

Maximizing Time and Attention: Using Quick Forms

For all of us - - mentors and protégés alike - - time may be our scarcest resource. In most cases, the challenge of developing and maintaining a learning-focused relationship exists outside of the expected activities and responsibilities of professional life. Mentors and protégés do not always have sufficient time to meet face-to-face. One way to maximize the productivity of mentoring relationships is to offer structures for protégé thinking that can be used when meeting is difficult or to focus conversations when time is tight.

3 - 2 - 1 offers a structured approach for proteges to organize thinking and focus communication. The information can be written on an index card, or note pad. Or, if a protégé is keeping a log or journal, the 3-2-1- structure offers an effective format for entries. Because it is so versatile, 3-2-1 works for planning, reflecting and problem solving. For example, prior to planning, ask a protégé to jot down three possible goals for the lesson (or unit), two specific success indicators and one strategy that might be used. Or, at the end of class, after teaching a new strategy, ask for three things you noticed about the student's learning, two surprises and one new understanding. As a problem solving support, ask for three ways to think about the problem (or three perspectives on it), two potential contributing or causal factors, and one possible solution.

Asking a busy novice for six pieces of information makes the task doable while appropriately placing the responsibility for defining the problem or gathering the necessary information on the protégé.

Source: Lipton & Wellman (2001). *Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-focused Relationships* (See product section for ordering information)