Managing Lifelong Learners

What you don't need,
when you don't need it

Your best specialist resigns at the worst possible moment. A promoted specialist falls on his face as he assumes that the best specialist is also the best manager of specialists. A routined practitioner is micromanaged. An apprentice needs to make mistakes but is prevented from doing so and never steps into personal responsibility. Thomas distinguishes six stages and their psychology to manage them for growth and mutual benefit to individual and organisation.

FORMAT
Four Hours, On Site or Online

AUDIENCE
Managers & Key People

GROUP
Three to About Twenty

A Practical Learners Mindset Orientation

A four-hour online workshop for greater speed and depth in the organisation's learning curve. Urgently useful for fast-growing companies or those in a turn-around situation. Generally useful for HR to frame and organise in-house training.

The Wrong Input

Each stage needs something different from you. Instruct a master and you insult them. Leave a beginner to find their own way and you abandon them. Thomas's skill spiral pairs each stage with a role, from instructing to challenging, and the stages lengthen as skill grows, from hours to years. Much of the friction between leaders and learners starts with a mismatch here.

Talk Less as They Grow

In stages one to three, answers to specific problems should come from you. From stage four on, they should come from the person you lead. Letting go of the talking is hard when you know the answer. In a team, people sit at different stages at once, so one meeting can call for several kinds of leadership.

Doing It Wrong, on Purpose

Each stage starts with a short piece of theory and moves to examples from participants' own experience: what happened, how it was handled, how it might have been. Towards the end comes a game in which everyone does it wrong on purpose. The aim is a calmer, wiser way of stepping into, or staying out of, other people's learning.

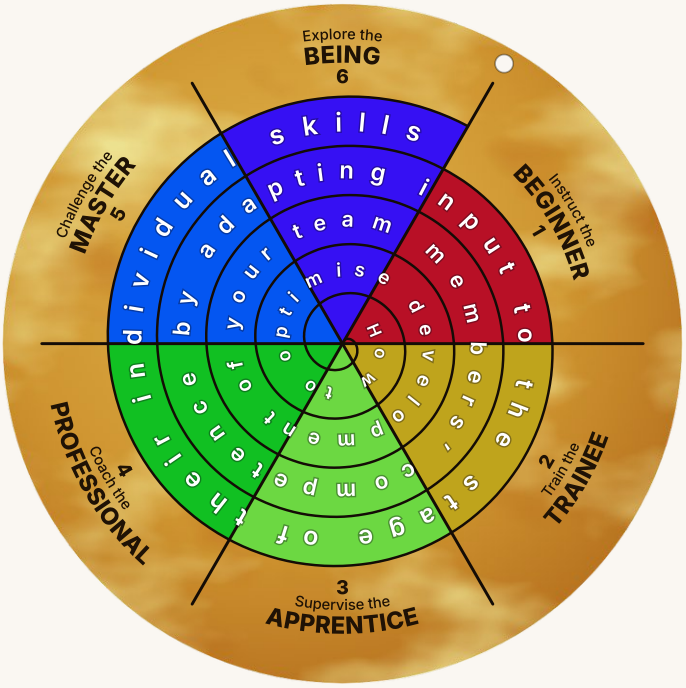
- **Recognise:** The stage someone is at, and its mindset.
- **Respond:** With the input that fits that stage.

Next Step

Interested in improving the organisation's learning curve and providing managers with an everyday ability to facilitate fast learning and high productivity at the same time? Get in touch to discuss the workshop and whether it fits your needs.

DIRECT ENQUIRY
hello@thinkwaredesign.com
thinkwaredesign.com

The Skill Spiral



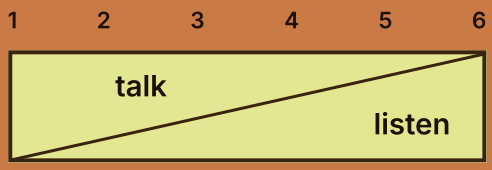
How to optimise development of your team members' competence by adapting input to the stage of their individual skills

Responsible for solutions to problems

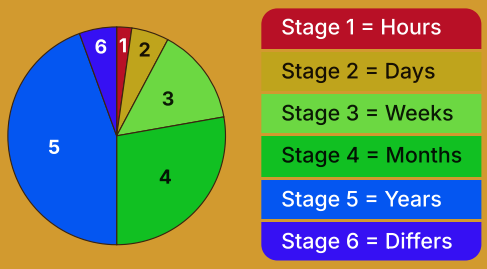
In stages 1, 2, 3 answers to specific problems should come from the person leading.

In stages 4, 5, 6 answers to specific problems should come from the person led.

Average leader "talk vs listen" ratio in interaction with people you lead



How long each stage takes



Skill stage	To do for improving skill	Desired result of stage
1. Beginner	mimic for understanding	able & willing to train methodically
2. Trainee	play-exercise for automation	has automated essential actions
3. Apprentice	practice for relevance	intelligently response-able to reality
4. Professional	optimise to deliver	very high lowest performance level
5. Master	disassemble to know	impossible odds & superior results
6. Seeker	introspect to improve / transform	aware & eager to learn new skills

Your input changes with the stage of each person's skill. Your share of the talking falls as theirs grows.

Model © Thomas Bothe

Feature Profile

Six scales describe how Managing Lifelong Learners is set up: why, how and with what results. Each runs between two poles, numbered 5 to 2 towards each pole, with a single 1 at the centre; there is no zero. Filled cells show where the workshop sits; each group carries its own colour.

Why

Aim

Whether the workshop sets out to build a skill or to inspire. The band leans towards inspiration, with some reach into skill.



Area of usefulness

Where what you take away is meant to be used. The band sits evenly between professional life and private life.



How

Where we go into detail

Whose part the workshop looks at closely. The band stays with your own responsibility.



Method

How the workshop works with you: mentoring alongside you, or training. The band leans towards mentoring, with some reach into training.



Results

Learning

Depth of understanding or breadth of knowledge. The band leans towards breadth of knowledge, with some reach into depth of understanding.



Confidence

The kind of confidence the workshop aims for. The band stays with presence.

