

Setting Learning Intentions

Interactive workbook

Setting meaningful learning intentions

We live in a complex world with more stimuli than we can possibly process. Setting learning intentions helps us to cut through the noise and stay focused on what we've identified as personally important.

There are two specific, subtle ways in which we can frame our intentions—our direction forward—that support both our ability to learn and the likelihood that we'll enjoy the experience.

Focus on the journey

Frame your desired outcome as a learning intention versus a performance goal.

.....
Good learning intentions prioritize the experience itself, not just the outcome. Instead of focusing on a specific target, they focus on

- The process
- Discovering and exploring new ideas
- Our growth

Link to meaning

Connect your learning to something that is personally meaningful to you.

.....
Taking the time to make this connection will help you learn better and have more fun in the process. Questions you might ask yourself include

- When things get hard, what keeps me motivated?
- What makes me feel fulfilled and proud?

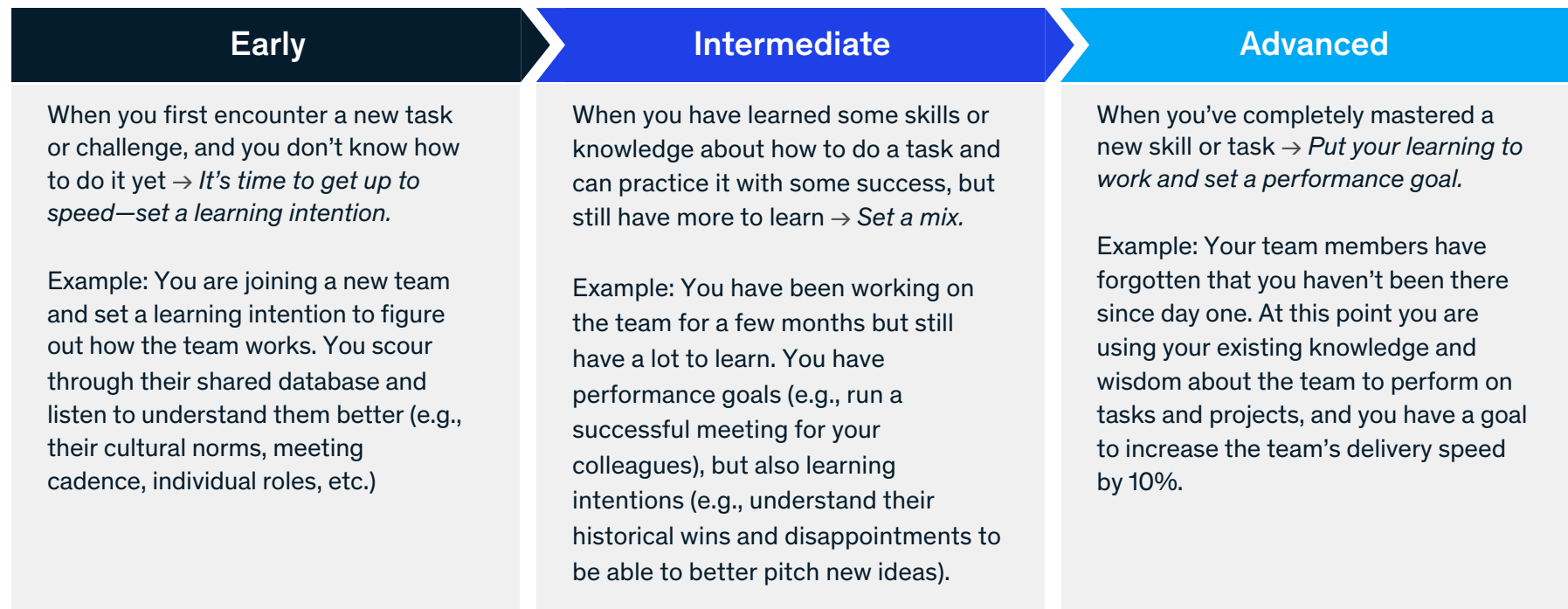
Performance goals and learning intentions

How should we think about the difference?

- **Performance goals** are helpful when there is something specific we want to achieve, and we already have learned the skills or knowledge we need to achieve it
- **Learning intentions**, on the other hand, are most useful when it's time to build new skills and knowledge, especially when we are adapting to changes that challenge us to do things differently

When should we use each of them?

Performing and learning serve us in different times and ways. Let's look at how you should think about learning intentions and performance goals across the three stages of skill acquisition.



Try it ➔ Setting meaningful intentions

Your learning intention

I want to <explore/practice/discover/understand/learn/develop/etc.> how to <insert a capability/skill/mindset/attribute>, because <insert something that's meaningful/important to you>.

➔ Set a calendar reminder for 2-3 weeks from now and include your learning intention. When that alarm goes off, check in with yourself about your progress

➔ Check in with your manager: share some of your intentions and get feedback and/or ask them to share some upcoming stretch opportunities

Actions to explore
Ideas for bringing your learning intention to life

➔ Have a coffee chat with a colleague and tell them about your learning intentions and the meaning behind them. Share some ways you plan to act on the learning intentions (perhaps signing up for a course, taking on a new task, or connecting to experts) and see if they have any other suggestions

➔ Forget work for just a second. What's something you've been wanting to do in your personal life? Go find an accountability partner or group

What will you do? *Pick an idea from the list above, or think of a different action you want to try.*

How did it go? *Once you've taken that action, reflect on the experience.*