BIG THINK +

What are best practices for deploying Curations by Big Think+?

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This article outlines some best practice recommendations for deploying Curations by Big Think+ that will strike a balance between sustaining progress and allowing reflection, making the programs more impactful and sustainable.

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1. Anchor the Program in Clear Leadership Competencies

- Why it Matters:
    - A focused competency framework ensures microlearning feels relevant and aligned to business needs. This prevents the program from becoming “nice-to-know” and instead positions it as essential for leadership readiness.
- You may opt to revise the Section Titles and/or Descriptions within the Curations so participants see a clear link between the lessons and leadership growth within the context of your organization.
- *Note:* any of the pre-curated video Lessons or content can be removed and replaced with different Lessons or supplemented with your own content.

2. Use a Blended Microlearning Approach

- Why it Matters:
    - Pairing short content with live or guided discussions maximizes retention and transfer. Learners gain both quick insights and the opportunity to deepen understanding through conversation and practice.
- Pre-work: Assign a Lesson to spark reflection.
- Live/virtual touchpoint: Use a group discussion, coaching circle, or workshop to apply concepts.
    - You can create discussion break points in the curation itself where you can insert links to your virtual meeting platform (such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams) or placeholders for in-person meetings for virtual or hybrid blended deployment.
- Follow-up: Reinforce with a related Lesson or self-reflection activity to drive retention.

3. Design a Cadence That Fits Workflows

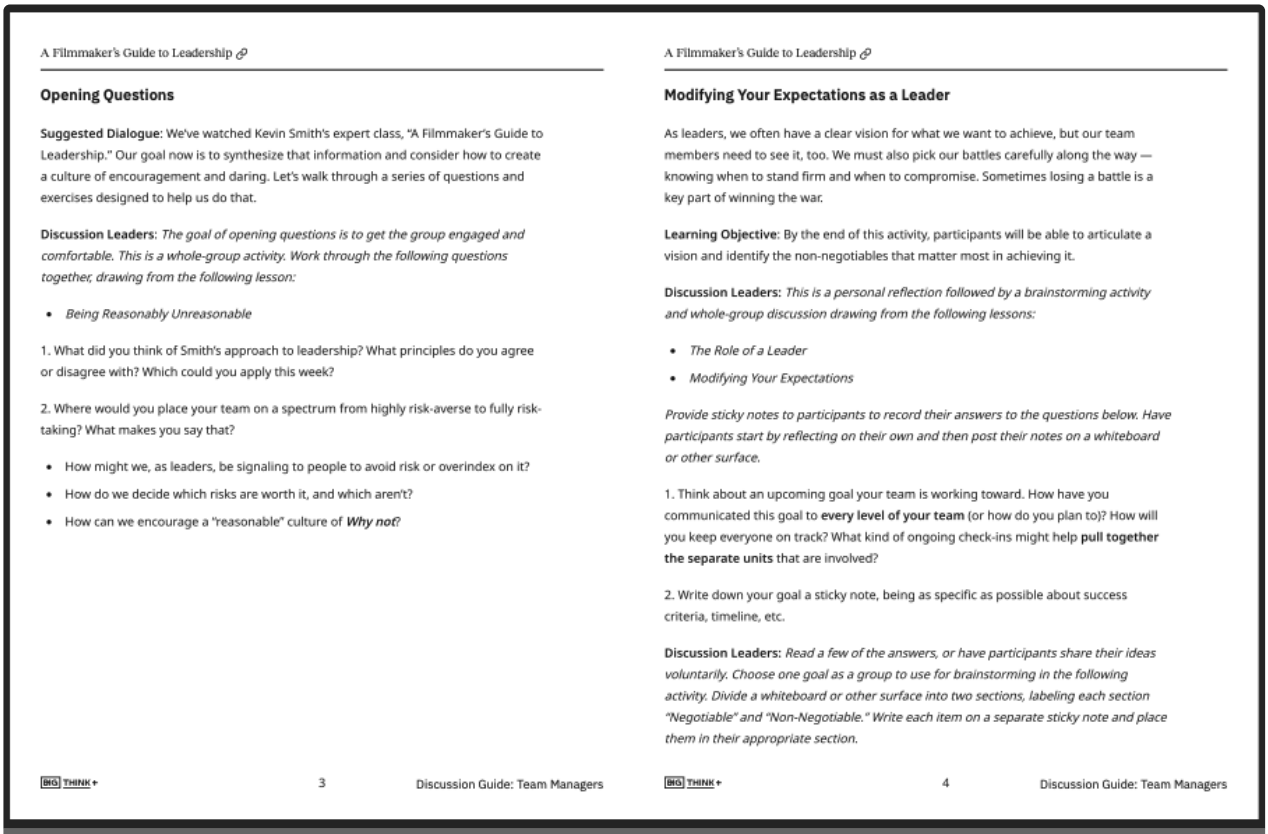
- Why it Matters:

    - Microlearning works best when it fits seamlessly into daily routines. A steady, predictable cadence prevents overwhelm and reinforces habits over time. Selecting the right pacing ensures participants have enough time to absorb concepts, practice skills, and apply them on the job without feeling overwhelmed. Too fast, and learning becomes superficial; too slow, and momentum and engagement can fade.

- Use “drip learning” - release one theme at a time instead of flooding learners with too much content.
- Weekly or biweekly Lesson drops (5-10 minutes maximum) keep momentum.
- Aligning release timing with performance cycles or organizational priorities.

4. Facilitate Social Learning & Peer Connection

- Why it Matters:
    - Learning sticks when participants reflect and share with others. Social learning builds accountability, broadens perspectives, and fosters a sense of leadership community.
- Encourage participants to discuss insights in peer learning groups or manager-led huddles.
- Use a discussion guide with prompts like *“What’s one idea from the video you can apply this week?”*
    - *Tip: All Big Think+ Expert Classes offer Discussion Guides for a variety of audiences.*



A Filmmaker's Guide to Leadership

Opening Questions

Suggested Dialogue: We've watched Kevin Smith's expert class, "A Filmmaker's Guide to Leadership." Our goal now is to synthesize that information and consider how to create a culture of encouragement and daring. Let's walk through a series of questions and exercises designed to help us do that.

Discussion Leaders: *The goal of opening questions is to get the group engaged and comfortable. This is a whole-group activity. Work through the following questions together, drawing from the following lesson:*

- *Being Reasonably Unreasonable*

1. What did you think of Smith's approach to leadership? What principles do you agree or disagree with? Which could you apply this week?

2. Where would you place your team on a spectrum from highly risk-averse to fully risk-taking? What makes you say that?

- How might we, as leaders, be signaling to people to avoid risk or overindex on it?
- How do we decide which risks are worth it, and which aren't?
- How can we encourage a "reasonable" culture of ***Why not***?

BIG THINK + 3 Discussion Guide: Team Managers

A Filmmaker's Guide to Leadership

Modifying Your Expectations as a Leader

As leaders, we often have a clear vision for what we want to achieve, but our team members need to see it, too. We must also pick our battles carefully along the way — knowing when to stand firm and when to compromise. Sometimes losing a battle is a key part of winning the war.

Learning Objective: By the end of this activity, participants will be able to articulate a vision and identify the non-negotiables that matter most in achieving it.

Discussion Leaders: *This is a personal reflection followed by a brainstorming activity and whole-group discussion drawing from the following lessons:*

- *The Role of a Leader*
- *Modifying Your Expectations*

Provide sticky notes to participants to record their answers to the questions below. Have participants start by reflecting on their own and then post their notes on a whiteboard or other surface.

1. Think about an upcoming goal your team is working toward. How have you communicated this goal to **every level of your team** (or how do you plan to)? How will you keep everyone on track? What kind of ongoing check-ins might help **pull together the separate units** that are involved?

2. Write down your goal a sticky note, being as specific as possible about success criteria, timeline, etc.

Discussion Leaders: *Read a few of the answers, or have participants share their ideas voluntarily. Choose one goal as a group to use for brainstorming in the following activity. Divide a whiteboard or other surface into two sections, labeling each section "Negotiable" and "Non-Negotiable." Write each item on a separate sticky note and place them in their appropriate section.*

BIG THINK + 4 Discussion Guide: Team Managers

Sample from a Team Manager Discussion Guide

- Leverage the Conversation tab in Big Think+ or other platforms (such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, LMS discussion boards) for ongoing reflection.

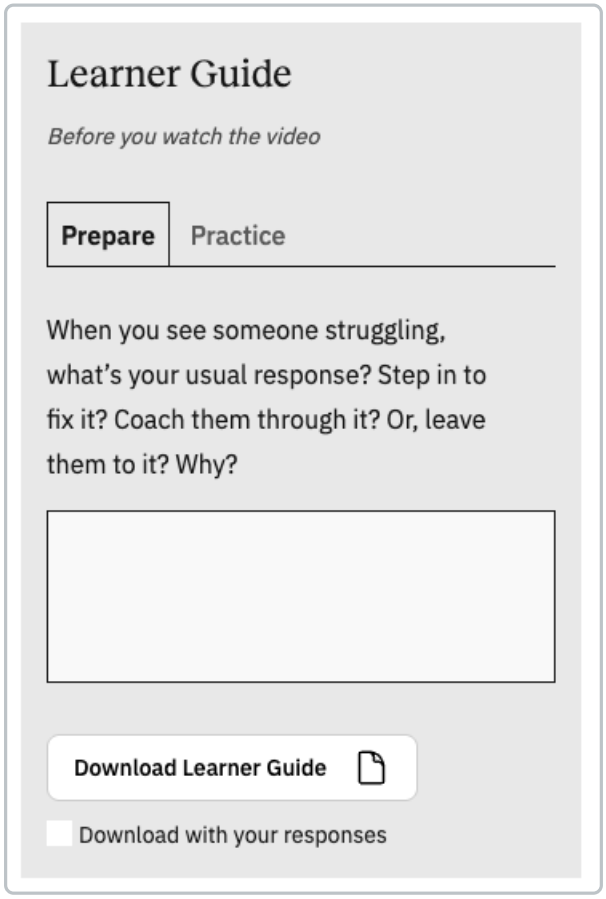
5. Support Managers of Emerging Leaders

- Why it Matters:
    - When managers reinforce lessons, participants are more likely to apply them. This creates a culture of coaching and ensures new skills don't stay siloed in the classroom.
- Provide managers with short "leader as coach" guides or companion questions.
- Encourage managers to observe participants applying new behaviors on the job and give feedback.

6. Embed Practice & Application

- Why it Matters:
    - When managers reinforce lessons, participants are more likely to apply them. This creates a culture of coaching and ensures new skills don't stay siloed in the classroom.

- Pair Lessons with micro-challenges such as *"This week, delegate one task and reflect on how it went."*
- Use journaling prompts, role-play, or scenario-based activities in between lessons.
    - Promote the use of the Prepare and Practice questions in the Big Think+ platform; you can use these as baselines for group discussions.



- Encourage participants to share success stories and lessons learned with their cohort.

7. Measure at Multiple Levels

- Why it Matters:
    - Tracking impact at learner, behavior, and business levels ensures the program demonstrates Return on Investment/Return on Expectations (ROI/ROE). It also provides feedback to continuously improve the learning experience.
- Immediate: Quick pulse surveys on engagement and relevance.
- Learning: Short self-assessments before and after each module.
- Behavior: Manager check-ins or peer feedback on observed behavior changes.
- Impact: Track promotion readiness, retention, and leadership bench strength.

8. Keep Content Flexible and Personalized

- Why it Matters:
    - Leaders and managers have diverse needs and contexts. Offering choice and just-in-time access makes the program more engaging and directly applicable.
- Let learners self-select optional microlearning tracks based on interests or growth areas.
- Offer additional "just-in-time" learning such as Lessons on conflict management when a team issue arises or Leading/Embracing Change during times of company reorganization.

9. Build Visibility & Recognition

- Why it Matters:
    - Celebrating progress motivates learners and signals organizational commitment to their growth. Recognition also builds credibility and buy-in from leadership stakeholders.
- Celebrate milestones with shout-outs for completing modules.
- Showcase participant progress to senior leadership to reinforce program value.

10. Create a Learning Culture

- Why it Matters:
    - Leadership development programs stick when supported by a learning culture that reinforces delegation and manager involvement.
- When managers coach and reinforce new skills, participants are far more likely to transfer learning into daily work.
- Ensure that managers are supporting and assisting in finding coverage for time spent completing Lessons or in discussion groups, particularly for those who are hourly or deskless workers.
- If participants are already in formal or informal leadership roles, ensure that they delegate as needed to support their full focus and attention during their training times.
    - Pro Tip: Provide a link to Alisa Cohn's Four Key Principles for Successful Delegation as part of program announcements.