to respond with something discriminatory or more vague, such as "I've been busy."

Continue this dialogue for a couple of rounds. Please note that the mentor should also comply with any employer policies, mandated reporter requirements, or other legal obligations in such situations.

STEP 3: REFLECTIONS ON ROLE-PLAY

Observers constructively critique the role-play:

- Begin by providing appreciative comments. What did you think the mentor did well?
- Ask clarifying questions of both the mentor and the colleague. Don't disguise advice as a question (e.g., "Do you think it would have been better to say...?").
- Share how you think the mentor's response might have been more constructive, or what you might have done or said.

The role-players then comment on how they saw the interaction and what comments and suggestions from the observers they find most valuable.

STEP 4: CONSIDER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENARIO

Remind the group about the teaching methods: constructive feedback, reflective questions, and joint problem-solving. The next three steps will provide the opportunity for the small group to focus on each of these methods.

Ask group members to identify any examples of reflective questions asked during the role-play or to suggest questions that could draw more thinking and engagement from the coworker:

- "Did the mentor ask any reflective questions? What were they?"
- "Can you suggest some (additional) reflective questions or rephrasing of the ones asked?"

Have examples of reflective questions ready that do not have "yes" or "no" answers, help the mentor understand the coworker's thought process and vice versa, and help orient the apprentice to problem-solving and future success. For example, the coworker could ask these reflective questions of the mentor:

- "Think about other social or work opportunities we've included apprentices in. Have we included the apprentice in any similar activities?"
- "Are there strategies you've used to welcome other youth apprentices that might help make this youth apprentice feel more welcome?"

STEP 5: CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR THE SCENARIO

Have group members identify which comments made by the mentor were examples of feedback, discuss ways to make that feedback more constructive, and provide additional ideas for constructive feedback.

If group members suggest feedback that feels unnecessarily punitive or judgmental, not inclusive or culturally sensitive, or not oriented toward solutions, point out those concerns. You can ask the group why those comments are inappropriate and how to reframe the feedback. Highlight the important role that a mentor plays in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace, and the need to ensure that the feedback that they provide fosters an environment in which apprentices feel valued. You can also provide examples of more constructive feedback if group members are having trouble coming up with ideas.

Have examples of constructive feedback that foster an inclusive workplace and are sensitive to apprentices' cultures and perspectives. Be ready to bring these examples into the discussion with the coworker as needed:

- “I have always been impressed by how welcoming you are to new employees. I’d like to make sure that this youth apprentice has the same experience with you.”
- Provide examples of ways that the coworker welcomed past apprentices and new employees into the workplace—such as starting non-work conversations in the office or providing rewarding work assignments early on.
- “I’d like to make sure that this youth apprentice is part of the team, and I need your help to do that.”

STEP 6: CONSIDER JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR THE ROLE-PLAY

Have group members identify if the role-play involved any joint problem-solving. If not, discuss strategies for adding it.

If group members have trouble coming up with strategies for joint problem-solving, you can provide examples to share and discuss.

Have examples ready to bring into the discussion with the coworker that highlights their role in shaping the apprentice’s experience:

- “I would like to make sure that the youth apprentice feels more welcome in the social exchanges that happen around work. Are there ways that you and I can set the tone to encourage others to be more welcoming? I’m afraid the youth apprentice feels excluded when he’s not given as many opportunities as other apprentices to try new work tasks. Is there a way that you prefer we communicate more regularly to make sure he is included in more tasks that you lead or assign?”

OPTIONAL STEP 2: MENTOR AND APPRENTICE ROLE-PLAY

Speak directly with your apprentice to learn what they want and need when they encounter challenges at work and school. For this role-play, have the mentor initiate a discussion with the youth apprenticeship about the scenario. (Example question: How are you finding the company? Have folks been welcoming?) Continue this dialogue for a couple of rounds.

Please note that the mentor should also comply with any employer policies, mandated reporter requirements, or other legal obligations in such situations.

OPTIONAL STEP 3: CONSIDER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENARIO

The mentor could also ask these sample reflective questions of youth apprentice, if necessary:

- “If you have felt excluded at work, can you tell me about a time that happened?”
- “What can I do to make sure you feel welcomed here?”

OPTIONAL STEP 4: CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR THE SCENARIO

Have examples of constructive feedback to bring into the discussion with the youth apprentice, as needed:

- “I appreciate that you’re willing to be open with me about what you’re experiencing and how you feel about it. I need that to be able to support you.”
- “I noticed the other day during lunch that you were sitting next to [colleague’s name] and the two of you seemed to be having a good conversation. How was that?”
- If the apprentice has first noted that they feel like they stand out as the only Black person on staff: “It can’t be easy to come in here as the youngest person and the only Black person. I’ve been impressed by how you have navigated the organization.”
 - If the apprentice has not brought up race as a factor in their experience, then the mentor raising this issue could end up “othering” the apprentice.

OPTIONAL STEP 5: CONSIDER JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR THE ROLE-PLAY

Have examples ready that recognize and enhance the apprentice’s agency and ownership while leveraging the mentor’s expertise:

- “I’m responsible for helping you become part of our team, and I would only like to move forward in a way that makes you feel more welcome at work. Let’s talk about what I can do and if my manager or HR can contribute.”
- “If you think [coworker] could be helpful, I could talk to him or we could talk to him together. Which would you feel more comfortable with? Or is there another strategy that you prefer?”

Knowing When to Elevate Challenges to Mentors and Supervisors

The Scenario

Your apprentice nursing assistant was initially reluctant to speak or take initiative, but has grown professionally and now conveys confidence with patients and colleagues. However, when a patient urgently needed medication and she could find no one else to give it, she administered it herself, which she is not trained or certified to do. Her supervisor (who may or may not be the mentor in this scenario) has already explained why this is not allowed.

What You'll Learn

Participants in this role-play should gain ideas about ways to foster their apprentices' confidence while also helping them recognize their limits and the importance of following appropriate laws as they continue to learn. They will be able to describe how to use reflective questioning, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving as mentoring techniques in this situation.

Instructions

STEP 1: ASSIGN ROLES

First, assign participants in the role-play session to the following roles:

- mentor,
- youth apprentice, and
- observer.

Note: Some people enjoy role-playing, but others don't. Let people choose to play a role or be an observer to avoid putting anyone on the spot.

STEP 2: MENTOR AND YOUTH APPRENTICE ROLE-PLAY

Before you get started, remind the mentor that reflective questions, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving are effective strategies for better understanding a situation and then supporting your apprentice.

The mentor initiates a discussion with the youth apprentice about the scenario, and the youth apprentice responds. If the mentor needs a jumping off point, provide this as a possible opening: "I understand that you recently administered medication to a patient. Tell me a little bit about what was happening just before that happened."

Continue this dialogue for a couple of rounds.

STEP 3: REFLECTIONS ON ROLE-PLAY

Observers constructively critique the role-play:

- Begin by providing appreciative comments. “What did you think the mentor did well?”
- Ask clarifying questions of both the mentor and the apprentice. Don’t disguise advice as a question (e.g., “Do you think it would have been better to say...?”).
- Share how you think the mentor’s response might have been more constructive, or what you might have done or said.

The role-players then both comment on how they saw the interaction and what comments and suggestions from the observers they find most valuable.

STEP 4: CONSIDER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENARIO

Remind the group about the teaching methods: constructive feedback, reflective questions, and joint problem-solving. The next three steps will provide the opportunity for the small group to focus on each of these methods.

Ask group members to identify if the role-play included any examples of reflective questions. If not, have them suggest questions that could draw more thinking and engagement from the youth apprentice.

- “Did the mentor ask any reflective questions?”
- “Can you suggest some (additional) reflective questions or rephrasing of the ones asked?”

Have examples of reflective questions ready to bring into the discussion that do not have “yes” or “no” answers, help the mentor understand the apprentice’s thought process, and help orient the apprentice to problem-solving and future success:

- “How did you decide you should give the medication?”
- “If you were in a similar situation again, what would you do differently to find a qualified person to administer the medication?”
- “Can you tell me what you know about why qualified staff are the only ones allowed to administer the medication and what outcomes could happen when someone else does that?”

STEP 5: CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR THE SCENARIO

Have group members identify which comments made by the mentor were examples of constructive feedback, discuss ways to make that feedback more constructive, and provide additional ideas for constructive feedback.

If group members suggest feedback that feels unnecessarily punitive or judgmental, not inclusive or culturally sensitive, or not oriented toward solutions, point out those concerns. You can ask the group for ideas on why those comments are inappropriate and how to reframe the feedback. Highlight the important role that a mentor plays in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace, and the need to ensure that the feedback that they provide fosters an environment in which apprentices feel valued. You can also provide examples of more constructive feedback if group members are having trouble coming up with constructive feedback:

- “I really appreciate your commitment to the patient’s well-being and your initiative. As you gain experience, you’ll understand the ways patients can be harmed when staff members go beyond what they have been certified to do.”
- “Even surgeons can make serious errors, so hospitals are organized to double and triple-check everything, including the simplest questions, like ‘Who is this patient?’ The training and instruction you’re getting and everyone gets here, help to minimize errors.”

STEP 6: CONSIDER JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR THE ROLE-PLAY

Have group members identify whether the role-play included any joint problem-solving. If not, discuss strategies for adding it.

If group members have trouble coming up with strategies for joint problem-solving, you can provide examples to share and discuss. The following examples of joint problem-solving recognize and enhance the youth apprentice’s agency and ownership while leveraging the mentor’s expertise:

- “We have a person here whose full-time job is working with staff to improve the quality of care. I think it would be very interesting to talk to them and I know we can get an appointment. Let’s write down some questions to ask them when we meet.”
- “Now that you’ve learned this lesson, let’s think through how you might handle a similar situation in the future.”
- “I’d like for you to talk with five coworkers here, starting with me, and ask them about an error they have made when treating a patient. Think about a few questions you can ask, and when you come in next week, you can ask me and then we’ll find four more people. Afterwards, we’ll talk about what you’ve learned.”

Workplace Harassment

The Scenario

A 19-year-old apprentice hesitantly tells you that an older male coworker said something confusing and distressing to her. There was background noise, so she isn't certain, but she thinks he made a suggestive comment about her appearance. If that's what happened, she doesn't want to let it pass, but she also doesn't want to accuse him falsely.

What You'll Learn

This role-play portrays a very challenging situation. Mentors should lead with believing apprentices when they raise such concerns. Participants should gain ideas about ways to support their apprentices as they navigate the many uncomfortable challenges that can arise in these scenarios, such as sexism, potential miscommunication, and personal trauma. Although workplace harassment is a complex challenge that can take many forms, this scenario is designed specifically to address when someone feels harassed, but the situation was unclear. Mentors will be able to describe how to use reflecting questioning, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving as mentoring techniques in this situation.

Instructions

STEP 1: ASSIGN ROLES

Assign each role-play participant to the following roles:

- mentor,
- youth apprentice, and
- observer.

Note: Some people enjoy role-playing, but others don't. Let people choose to play a role or be an observer to avoid putting anyone on the spot.

STEP 2: MENTOR AND YOUTH APPRENTICE ROLE-PLAY

Before you get started, remind the mentor that reflective questions, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving are effective strategies for better understanding a situation and then supporting your apprentice.

The mentor initiates a discussion with the youth apprentice about the scenario, and the youth apprentice provides a response. If the mentor needs a jumping off point, provide this as a possible opening: "I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. Although it can be difficult to do, it's important to trust your

gut and feel comfortable speaking up. I'd like to help you and would like your thoughts about what could help relieve your anxiety in this situation."

Continue this dialogue for a couple of rounds. Please note that the mentor should also comply with any employer policies, mandated reporter requirements, or other legal obligations in such situations.

STEP 3: REFLECTIONS ON ROLE-PLAY

Observers constructively critique the role-play.

- Begin by providing appreciative comments. What did you think the mentor did well?
- Ask clarifying questions of both the mentor and the apprentice. Don't disguise advice as a question (e.g., "Do you think it would have been better to say...?").
- Share how you think the mentor's response might have been more constructive, or what you might have done or said.

The role-players then both comment on how they saw the interaction and what comments and suggestions from the observers they find most valuable.

STEP 4: CONSIDER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENARIO

Remind the group about the teaching methods: constructive feedback, reflective questions, and joint problem-solving. The next three steps will provide the opportunity for the small group to focus on each of these methods.

Have group members identify whether any of the mentor's comments were examples of reflective questions, discuss ways to make the questions draw more thinking and engagement from the youth apprentice, and suggest additional reflective questions.

If group members have trouble coming up with reflective questions, you can provide examples that do not have "yes" or "no" answers, help the mentor understand the apprentice's thought process, and help orient the apprentice to problem-solving and future success:

- "What do you think would relieve your anxiety about this situation?"
- "What do you think would happen if he knew what's bothering you?"
- "It's never okay for you to feel harassed. Just to make sure I understand the full picture, is this the first time you've felt harassed at work or by this coworker, or is there a larger pattern of behavior that we also need to consider?"

STEP 5: CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR THE SCENARIO

Have group members identify which comments made by the mentor were examples of constructive feedback, discuss ways to make that feedback more constructive, and suggest additional ideas for constructive feedback.

If group members suggest feedback that feels unnecessarily punitive or judgmental, not inclusive or culturally insensitive, or not oriented toward solutions, point out those concerns. You can ask the group for ideas on why those comments are inappropriate and how to reframe the feedback. Highlight the important role that a mentor plays in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace, and the need to ensure that the feedback that they provide fosters an environment in which apprentices feel valued. You can also provide examples of more constructive feedback if group members are having trouble coming up with examples:

- “I can understand why you’re upset about this. I’m glad you told me.”
- “I’m certainly ready to help you. There’s also someone in the HR department who could help if you’d like.”
- “Situations like this are always difficult, and I certainly understand your concerns about not either ignoring what happened or overreacting. The most important thing is that you feel safe and comfortable at work.”

STEP 6: CONSIDER JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR THE SCENARIO

Have group members identify whether the role-play included joint problem-solving. If not, discuss strategies for incorporating it.

If group members have trouble coming up with strategies for joint problem-solving, you can provide examples. These examples recognize the apprentice’s agency and ownership while leveraging the mentor’s expertise:

- “Would you feel more comfortable if someone talked to him now, or is there additional information gathering you would like me to do before approaching him?”
- “Would you like me to talk with him, would you prefer to talk to him, or would you feel best if we talked with him together?”
- “If you decided to ask him about what happened, how would you start?”

Academic Challenges

The Scenario

You've received a message from your apprentice's school warning that her grades have fallen. If she doesn't bring them up, the school will no longer allow her to participate in the apprenticeship program.

What You'll Learn

Participants in this role-play should gain ideas about how to help apprentices balance obligations at and outside of work. They will be able to describe how to use reflective questioning, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving as mentoring techniques in this situation.

Instructions

STEP 1: ASSIGN ROLES

Each participant in the role-play session should be assigned to one of the following roles:

- mentor,
- youth apprentice, or
- observer.

Note: Some people enjoy role-playing, but others don't. Let people choose to play a role or be an observer to avoid putting anyone on the spot.

STEP 2: MENTOR AND YOUTH APPRENTICE ROLE-PLAY

Before you get started, remind the mentor that reflective questions, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving are effective strategies for better understanding a situation and then supporting your apprentice.

The mentor initiates a discussion with the youth apprentice about the scenario, and the youth apprentice responds. If the mentor needs a jumping off point, provide this as a possible opening: "I heard from your school that your grades have recently dropped. Can you share why you think that has happened?"

Continue this dialogue for a couple of rounds.

STEP 3: REFLECTIONS ON ROLE-PLAY

Observers constructively critique the role-play:

- Begin by providing appreciative comments. What did you think the mentor did well?

- Ask clarifying questions of both the mentor and the apprentice. Don't disguise advice as a question (e.g., "Do you think it would have been better to say...?").
- Share how you think the mentor's response might have been more constructive, or what you might have done or said.

The role-players then both comment on how they saw the interaction and what comments and suggestions from the observers they find most valuable.

STEP 4: CONSIDER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENARIO

Remind the group about the teaching methods: constructive feedback, reflective questions, and joint problem-solving. The next three steps will provide the opportunity for the small group to focus on each of these methods.

Ask group members to identify any examples of reflective questions, and then to suggest questions that could draw more engagement from the youth apprentice:

- Did the mentor ask any reflective questions?
- Can you suggest some (additional) reflective questions or rephrasing of the ones asked?

Have examples of reflective questions ready to bring into the discussion that do not have "yes" or "no" answers, help the mentor understand the apprentice's thought process, and help orient the apprentice to problem-solving and future success:

- "Why do you think your grades have fallen?"
- "Do you know why the school sets a minimum GPA for apprentices?"
- "Do you know of any tutors that could help you get your grades back up?"

STEP 5: CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR THE SCENARIO

Have group members identify which comments made by the mentor were examples of feedback, discuss ways to make that feedback more constructive, and provide additional ideas for constructive feedback.

If group members suggest feedback that feels unnecessarily punitive or judgmental, not inclusive or culturally insensitive, or not oriented toward solutions, point out those concerns. You can ask the group for ideas on why those comments are inappropriate and ideas on how to reframe the feedback. Highlight the important role that a mentor plays in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace, and the need to ensure that the feedback that they provide fosters an environment in which apprentices feel valued.

You can also provide examples of more constructive feedback if group members are having trouble coming up with constructive feedback:

- “You’ve been very diligent with your work here and very attentive when I teach you something. I think you could apply those qualities in school, too.”
- “You’ve been very frank about what might be making it harder for you to keep up in school. Recognizing a problem is a first step toward solving it.”
- “I can imagine someone in your situation being frustrated. Your ability to talk about things openly helps us focus on what we can do about it.”

STEP 6: CONSIDER JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR THE ROLE-PLAY

Have group members identify the role-play included any joint problem-solving. If not, discuss strategies for adding it.

If group members have trouble coming up with strategies for joint problem-solving, you can provide examples to share and discuss. Here are examples that recognize the apprentice’s agency and ownership while leveraging the mentor’s expertise:

- “Do you have a favorite teacher or a counselor at school who might be helpful? We could talk with them together so we’re all on the same page. If you think it would help, we could bring a parent in on it too.”
- “Let’s make a plan for what you’re going to do over the next two weeks. Then we can review your progress and plan for the next two. If you need to cut back on your hours, especially toward the end of the semester, I’ll talk to the manager about that and we’ll try to give you some extra time to study.”
- “Does your school have a tutoring program? If not, I know there’s one at the community center. If you think a tutor would help, I could see what’s involved in arranging that.”
- “Is there something else that’s making it more challenging to balance school, work, and home life? Your apprenticeship program can help provide access to transportation vouchers or other services that might be helpful. Do you know who to talk to, or would you like me to connect you with the right person to access those services?”

Template for Creating Custom Role-Play Scenarios

Fill out this template to create custom role-play scenarios that can help mentors prepare for the various situations they may encounter in their roles with apprentices.

The Scenario

[Provide a two-to-four sentence summary of the concern, challenge, or opportunity to explore in the role-play. This should be descriptive of observed behaviors, without any further speculation of why the situation presented itself.]

What You'll Learn

[Summarize the learning objective for this scenario. For example, helping mentors gain ideas about ways to foster their apprentices' confidence while also helping them recognize their limits as they continue to learn. Through all role-plays, mentors should be able to describe how to use reflective questioning, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving as mentoring techniques in similar situations.]

Instructions

STEP 1: ASSIGN ROLES

- mentor
- youth apprentice/coworker/other stakeholder
- observers
- *optional: youth apprentice (see step 2)*

Note: Some people enjoy role-playing, but others don't. Let people choose to play a role or be an observer to avoid putting anyone on the spot.

STEP 2: MENTOR AND COWORKER ROLE-PLAY

Before you get started, remind the mentor that reflective questions, constructive feedback, and joint problem-solving are effective strategies for better understanding a situation and supporting your apprentice.

The mentor initiates a discussion with the [youth apprentice/coworker/other] and the [youth apprentice/coworker/other] responds. If the mentor needs a jumping off point, provide this as a possible opening question: *[Provide a sample reflective question or example of constructive feedback here.]*

Continue this dialogue for a couple of rounds.

STEP 3: REFLECTIONS ON ROLE-PLAY

Observers constructively critique the role-play:

- Begin by providing appreciative comments. What did you think the mentor did well?
- Ask clarifying questions of both the mentor and the colleague. Don't disguise advice as a question (e.g., "Do you think it would have been better to say...?").
- Share how you think the mentor's response might have been more constructive, or what you might have done or said.

The role-players then both comment on how they saw the interaction and what comments and suggestions from the observers they find most valuable.

STEP 4: CONSIDER REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENARIO

Remind the group about the teaching methods: constructive feedback, reflective questions, and joint problem-solving. The next three steps will provide the opportunity for the small group to focus on each of these methods. Ask group members to identify any examples of reflective questions asked during the role-play, and then to suggest questions that could draw more engagement from the youth apprentice, coworker, or other stakeholder:

- Did the mentor ask any reflective questions? What were they?
- Can you suggest some (additional) reflective questions or rephrasing of the ones asked?

Have examples of reflective questions ready that do not have "yes" or "no" answers, help the mentor understand the coworker's thought process and vice versa, and help orient the other stakeholder to problem-solving and future success. For example, the mentor could ask these reflective questions:

- *[Insert two-to-three examples of reflective questions here.]*

STEP 5: CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FOR THE SCENARIO

Have group members identify which comments made by the mentor were examples of feedback, discuss ways to make that feedback more constructive, and provide additional ideas for constructive feedback.

If group members suggest feedback that feels unnecessarily punitive or judgmental, not inclusive or culturally insensitive, or not oriented toward solutions, point out those concerns. You can ask the group why those comments are inappropriate and how to reframe the feedback. Highlight the important role that a mentor plays in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace, and the need to ensure that the feedback that they provide fosters an environment in which apprentices feel valued. You can also provide examples of more constructive feedback if group members are having trouble coming up with ideas.

Have examples of constructive feedback that foster an inclusive workplace and are sensitive to apprentices' cultures and perspectives. Be ready to bring these examples into the discussion with the coworker as needed:

- *[Insert two-to-three examples of constructive feedback here.]*

STEP 6: CONSIDER JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR THE ROLE-PLAY

Have group members identify if the role-play involved any joint problem-solving. If not, discuss strategies for adding it.

If group members have trouble coming up with strategies for joint problem-solving, you can provide examples to share and discuss.

Have examples ready to bring into the discussion with the coworker that highlights their role in shaping the apprentice's experience:

- *[Insert two-to-three examples of joint problem-solving here.]*

About the Authors

Stephen F. Hamilton is Professor Emeritus of Human Development at Cornell University. He has done research and led programs on youth apprenticeship and on mentoring. He has written many articles and two books related to youth apprenticeship: *Apprenticeship for Adulthood: Preparing Youth for the Future* (1990) and *Career Pathways for All Youth: Lessons from the School-to-Work Movement* (2020).

Bhavani Arabandi is a principal research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. She is a labor sociologist whose work focuses on enduring inequities in the labor market, gender, apprenticeship, and international development. Her expertise is in program design and implementation, qualitative methods, policy analysis, and technical assistance. Arabandi has a MA in sociology from George Mason University and a PhD in sociology from the University of Virginia.

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