

Enhancing Skill and Knowledge Transfer

How can WIL Practitioners help learners make new situations seem more familiar so as to prompt the natural “Near Transfer” of skills or knowledge?

Here are some tools to help support near transfer:

METAPHOR

Metaphor encourages learners to think outside of the context in which they came to know something. Metaphors allow learners to more quickly see the new transfer situations as “nearer” and more readily see how what they already know, or can do, might apply to a new situation. In turn, making their performance their easier and more effective.

For example: turning bland marketing into sizzling content. Using the metaphor of cooking enables students to see how their knowledge of cooking can be applied to marketing.

METACOGITION

A second useful technique is the prompting a deeper level of thinking that comes from reflecting on one’s own thinking. More precisely, metacognition refers to the processes used to plan, monitor, and assess one’s understanding and performance.

Metacognition helps the learner uncover the underlying concepts that they can mobilize for new uses and applications. Skills and knowledge transfer requires a level of metacognitive thinking, which can be prompted through WIL program activities, and which can greatly empower learners to have better control over their knowledge and skills.

CONSIDER USING THE FOLLOWING PROMPTS WITH YOUR STUDENTS

- Does this situation resemble anything I have seen/done/experienced before and if so how?
- What did I do then ?
- What is different ?
- What could work now?
- What is going on here?
- What is the big picture?
- Am I seeing everything?
- What facts are still needed?
- What are possible outcomes?