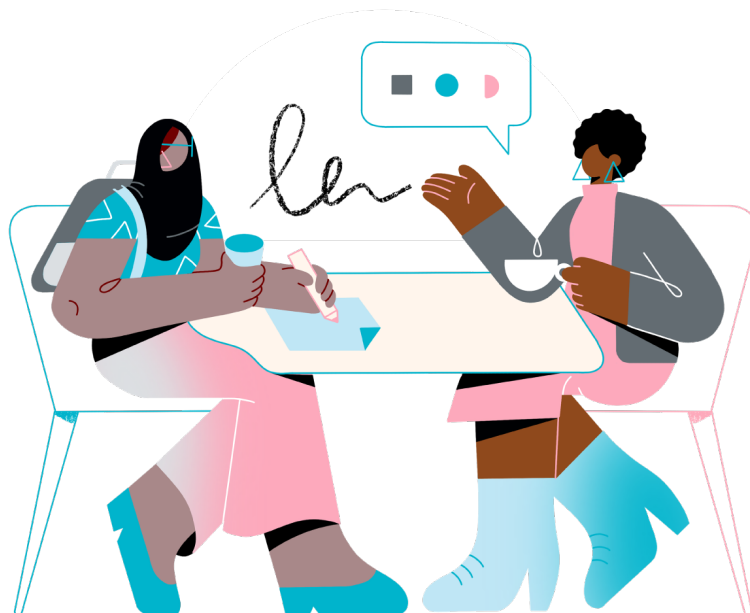


Harvard ManageMentor® Café Guide

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About Cafés

WHAT IS A CAFÉ?

A Harvard ManageMentor Café is a brief learning experience based on the concepts and skills found in a particular Harvard ManageMentor course. During a Café, participants review key concepts, discuss tools, exchange ideas, and practice skills.

CAFÉ PURPOSE AND BENEFITS

Harvard ManageMentor Cafés strengthen the online Harvard ManageMentor course learning experience in a variety of ways:

- Cafés allow learners to apply Harvard ManageMentor course content and tools to their specific organizational and team workplace context, thereby increasing relevance and value.
- Cafés provide an opportunity to learn with others. During Cafés, learners gain support in their development and benefit from the ideas of others as they discuss issues and challenges.
- The Café experience increases the opportunity for learners to enhance their skills in a course area by providing opportunities to practice and apply the skills over time.

Cafés reflect the learning design principles that Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning and our client organizations consider essential to effective leadership development, with an emphasis on Learning in Context, Learning by Doing and Reflecting, and Learning with Others.



Harvard Business Publishing Learning Design Principles

DESIGN

A Harvard ManageMentor Café is designed to be used in concert with the online Harvard ManageMentor course, and includes these components:



- In Part 1, individual learners complete the designated Harvard ManageMentor course, including selected assigned pre-work activities.
- In Part 2, learners participate in the Café session, which focuses on practicing key skills found in the course.
- In Part 3, individual learners take action to apply Harvard ManageMentor course content and Café learning on the job.

The Difference Between Café and Course Discussion Guides

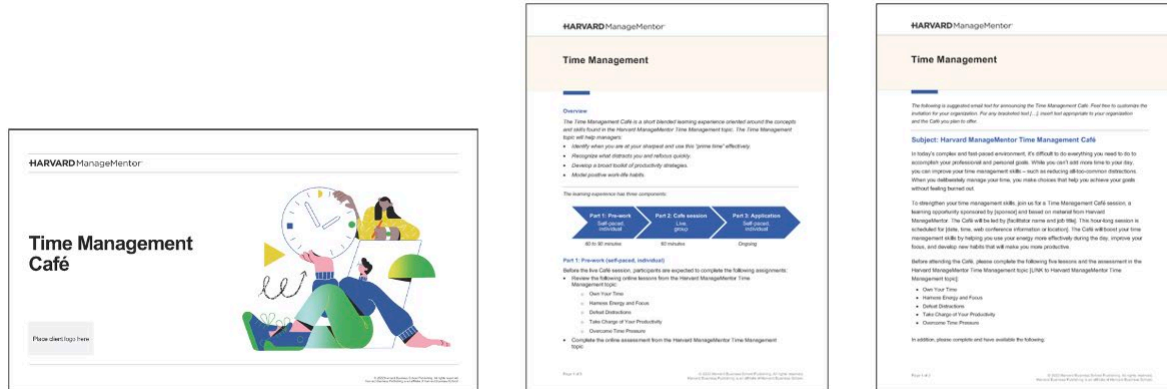
Harvard ManageMentor includes both Cafés and Discussion Guides for each course. They serve a similar purpose but have some important differences. Cafés are designed to be led by experienced facilitators, such as Human Resources or Learning and Development professionals. They are also designed to be used with a group of participants who have completed an entire Harvard ManageMentor course and specific pre-work. Cafés may be used effectively with participants from different functional areas across the organization. Discussion Guides, on the other hand, are intended for managers and other Harvard ManageMentor learners, such as project team leaders, to help a group or team discuss approaches to applying key Harvard ManageMentor course concepts to their team's work. Discussion Guides not only benefit the group engaged in a discussion but also help leaders develop their skills as teachers and coaches. The figure below illustrates the differences between a Café experience and a Discussion Guide experience.

Cafés versus Discussion Guides

FEATURES	CAFÉ	DISCUSSION GUIDE
Audience	Cross-organizational cohort	Team
Time	60–90 minutes	30–45 minutes
Format	Formal	Informal
Focus	Overall course	Specific lesson
Pre-work	Complete course	Targeted course content (provided by leader)
Activities	Questions, scenarios, application of tools, reflection, activity debriefs	Discussion questions
Facilitator	HR or L&D professional	Learner

Materials

Materials for each Harvard ManageMentor Café include an overview, a set of presentation slides with facilitator notes, and an announcement.



- **The overview** for facilitators contains the following information:
 - Harvard ManageMentor course objectives
 - Review of blended learning components
 - Café session objectives
 - Detailed outline of the Café session
 - Post-Café assignments
- **Slides** present varied activities such as questions, scenarios, and a debrief of tools.
- **Notes** are included with each slide to provide suggested instructions for facilitating the activity.
- **The announcement** offers suggested email text for inviting participants to attend the Café. It includes:
 - Business context
 - Required preparation
 - Logistics and timing

All Café materials can be tailored to meet the needs or preferences of your organization or group.

ACCESSING CAFÉ MATERIALS

All Café materials can be found on the Administrative console, including the translated versions.

FILTER RESOURCES BY CATEGORY

- ☐ Reference
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Content
- ☒ Café
- ☐ HMM Implementation

CAFÉ

Career Management Café



This café on Career Management will help learners to identify core interests, work values, and skills; explore career opportunities; and cultivate a sponsor relationship.

[Other available languages](#)

CAFÉ

Change Management Café



This café on Change Management will help learners to maintain a high level of change-readiness in your team; develop and communicate a vision for change, and overcome resistance to change.

[Other available languages](#)

CAFÉ

Coaching Café



This café on Coaching will help learners to establish formal coaching, listen and question effectively, and give constructive feedback.

[Other available languages](#)

SAMPLE APPLICATIONS OF CAFÉS

Organizations use Cafés in a number of different ways:

Support for a Strategic Initiative

Organizations often use Harvard ManageMentor courses and the associated Cafés to support specific strategic initiatives or projects. For example, an organization planning a major change could offer Change Management Cafés to strengthen leaders' skills in implementing change and overcoming resistance to change.

Reinforcement of Skills Related to Recurring Organizational Activities

Most organizations have periodic activities such as annual performance reviews, strategic planning, or end-of-year business unit performance measurement. An organization might choose to offer Café sessions such as Feedback Essentials, Strategy Planning and Execution, or Performance Measurement to support such recurring activities.

Component of an Extended Blended Learning Program

You may choose to expand the standard blended learning design described in Section 1. Some organizations combine external or proprietary course(s) with Harvard ManageMentor course(s) and Café(s) to create a contextualized blended learning experience. For example, you could offer a custom or vendor-developed course on Feedback, followed by the online Harvard ManageMentor online course "Feedback Essentials," and finally the Harvard ManageMentor Feedback Essentials Café.

Executive Speaker Series with Human Resources/Learning and Development Co-facilitator

In some organizations, line executives co-lead Café sessions with a Human Resources or Learning and Development facilitator, which can add credibility to the process and enhance engagement. For example, one organization initiated a quarterly speaker series, leveraging key Harvard ManageMentor courses and featuring senior executives. The first one was called “Owning Your Career” and included a presentation by a C-suite executive who spoke about learning opportunities she has taken advantage of and how they contributed to her career growth. It was followed by a professionally facilitated portion of the Career Development Café.

FACILITATING CAFÉS

Cafés are designed to be led by an individual with professional facilitation skills and experience, such as Human Resources or Learning and Development professionals. Café materials, especially facilitator notes, are optimized for virtual delivery but can be adapted by facilitators for delivery in a face-to-face or hybrid environment. Tips for virtual and face-to-face delivery are included later in this guide.

Preparing for a Café Session

- Consider interviewing a Subject Matter Expert (SME) or Senior Leader/Sponsor to gain organizational insight on the value or importance of the Café course. Note example interview questions you might ask related to a Feedback Essentials Café:
 - For our organization to be as successful as possible, what types of organizational challenges represent opportunities for giving/seeking frequent feedback among employees?
 - What might be some cultural norms within our organization that make giving/receiving feedback so difficult?
 - What cultural norms within our organization should be preserved and/or strengthened when giving/receiving feedback?
- Consider working with a co-facilitator or SME from the organization to enhance relevance and credibility.
- Develop a contingency plan if participants have not completed the assigned pre-work. For example, you may need to spend more time reviewing concepts from the Harvard ManageMentor course experience.
- Organize all materials you want to use, such as worksheets or visual aids.
- Familiarize yourself with technical equipment whether you are delivering virtually or face to face.
- Review the Café facilitator notes. Be prepared to share stories based on your own experience.

TIPS FOR ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS VIRTUALLY

Conducting virtual learning sessions is challenging even for experienced facilitators. Facilitators of virtual Cafés need to focus on strategies for maintaining learners' engagement in an environment that poses numerous distractions, such as open workspace learning settings, email, and easy access to unrelated online activities.

Research shows that the majority of learning programs are still delivered face to face. However, organizations are increasingly turning to virtual learning environments to accommodate the needs of virtual and global teams and to provide more cost-effective learning experiences. Consider these tips to adapt your facilitation skills to a virtual setting:

- Familiarize yourself with the participants' learning spaces and how that could affect ease of discussion. For example, if learners are participating from open workspaces, you may want to rely more on chat functions than requesting verbal responses via audio.
- Use a headset to improve audio quality for participants.
- Use your webcam if possible; seeing you helps participants feel engaged in the learning.
- Check your volume, so you don't over-project.
- Vary your speaking pace, pitch, and pauses.
- Smile! Even if participants can't see you, smiling will help you speak in a more engaging tone.

FACILITATION BEST PRACTICES

Even the most experienced facilitators can benefit from a recap of general best practices:

- You are valued for your experience, so share your (relevant) stories.
- Help connect the concepts to their use and importance in your organization.
- Respond to questions from the group to help them learn.
- Work to create an atmosphere of trust and sharing.
- Bridge and link points during the session.
- If it makes sense, include a business unit leader/SME to provide additional anecdotes and examples.
- Prepare your own answers to Café questions and scenarios ahead of time.
- Customize the slides to make them your own.

FACILITATION TRAPS

- Looking at/speaking to one person or one part of the room (in a face-to-face program)
- Ignoring virtual communication tools such as hand raising and chatting
- Talking too much/lecturing

- Telling someone they asked a great question if you have not also told others their questions were great
- Ignoring someone's point
- Allowing one person to dominate the discussion
- Allowing the conversation to get off track
- Running out of time

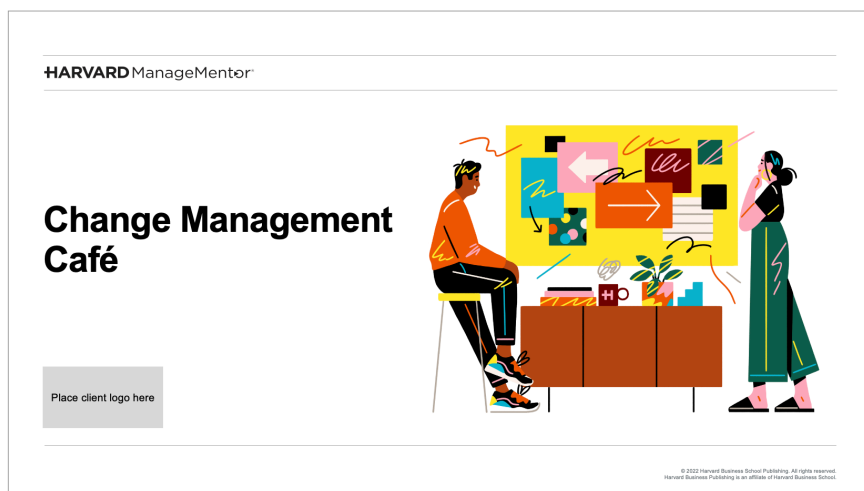
TIPS FOR TAILORING CAFÉS

A key feature of Cafés is that they are designed to be easily customized to your organization and learners.

Customizing Look and Feel

Standard Café slides use Harvard ManageMentor slide templates. Most organizations add their own logo to the title page; many add their logo to each slide.

You may also choose to use your organization's slide templates. While the structure of each slide will be preserved, you may need to adjust font size and color. If you use your organization's slide template, be sure to retain appropriate Harvard ManageMentor branding and copyright information.



Customizing for Face-to-Face Delivery

- When facilitating a Café face to face, revise standard slides and notes to eliminate virtual delivery guidance, including references to use of the chat function and hand raising.
- For face-to-face Cafés, consider adding features such as brief breakout sessions or partner discussions when debriefing pre-work or facilitating discussions.

CUSTOMIZING CAFÉ ACTIVITIES


Scenarios

Most Cafés include “What would you do?” scenarios to stimulate analysis and problem solving related to management challenges. Some organizations find that they can increase relevance and engagement by substituting a more organization-specific scenario. Customizing scenarios generally does not take much time, since they can easily follow the story line of the standard Café scenario, as shown below.

Standard scenario example:

Change Management

Boost a team's capacity for change



A regional bank is facing increased competition from both major financial institutions and disruptive startups. It's clear that to stay competitive, the bank will continually need to change how it does business.

Marcus, who manages the bank's data center, realizes that these changes will affect his team on an ongoing basis.


What can Marcus do to help his group develop skills for navigating continual change?

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Tailored scenario example for a health care organization:

Change Management

Boost a team's capacity for change



A large hospital consortium is discussing how to reinvent their Emergency Departments to provide more efficient operations and a more positive experience for patients. Because of the complexity of anticipated changes, they will be implemented over an extended period of time.

Marcus, Chief of Emergency Medicine for one of the hospitals, realizes that the planned changes will affect his Emergency Department staff on an ongoing basis.

What can Marcus do to help prepare his hospital's Emergency Department for navigating continual change?

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Discussion Questions

Organizations may wish to tailor a discussion question to have more resonance for their learners. For example, instead of a standard question such as “Why do you think it’s important to tailor feedback for different individuals?” a facilitator substituted the question “How do you currently tailor feedback to address the needs of diverse individuals on your team?”

Reflections and Applications

Organizations may have a particular context for conducting a Café that might lead them to customize the focus of a reflection activity. For example, a standard facilitator’s question that follows discussion of tips for dealing with resistance to change asks:

Thinking about what we’ve discussed today, what are the strategies for addressing resistance that are most relevant to you and your team? Take the next minute to write down a few ideas about managing resistance that you think are the most important to keep in mind.

An example of tailoring the question to a specific organization’s challenges might be:

Thinking about what we’ve discussed about resistance to change, what strategies should you and ABC Company focus on to help employees accept change and maintain engagement while we merge our two market units?

Adapting High-Level Design

Standard Cafés include three skill focus areas. Though Cafés are designed to flow from one skill focus area to another, each Café skill focus area can also stand alone. Depending on the timing, organizational context, and/or group needs, facilitators should consider whether to focus on one or two rather than all three skill focus areas.

- A facilitator might opt to lead activities related to only one skill focus area for a variety of reasons:
 - Use only one Café skill focus area in a larger blended learning program.
 - Choose the one Café skill focus area that is most urgent given skill gaps.
 - Support micro-learning by facilitating a single Café skill focus area in a short amount of time.
- A facilitator might adjust the time spent on each of the three skill focus areas.
 - This would likely include eliminating certain activities in a less urgent skill focus area, and perhaps adding a discussion or activity for a higher priority skill.
- A facilitator might combine elements of multiple Cafés to support a business need.
 - For example, in the case of a need to enhance employee engagement, select certain skill focus areas from the Leading People and Retaining Employees Cafés.

Also consider strengthening learning by adding a Café follow-on session after participants have had 90 days to work on their action plans. For example, the group could share their results and discuss plans going forward in small groups, and then share highlights with the larger group.