



Conversation with Your Supervisor Guide

Having a conversation with your branch/project/task supervisor is a critical step to take before you register for a training course. Benefits of such a conversation include:

- Obtaining their concurrence on taking time off from your work to attend the training
- Receiving their input on your learning needs and how those learning needs might be met
- Clarifying how the training might support your current work, their expectations of you, and your long-term career goals

Before you have the conversation with your supervisor, take time to prepare by considering the following questions:

- What are your learning priorities?
- How do each of your priorities support the goals of your branch/project/task?
- What are possible solutions (e.g., courses, self-directed learning) that might address your learning priorities?
- What solution appears most likely to help you address your learning priorities? What criteria did you use to evaluate the solutions (e.g., time, expense, reviews/evaluations, convenience)?
- What documentation do you need to bring to the meeting with your supervisor in order to address questions s/he might have (e.g., course description, course agenda, action plan template)?
- What can you do to maximize the benefit your attendance at the training course would have for your branch/project/task (e.g., produce a white paper, conduct a lunch and learn, present a “teach back” at a meeting)?
- What might be the outcome of a successful conversation with your supervisor (e.g., their concurrence on your training solution)?

Plan on having a 30-minute conversation with your supervisor. Also, consider the timing of this conversation. You might want to have it as part of your annual performance review process. Or perhaps you want to have it shortly before the beginning of the fiscal year, when the APPEL Knowledge Services training schedule is made available.

Whenever you have the conversation, consider the following suggestions to increase the likelihood that the conversation is productive:

- Have I clearly identified my learning priorities?
- Have I clearly connected how my learning priorities relate to the goals of my branch/project/task?
- Have I given my supervisor an opportunity to provide feedback/constructive criticism of my learning priorities?

Before you end the conversation, make sure that you can answer the following:

- I know whether or not I have my supervisor’s support to register for the training course(s) we discussed
- I know what my supervisor expects from me in order demonstrate the training course was effective, and I know the date by which I need to meet that expectation
- I know how attending this training course will support my Individual Development Plan
- I know what knowledge and/or skills I want to acquire during the training course