

Guiding progress

Onboarding drew the route; guiding is keeping the person moving along it. Four practices carry the months between the start and the goal.

Work the prerequisite chain. Don't let someone reach for an advanced skill before its foundations — even when they're eager, *especially* when they're eager. Frustration up the tree is almost always a missing skill down the tree; when a person stalls or struggles, look below the struggling skill before questioning the person. This one diagnostic habit prevents most coaching dead-ends.

Pace against the levels, not the calendar. Most skills move within a month or so of focused work — that's the granularity the forest was cut to. So a three-level skill stalling for months isn't a motivation problem to push through; it's a signal the skill is too big. Split it, or narrow the focus to a slice that can visibly move. Visible movement is the fuel; a coach's job includes keeping the fuel flowing.

Make practice the assignment. Skills grow through use — so pair every focus skill with real work, not just materials. And use **teaching-back as the test** for advancing someone to confident or expert: ask them to explain the skill, or better, have them walk a colleague through it. It's simultaneously the assessment and the final rep of the learning.

Review monthly. A short check-in keeps the picture current without heavy ceremony — what moved, what stalled, what's next month's focus. Same rhythm as everywhere else in the method, and it composes: your coaching check-in can *be* the person's monthly forest update.

The route will change — goals sharpen, life intervenes, the forest itself gets reviewed. That's fine. The map makes re-routing cheap; the practices above make it rare.



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