801 Stockbridge Drive

Hockessin, DE 19707

(888) 598-7596, Ext. 101

Dear Learning Pursuit Newsletter Subscriber:

Thank you so much for signing up for our newsletter!

As promised, this is a chapter from my soon-to-be-published book about mentoring. Hopefully, it will help you as you mentor youth and teach your mentees about planning.

I have yet to send this chapter to a professional editor, so there may be changes before the book is published.

Again, thank you for signing up for our newsletter!

Respectfully,

Chad

Chad C. Carmack, Ed. D.

Learning Pursuit Founding Member

chad@learningpursuit.org

Planning

Teach young people how to plan. Planners get things done. When young people make planning a habit, they can achieve great success.

Use your mentoring skills to hook your mentee creatively. Your hook might be a story of how you found planning a valuable tool to guide you through achieving goals. The goal is for youth to understand how planning links to success.

During one season of my life, I enjoyed my role serving as an assistant football coach. I assisted a competent, competitive team with a coaching staff responsible for a winning mentality. Weekly planning was a part of the process of developing impressive outcomes for the team.

Assistant coaches had a variety of responsibilities. One of my duties was to film Friday night football games. Game films were a historical record and were used to support weekly plans. After I delivered a video of the football game, it allowed us to see how we did and use the measurements and data to help players and the team.

One night while I was filming our team, another scouting coach was sitting in another stadium watching a football game between two other teams. When collecting scouting information, filming the other teams was not permitted. Instead, the coach would frantically take notes. The notes were a measure to get information about teams that would someday be our opponents.

Like looking at the film after the football game, the scouts looked for various observable activities on the football field. We were able to identify the talent, problems, and team strategy. What did the coach do in certain situations? Were there any standout players? Were there any weaknesses, such as players who didn't appear to contribute effectively to the team? Those weaknesses might be areas we could take advantage of in upcoming weeks during our game. All the information was vital to the planning process.

To share our data collection results, we would have coaches' meetings and meetings with the players. During these meetings, we reviewed the film and all data collected. A thorough performance review was a part of the planning process. We had to get ready for the upcoming week of practice and game. To do this, looking back helped us look ahead.

Many teams schedule a time to look at film and review scouting reports. The best teams use measurements from the film and scouting reports to determine how the team and players can improve and win the next game.

We set goals for each upcoming game. We took it one week at a time and built plans based on our performance strengths and weaknesses. Juxtaposition skills were critical as we reviewed our team's and opponent's strengths and weaknesses. We would use the knowledge of their skill level and coaching patterns to take advantage of them. Planning was a way to facilitate victory. We wanted to win.

Although the overall mission was to get as many wins as possible through the season, this weekly planning helped us achieve our desired result.

Like the coaching staff, youth can use the same evaluation evidence in weekly planning. How did the week go? What needs to change in the upcoming week? How will you make sure those adjustments take place? Were unaccomplished goals important? Maybe they should not be in the plan if they're not necessary.

You may not have a team of coaches helping with the planning process as a mentor. However, a mentor can become incredibly important in this process. Check in to make sure that the mentee is using the plan. Discuss how the planning process is moving along. These types of discussions will benefit the young planner. With guidance, one can fine-tune a skill until it becomes a habit.

Prioritizing, **L**eadership, **A**ccountability, and **N**ew Directions are important components of a plan (P-L-A-N).

P—Priorities

Priorities become actionable through the planning process. Taking action on the essential planning targets can mean the difference between getting things done or not.

It takes time to prioritize. Setting aside time for planning improves the opportunity for success. Make it a habit to schedule time for planning.

Focus and awareness of what you want in the future helps prioritize. What will be the result? Visualize what benefits will come from taking action. Also, remember what will happen if you don't take action on the actionable targets.

Setting priorities requires not letting less important activities get in the way. Self-discipline helps keep you focused on getting results. Fight for the time needed to

get it done. But understand that there will always be interruptions and other forces that compete for your time.

Prioritizing is a fundamental part of the planning process. We mentors can model using self-discipline to accomplish planning skills, such as prioritizing. Our mentee will notice.

L—Leadership

Would you like for your mentee to be a leader or follower? Most likely, you're like me and hope they will be aspiring leaders. We must communicate clearly that highly effective leaders plan.

When I observe highly effective leaders in action, they all seem to practice self-discipline. Also, leaders look to the future and visualize it. Planning separates highly effective leaders from others. They can see into the future and know that it will take self-discipline to plan to make the vision a reality.

If a leader knows the skill of planning is essential, they must demonstrate self-discipline to accomplish it. Planning is vital, so having the self-discipline to make it a part of their life skills will pay off. Regular planning will require willpower. Those who have willpower can fight through inaction.

Not being disciplined can become a comfortable state of being. But when helpful routines become a part of a person's life, there is a reward. Getting past inaction is a type of willpower that accompanies self-discipline.

Connecting leadership and planning might be enough to get our mentees to plan.

A—Accountability

Accountability accompanies planning. A written plan is a promise to yourself. When a person makes a promise, there should be an understanding of responsibility. The planner must evaluate their effort to accomplish the plan. After writing an actionable item at a specific time, a planner must ask what the outcome was.

For people who plan and set daily or weekly goals, scheduling time to look at results must be a part of the process. Planners must hold themselves accountable. When results are not acceptable, identify precise steps to improve.

What if, week after week, the planner never seems to get to an actionable part of the plan? If part of the plan is incomplete, prioritize the activities during the review process.

In a new plan, remove those parts that no longer have importance. You have to decide whether the action is a priority when not completed after several planning sessions.

Accountability must include self-evaluation when an essential part of the plan is not yet completed after several sessions. When necessary, make personal adjustments. Having accountability, even though it might not be an easy process, is far more productive than people who choose not to plan and not hold themselves responsible.

N—New Directions

Often, new directions emerge with planning. The path of overcoming problems in the plan may require you to go in a new direction. Further courses of action may along with the planning accountability phase.

If you're creative, this can be fun. Changing direction shouldn't be seen as a negative.

Like the other actionable parts of planning, it takes time to identify why a new direction will be necessary. During the planning process, use analytical skills and determine why the plan didn't work. What needs to change? There is a difference between giving up and taking a new path to success. The skill of finding solutions benefits those who practice the art of new directions.

Teaching Planning Skills—Keep Things Simple

Planning isn't keeping a schedule or to-do list. Those certainly are a part of getting things done, but they are not the most critical parts of a disciplined planning routine.

Short-term plans include daily and weekly plans. I like to organize my planning process into a weekly format. Long-term planning should also not be overlooked in the process. Learning short-term and long-term planning will provide a young person with lifelong skills.

I experimented over the years with different types of planning tools. I started writing plans and later tried to move to a digital platform. Writing my plan down on paper has been more effective for me. I can keep it in my pocket, where it can be reviewed or modified at any time. I have a friend who uses a journal format. A planning system is a personal choice.

It's crucial to remember that we must find ways to engage youth in the planning process. Keeping things simple will work best. Most youth won't be interested in pursuing a complicated planning method.

Many schools provide students with planning books. When you open the planner, it may have a layout showing one week at a time. This type of planner will be perfect for us as we try to coach our youth and develop planning habits.

Finally, as you teach planning, use my P-L-A-N components. Planning must be a priority, and they must prioritize actionable goals. What is their leadership vision? Is the vision in a weekly plan? Teach them to be accountable and set new directions as appropriate.