



Connecting Work & Academics through MaverickGROW

How **students** and **employer's** benefit

Maverick Student Employment and Career Services

Meet & Greet

- Share your **name**, **department**, **student supervision**, and what you **hope to gain** from the session today.



Agenda

- **Overview** of student success and student employment
- **Enhancing** student success through employment
- **Key role** of supervisors
- **Strategies** for supporting your students through Iowa GROW[®]



Objectives

- Articulate the benefits of being mindful of the academic/work connection for student employees
- Incorporate academic support conversations into everyday interactions with students
- Help students make connections between their work and their academic efforts
- State at least three reasons why creating a seamless in and out of classroom experience for students contributes to student academic and work success



Assumptions

- Student employment is **positive** for the student and the employer
- Student employees can be **challenging**
- It is **easier** for supervisors in some areas to spend time developing student employees than in other areas
- **Small efforts** can still make a big difference in helping our students develop important skills for lifelong success
- There can be both an **immediate** and **long-term payoff** for this investment in student development



Mission

“To educate students for success and personal fulfillment in a diverse world.”



Defining Student Success

- UNO students succeed when they achieve personal and institutional educational goals.
- Successful students **develop skills and knowledge**, become **more mature in their thinking**, assume **greater responsibility** for their own lives and learning, develop **understanding of diversity and multiculturalism**, and become **effective leaders**.



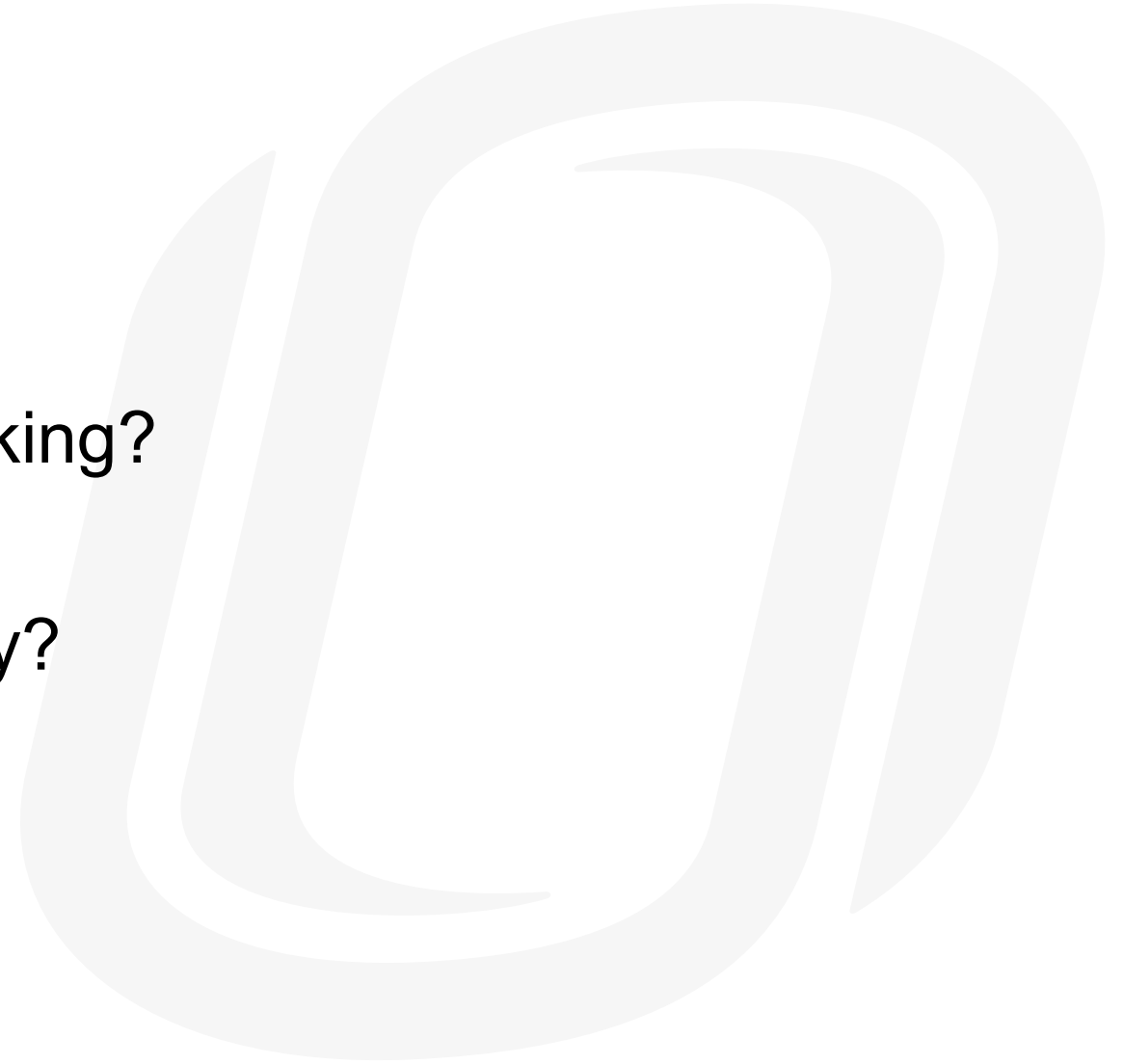
Defining Student Success

- Student success at UNO is a **shared enterprise**.
- Students succeed by **active engagement** in educationally purposeful activities. Faculty, staff, and students create learning opportunities [and] policies, programs, and practices that **foster student engagement**.



Where Do Students...

- develop skills and knowledge?
- become more mature in their thinking?
- assume greater responsibility?
- develop understanding of diversity?
- become more effective?



In the classroom...



During student activities...



And in the workplace!



MAVERICK STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

Why Focus On Learning?

- Students are most successful in “seamless environments” where they can make connections between classroom and out of classroom experiences.

George Kuh



High-impact Activities

- High-impact activities are those that allow students to apply learning to real life, to make connections, reflect, and integrate learning.



Teach Students To...

- **Reflect:** think about experiences inside and outside the classroom
- **Integrate:** connect what they are learning from different courses, out of class experiences and life beyond the institution
- **Apply:** transfer and use what one has learned in different settings presenting novel challenges and opportunities (develop “adaptive expertise”)
- **Connect:** skills they develop to what employers want and need



Specialists in Student Employment

- Typically, student affairs, academic student services, and support services are the largest employers of students. We can be leaders in high-impact student employment.
- To do this, we must reframe student employment from **transactional to transformational**, from **supervision to mentoring**, from **cost to investment**.



UNO's Strategic Plan

Priority 1.4: UNO will partner to provide students **hands-on, real world learning experiences** through internships, job shadowing, field experiences, practicums, and experiential learning projects.



Student Employment

- Most students work at some point
- Employment can be related positively to engagement with the institution, not a distraction from academic pursuits
- Work can be high impact with some additional structure from us (supervisors)



High-Impact Employment

- Identified outcomes (what we want them to know or be able to do)
- Deliberate reflection
- “Scaffolding” – using prompts that encourage students to connect previous knowledge and experience to new experiences and knowledge



Supervisor's Role

- Supervisors are educators
- As supervisors, you help students learn real world skills
- Many supervisors are already having conversations with their student employees



Student Employment

- Complete items 1 and 2 on the worksheet.
 - What should students know and be able to do after working in your office including tasks, skills, and competencies?
 - By May, I hope the students I supervise are able to...?
- Discuss in your small groups



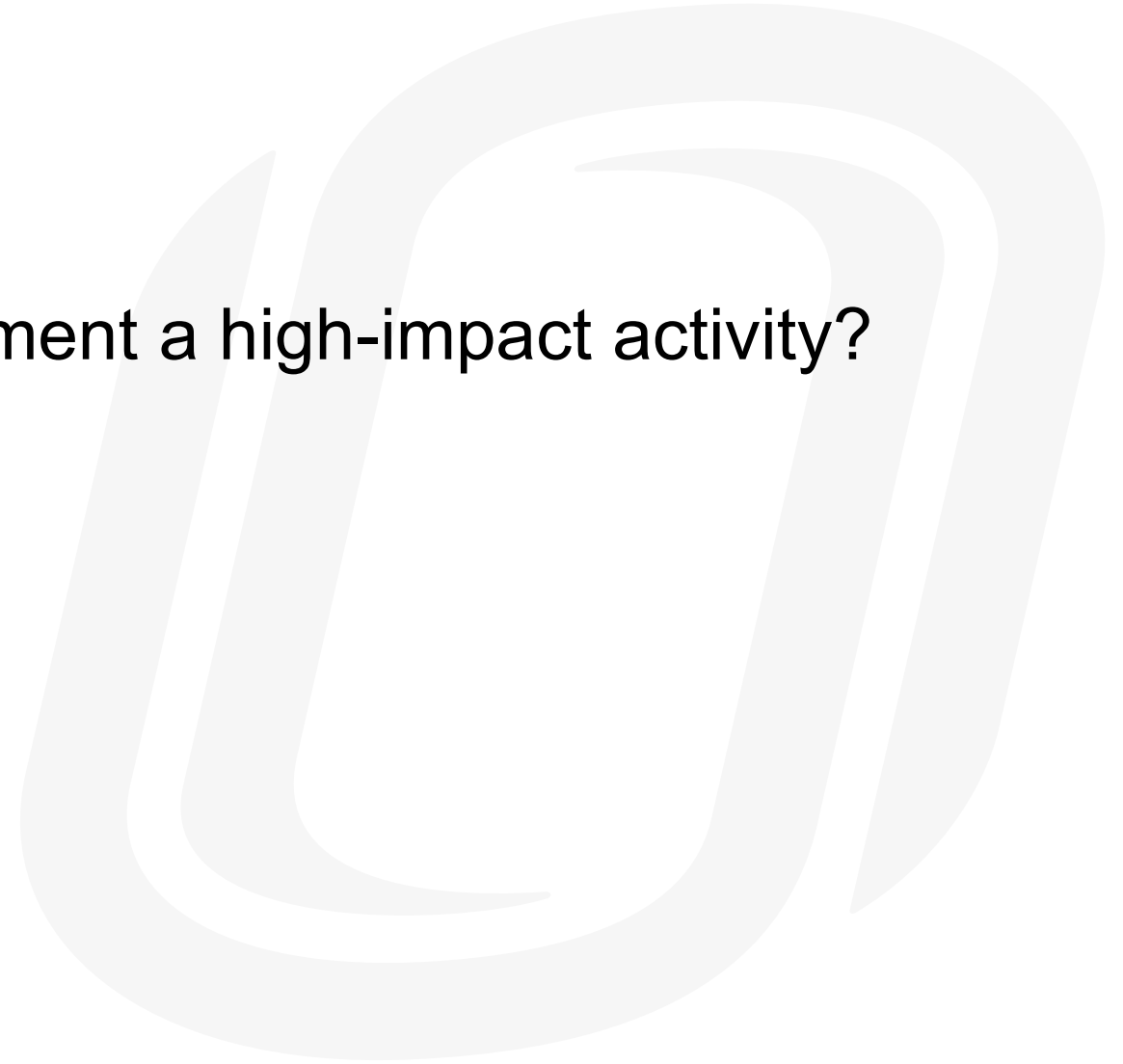
Mission Rich Work

- Specific content knowledge such as software, project management, teaching methods, etc.
- Metacognitive skills
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Critical thinking/problem solving
- Conflict resolution
- Time management
- Multicultural competence
- Relationship skills
- Study skills



Our Goal

How can we make student employment a high-impact activity?



Guided Reflection on Work



DEPARTMENT NAME

Guided Reflection On Work

MaverickGROW uses brief, structured conversations between student employees and their supervisors to make the learning that is occurring through student employment more “visible” to students.

MAVERICK
GROW
Guided Reflection on Work



4 Key Questions

1. How is this job fitting with your academics?
2. What are you learning here at work that's helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of what you've learned here that you think you'll use in your chosen profession?



Priorities

- Supporting integration across contexts (work, academics, future career)
- Providing scaffolded practice with reflection
- Cultivating adaptive expertise – ability to use learning flexibly in various contexts
- Metacognition – helping students view themselves as learners no matter the setting



Process

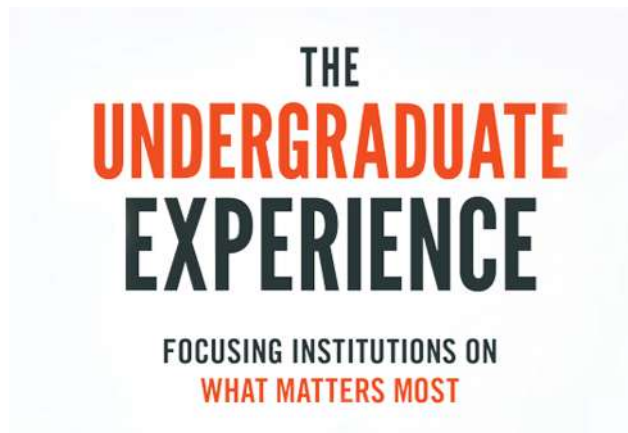
- Supervisors have two, brief structured conversations with each of their student employees each semester
- Small group or 1:1 conversations
- Additional questions may be asked, but the 4 core questions are an expectation
- An average conversation takes 5 minutes



Process

“Not only does GROW illustrate the power of simple reflective practices, but it also underscores how small interventions can have significant outcomes for the undergraduate experience.”

-Felten, et al (2016)



Findings

- Did taking time to talk with students about their learning help them see what they were learning more clearly?
- How are our student jobs contributing to the key aspects of student success we mentioned earlier?



Findings

GROW participants were significantly more likely to report the following 10 outcomes of student employment:

- 1** My supervisor helps me make connections between my work and my life as a student.
- 2** My job has helped prepare me for the world of full-time employment.
- 3** I can see connections between my job and major/coursework.
- 4** My job has helped me learn about career options.
- 5** My job has helped me develop more effective time management skills.
- 6** My job has helped me improve my written communication skills.
- 7** My job has helped me improve my verbal communication skills.
- 8** My job has helped me develop conflict negotiation skills.
- 9** My job has helped me use critical thinking skills to form opinions and solve problems.
- 10** Because of my job, I am able to work effectively with individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and cultures.



Findings

GROW participants were more likely to...

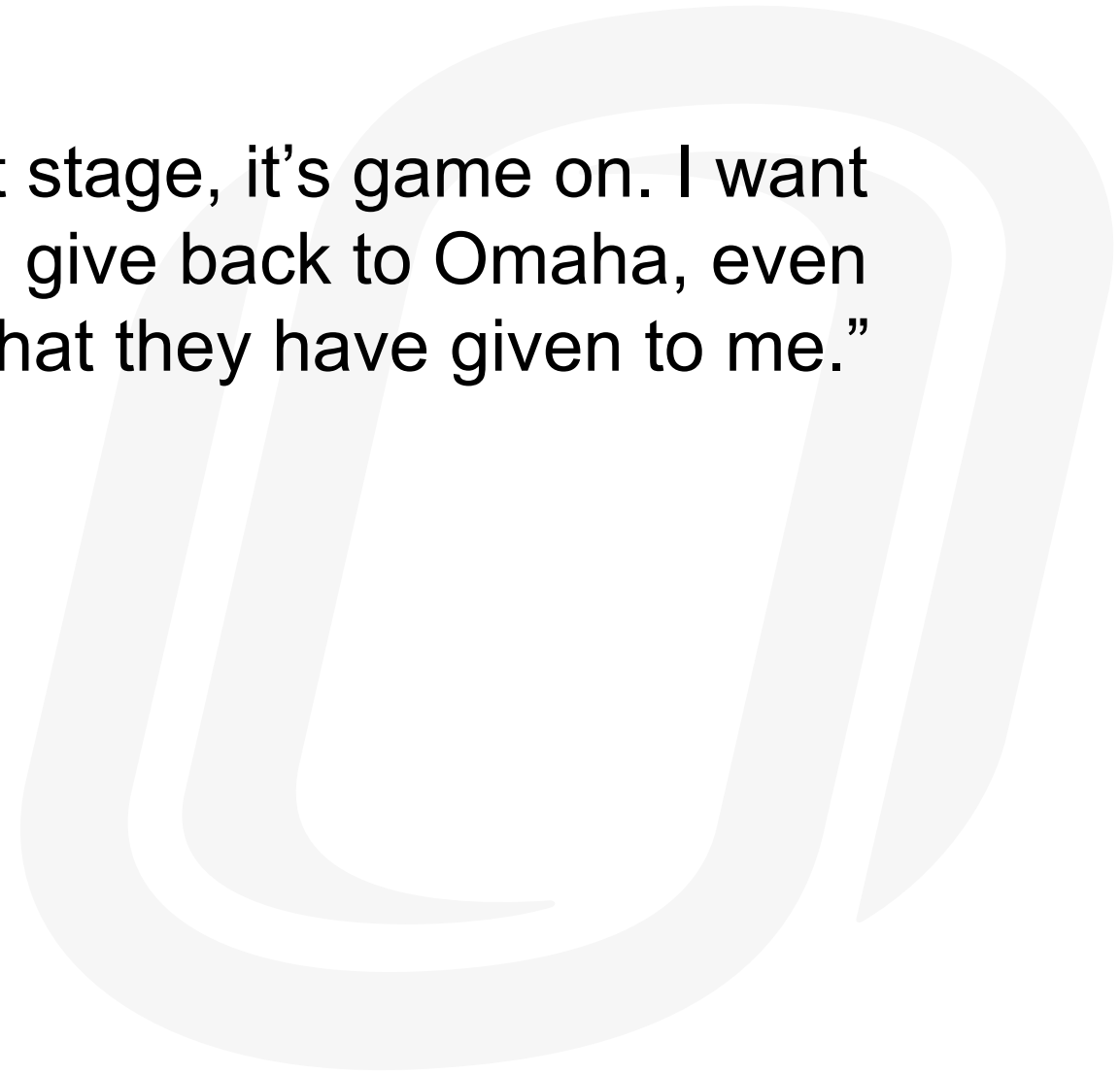
- Mention positive outcomes of employment other than money.
- Note they felt as though they were making a positive contribution to the university.
- Be able to state at least one thing they've learned on the job.



“My job with the university has helped me learn the importance of effective communication and time management.”



“As soon as I cross that stage, it’s game on. I want to give back to UNO, give back to Omaha, even more than what they have given to me.”



“I have met wonderful people in my office and established connections that will last beyond my time as a college student.”



“Being involved really helped me get adjusted to what college life is like and what my adult life will be like...It helped me make connections and network, learn about resources that help myself and others, and meet people to have fun with and make memories with.”



Case Study

- At University of Iowa, for an average of approximately \$5,000 in wages per student per year, they get:
 - **Retention:** Students employed on campus are retained higher rates.
 - **Graduation** (4-year & 6-year): Students employed on campus graduate at higher rates.
- In the Division of Student Life, participants in Iowa GROW® are retained as UI students at higher rates than those who did not receive the conversations.
- Relationship rich experiences.



What Employers Want

- Problem-solving skills
- Ability to work in a team
- Strong work ethic
- Analytic/quantitative skills
- Written communication skills

Students gain these skills from campus employment. BUT, unless we support them in making learning more visible, they will not be able to effectively articulate this to future employers.



What About You?

- When students make connections to the workplace, they are more invested.
- Invested employees:
 - Do better work
 - Feel more committed and responsible to you
- These conversations also open the line of communication between you and your employees



“The conversations gave me instant feedback on how the students were coping with balancing both work duties and classes and gave me valuable information on how to help students with any issues they were having. I also found it helpful to see how the students were learning their jobs and relating to other employees in the workplace.”



“The student perspective provides a mirror for me – it points out aspects of our work that I sometimes take for granted or just assume everyone knows because I have been in this work environment for so long.”



“[It] provides a [medium] for developing a deeper relationship with students beyond the workplace. It allows for supervisors to gain an insight into the difficulties and enjoyments that an average student has as part of the college experience.”



Beyond Campus

- Iowa GROW®, the program that UNO Student Employment has adapted to MaverickGROW, has been recognized in numerous books and articles for its accomplishments in helping students foster learning, build connections, and encourage reflection.



Implementation



DEPARTMENT NAME

Challenges

- What are some challenges you see to implementing connection conversations with your student employees?
- What are some strategies to overcoming those barriers?



Challenges	Strategies
Time	•Small groups vs. 1:1 •Provide questions ahead of time •Build time for questions into regular meetings •Reframe the conversation as an investment
Concerns about “carrying” the conversation	•Provide questions ahead of time •Identifying outcomes and prompting students •Take notes and refer to them
Not sure what to do if something else comes up (e.g., student opens up about a problem)	•Reframe as a sign of trust •Learn referral resources •Acknowledge, support, refer

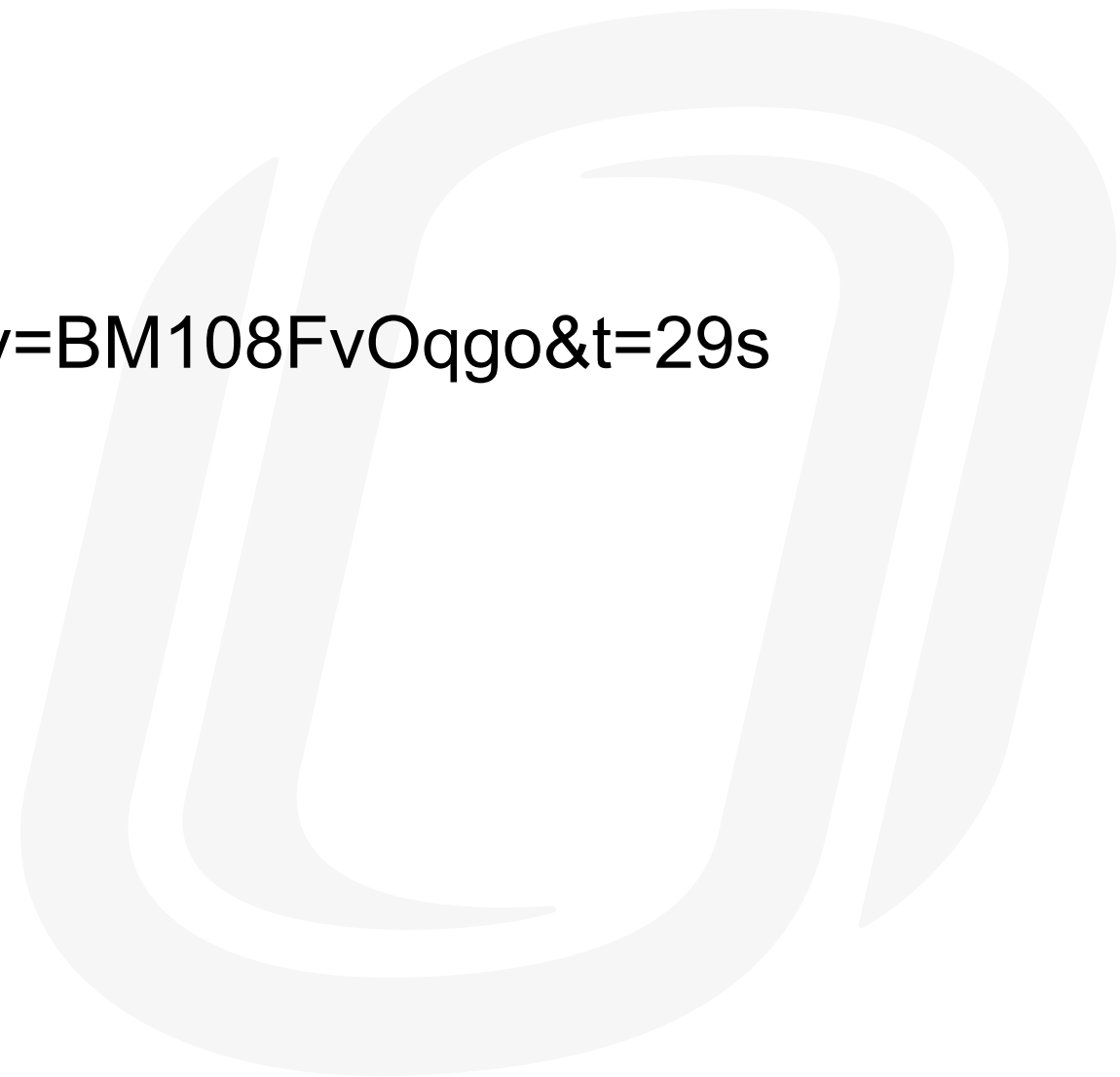


Challenges	Strategies
Continuing conversations with students for multiple semesters	• Prompt students regarding skills you think they should be learning • Incorporate other questions in addition to the main four • Ask students to reflect on learning since the last conversation • Provide foreshadowing that you will discuss these topics again
Facilitating group meetings	• Keep groups at 8 students or fewer so everyone gets to speak • Encourage students to share with a partner first • Have partners share with the larger group



Video & Packet

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BM108FvOqgo&t=29s>



Before The Conversation

- Think about what you want your student employees to gain from their work.
- Decide on one-on-one or group conversations.
- Think about how you can integrate your conversation into any check-ins or one-on-ones with students.
- Send out questions ahead of time and let students know you will discuss their responses at your meeting.



Conversation Tips

- Remind students of the why.
- Put the questions into your own words.
- Weave the questions into your conversation.
- Use your notes to revisit topics of interest in later conversations.



Conversation Tips

- Prompt students regarding the skills you have determined they should be learning.
- Incorporate other questions in addition to the four.
- Ask students to reflect on their experiences since your last conversation.
- Mention at the end of the conversation that you will be discussing this again later in the semester.



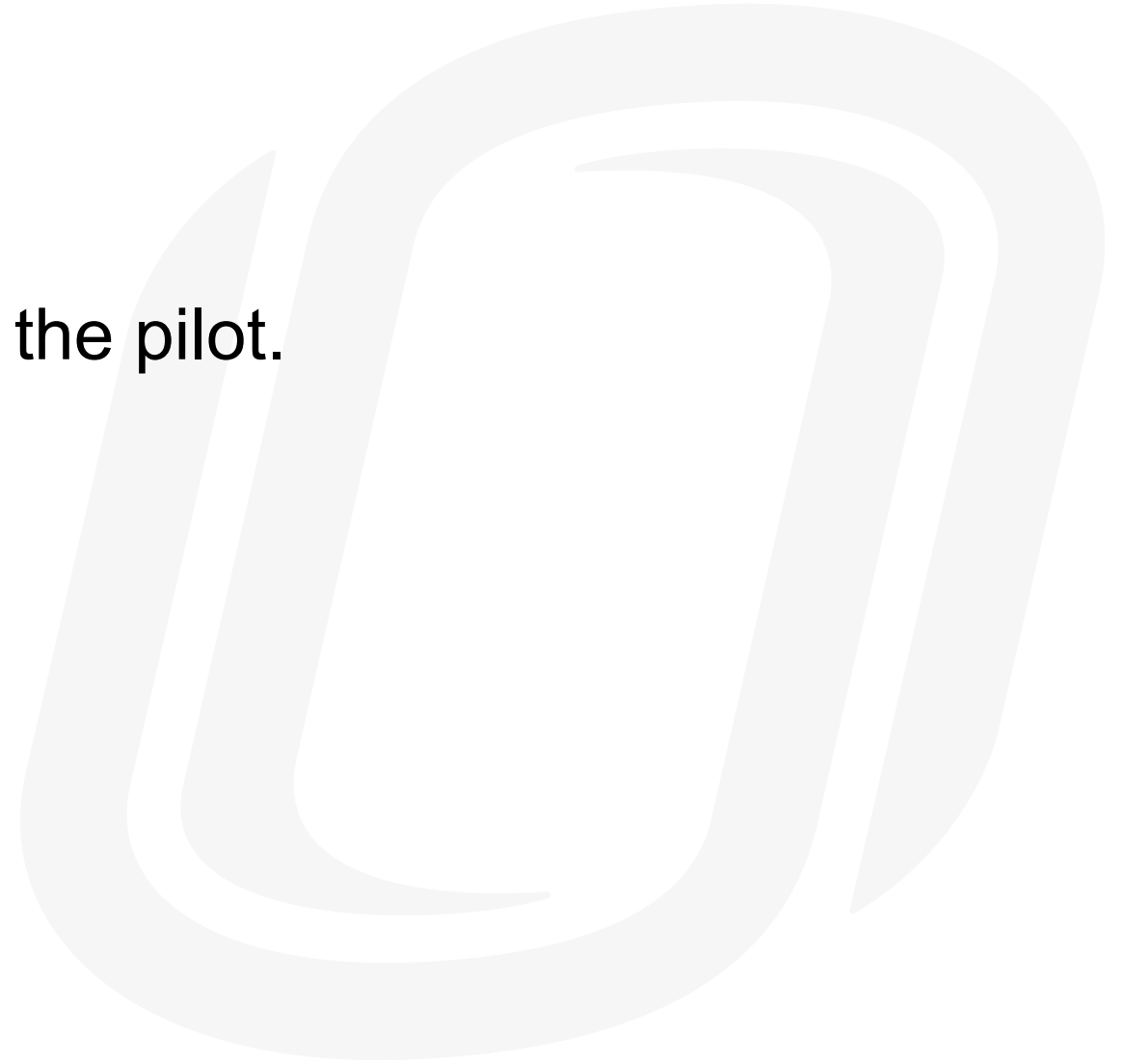
Facilitation Tips

- Open-ended questions
- Paraphrasing
- Follow-up probes



Facilitation Tips

You are the air traffic controller, not the pilot.



Consider

- Establish general outcomes for student employment
 - What should students know and be able to do after working in your office?
- Incorporate language of student learning into job announcements and position descriptions
- Create and use interview questions that encourage students to make connections between world of work and academics



Consider

- Add discussions of learning outcomes to orientation/training checklists
- Utilize goal setting



Your Area

- Thinking about student employment conversations, and the other considerations shared, discuss this prompt...

“For me, what might work would be to....”



Supervisors are educators.

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MAVERICK STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

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