THE LEGACY LINK INSTITUTE

The Teaching Gap Workbook

Teach one useful skill.
Give your crew room to grow.

Start with one employee and one skill that would take some pressure off you or your crew.



A companion to
The Teaching Gap Behind
the Skilled Trades Shortage

What are you explaining over and over?

Think about the tests you repeat, the systems only a few people understand, and the decisions that still come back to you. Name a skill someone can practice. Choose equipment and work that fit your trade.

What keeps coming back	A specific skill to teach
"Why did you decide that part failed?"	Choose a test, interpret the result, and explain what it rules out.
"What does this component do?"	Trace how a familiar system operates using its drawing or manual.
"Do we carry it, or must we order it?"	Match the required part to the equipment, check stock, and identify what must be ordered.
"Is this still a service call?"	Recognize when the work needs a separate scope, estimate, or approval.

What technical question or correction keeps coming back to you?

Turn one of those into a skill someone could explain or demonstrate.

Recap notes, customer communication, and salesmanship belong in the inventory, too. Start with the missing skill that is holding up the work.

Where does the work get stuck?

Where do calls or projects stall because someone lacks the knowledge to take the next step? Look for repeated trips, uncertain diagnoses, wrong parts, and work that waits for one experienced person.

For example: A worker makes a second trip because the replacement part does not match the equipment. The lesson is to confirm the equipment details and part requirements, then check what is on the truck, in the shop, or available to order before leaving.

Which technical task or decision keeps stopping the work?

What knowledge is missing? What delay, rework, or extra trip does it cause?

Which skill would relieve the most pressure? Why start there?

Keep it specific. “Trace the operating sequence on this system” is a lesson. “Learn diagnostics” is too broad.

Who knows what?

Write specific skills across the top and employees down the side. Name the system, equipment, or type of work. Someone may know one system well and need coaching on another.

Here is one crew's starting point.

Employee	Test and interpret a fault	Trace a system drawing	Match parts and check stock
Sam	I / T	I / T	I
Jordan	C	I	C
Casey	C	C	?

? = Not assessed C = Needs coaching I = Independent T = Can teach

Mark I / T when both apply. Independent work still requires the qualifications and supervision the task calls for. Being good at a task does not automatically make someone ready to teach it.

Fill in the skills and people in your business.

Employee	Skill	Skill	Skill

Who could learn your priority skill? Who could help teach it?

Teach it three ways

Experienced tradespeople have taught generations by showing the work. Reinforce that demonstration with written steps and coached practice. Ask the apprentice what is still unclear. Change the explanation when needed.

For example: On a familiar system, show how you choose a diagnostic test and explain what the result tells you. Have the apprentice write the steps and expected findings. Coach them through the test and ask what they would check next.

1. Show it. Which system, test, or procedure will you explain?

2. Write it. Which steps, readings, or system details need recording?

3. Practice it. What will they do, explain, and repeat with coaching?

Explain the reason behind the steps. Give feedback, then let the apprentice try again.

How will you know it stuck?

“You got it?” usually earns a nod. Ask the employee to explain the thinking and demonstrate the work. Decide what good performance looks like before the lesson starts.

For example: Give the worker a repair request that grows beyond the original call. Ask them to explain what can be handled within the agreed service scope, what needs a separate estimate or approval, and what parts, labor, and system information are still needed.

What must they do or explain? What result would show sound judgment?

What requires stopping and asking for help? Who will assess the work?

What did you observe? What needs more explanation or practice?

Keep required qualifications and supervision in place. One successful attempt may not show that someone is ready to work independently.

Who has time to teach?

Teaching takes time from people who are already carrying the work. Choose a small lesson, agree on a time, and ask the teacher what would make it easier. Give the learner a reason to see progress as worth the effort.

For example: Sam sets aside 15 minutes in the shop to help Jordan trace a familiar system using its drawing and manual. Jordan identifies the components and explains their sequence. At the next suitable job, Sam checks whether Jordan can connect that explanation to the actual equipment.

Who will teach? What work or interruptions can you take off their plate?

What explanation could become a reusable photo, checklist, or short video?

What responsibility, recognition, or pay review could follow progress?

Ask the teacher and learner what is helping. Adjust the plan before frustration becomes a reason to give up.

One employee.
One useful skill.

You do not need to rebuild your training program this week. Choose one lesson from these pages and make a plan you can actually follow.

Employee and skill

Teacher and first teaching date

Show it, write it, practice it: what will you do?

What will the employee demonstrate? Who will check it?

Follow-up date and next opportunity after progress

At follow-up: what improved, and what needs another try?

The next person who takes some weight off your shoulders may already be on the payroll.