



RESOURCES

TITLE | EDUCATION OUTSIDE SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR PROGRAM MANAGERS

CATEGORY | Garden Educator Management & Coaching

OVERVIEW | This document provides program managers training topics and templates that program managers can use when supervising garden educators.

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What this resource is:

This resource outlines some of the systems that Education Outside utilized to support program managers (PMs) in effectively supervising garden educators. These systems are described briefly here and expanded upon in the sections below.

- **Program Manager Training:** Many Education Outside PMs had previous experience as garden educators, but most did not have experience managing others prior to becoming PMs. Education Outside PMs received training on how to be effective people managers and instructional coaches and how to support team development. This section includes a list of topics covered in Education Outside's PM trainings.
- **Garden Educator Management Templates:** This section includes templates for lesson observation debriefs, check-ins with garden educators, and mid and end of year reviews.

Why this resource was created:

The trainings and templates included in this document were created to ensure consistency of practice across the Education Outside Program Team and to create systems to streamline PM workload. They were modified over the years based on feedback from garden educators and PMs. They are included here to serve as a resource for School Garden Support Organizations and staff who provide direct support to garden educators.

How to use this resource:

We suggest using these training descriptions and templates as a reference when developing support systems for people who manage garden educators.



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Program Manager Training:

Instructional Coaching: At Education Outside, PMs were the primary provider of consistent feedback to garden educators on their teaching practice. This training covered how to conduct lesson observations (including the use of the lesson observation debrief template explained below), how to focus and prioritize feedback for garden educators, and how to deliver feedback effectively. It also covered inquiry-based coaching, including questions to ask garden educators in order to support them in deepening their own self-reflection during check-ins. See the references section for more on inquiry-based coaching and coaching sentence stems.¹

Management: Education Outside used resources from The Management Center and Compass Point to train PMs in various best practices related to people management. Topics included delegation, goal setting in alignment with core responsibilities, organization, project management, strengths-based leadership and supervision, and relationship development.

Communication: This training for PMs was similar to what is described in “Communication: Feedback, Nonviolent Communication, and Grant Writing” in the *Leadership for Community Engagement* resource linked in the Table of Contents. It included best practices for giving and receiving feedback in the context of supervising garden educators and engaging with peer PMs and other staff members. It also included non-violent communication practices and team building.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Education Outside provided training related to diversity, equity and inclusion to all staff members, including PMs. Details are included in “Supporting Diversity, Equity & Inclusion with External Consultants” in the *Leadership for Community Engagement* resource linked in the Table of Contents. In brief, this training included identifying characteristics of equitable and inclusive workplaces, understanding how to interrupt oppression and hold each other accountable, and how to manage with a lens toward equity.

Garden Educator Management Templates:

Lesson Observation Debrief Template

As explained in *Education Outside Support Systems for Garden Educators*, available in the Table of Contents, Education Outside PMs observed garden educator lessons on a monthly basis. They used the Best Practices Rubric to evaluate the educator’s use of the best practices during the lesson (see *Education Outside’s Best Practices for Teaching* in the Table of Contents). Following the lesson observation, the garden educator and PM both filled out a lesson debrief template (**Appendix A**) to use as a basis for their discussion.

Check-In Template

As explained in *Education Outside Support Systems for Garden Educators*, available in the Table of Contents, Education Outside PMs had regular check-ins with garden educators. These meetings generally lasted about one hour and took place once per month. During this time, PMs helped garden educators brainstorm solutions to issues that they were facing at their school site (ranging from supporting students who were disruptive during class, preventing vandalism in their outdoor classroom to navigating difficult conversations with other adults in the school community). They also used this time to help garden educators set goals and monitor their progress toward completion and check their progress on administrative tasks such as data entry and timesheet submission. Two versions of the check-in template are available in **Appendix B**.

Mid/End of Year Review Template

As explained in *Education Outside Support Systems for Garden Educators*, available in the Table of Contents, Education Outside PMs held mid and end of year reviews with garden educators. During these meetings, garden educators had a chance to reflect on their work during the previous semester, conduct a self-evaluation, and provide feedback to their PM. PMs similarly reflected on the garden educator’s work and growth during the semester and provided feedback to garden educators. The review template is available in **Appendix C**.

References:

1. Diane Sweeney Consulting. (2015). Coaching Questions & Sentence Stems to Support Open-Ended Dialogue [PDF file]. Retrieved from <https://dianesweeney.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Coach-Talk.pdf>

Appendix A: Lesson Debrief Template

Date:

Grade:

	Lesson Observation (Garden Educator)	Lesson Observation (Program Manager)
General Notes		
Lesson Objective - What did you want students to walk away with? - Did your students meet the learning objective you set? How do you know?		
Strengths to Leverage - What went well during your lesson? - What did you do to create success in your lesson?		
Opportunities for Growth - Think of any moments of confusion during the lesson for yourself, the classroom teacher, or students. - With this in mind, how could you enhance your lesson?		
Action Item - What is one thing you will change next time?		

Appendix B: Check-In Templates

The two templates below were adapted from **The Management Center** and used by PMs in their check-in meetings. The first is more detailed and the second is a paired-down version of the first. Both templates accomplish the goal of providing structure to PM check-ins with garden educators and both should be completed by the garden educator ahead of time. The only section to be filled out by the PM in advance is “Program Manager Section: Topics for Discussion.”

Check-In Template #1

Date:	How I’m doing personally:	
Goal	Current Progress	Projected Results
This week will be successful if...		
1.		
2.		
3.		
Lessons Learned		
Data Tracking Up to Date?		
Quick FYIs		
Quick Questions		
Deep Dive		
Follow-up (from last meeting)		
Program Manager Section: Topics for Discussion		
Next Steps/ Repeat Back		

Check-In Template #2

Garden Educator Section		Program Manager Section	
Highlight and Lowligh		Topics for Discussion	
Quick Questions/ Updates			
Goals (check-in)			
Topics for Discussion (LTO, OCD, LCE, other)			

Appendix C: Mid/End of Year Review Template

The template below was used for both mid and end of year reviews. Garden educators and program managers each added their initials to the column corresponding to performance (i.e. beginner, developing, accomplished or not observed), and added comments to explain their reasoning.

<i>Accomplished</i>	Performance exceeded expectations due to high quality of work performed in all essential areas of responsibility. A major goal or project was completed or an exceptional or unique contribution in support of the organization was made.
<i>Developing</i>	Performance has consistently grown in all essential areas of responsibility; quality of work improved overall; approaching desired impact or outcome. Room for growth.
<i>Beginner</i>	Early stages of content knowledge or effort; desired impact or outcome has not yet been met; this behavior has not been demonstrated despite expectations.
<i>Not Observed</i>	There was not an opportunity for this behavior to be observed during this review period.

PROGRAM PILLARS						
LEARNING AND TEACHING OUTDOORS	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>Educator Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator prepares for and teaches garden-based lessons that help students practice inquiry and science and connect to the natural world						

Educator creates a safe and positive outdoor classroom culture						
Educator uses and adapts the Education Outside Curriculum for their school site with completed lesson plans						
Educator employs an understanding of positive classroom management practices						
OUTDOOR CLASSROOM DESIGN	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>CM Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator keeps the outdoor classroom space organized, safe, and clutter-free for students						
Educator plants and maintains perennials for long-term garden habitat and exploration						
Educator plants and maintains an edible garden that engages students throughout the year						
Educator develops site infrastructure to support learning outcomes						

LEADERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>CM Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator creates out-of-class opportunities for the school community to interact with the garden and Education Outside (i.e. attends Back to School Night and hosts a non-workday garden event at some point during the year)						
Educator seeks opportunities to activate their community around the outdoor classroom and incorporates community assets and feedback into programming						
Educator builds strong relationships with community members in order to serve the needs of the school and students (i.e. attendance at staff meetings/PTA meetings/grade level meetings/etc.)						
TRAINING	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>CM Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator arrives on time at the beginning of the day and after breaks. Educator stays until end of day unless otherwise arranged with PM						
Educator is respectful of training presenters (i.e. avoids side conversations, remains curious and assumes best intentions, offers solution-oriented feedback)						
Educator is engaged and participates fully						



GARDEN EDUCATOR GENERAL COMMENTS	PM GENERAL COMMENTS

COMPETENCIES						
LEADERSHIP	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>CM Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator communicates effectively and in a timely manner (i.e. work plans, needs, feedback, etc.)						
Educator is accountable to impact; Educator is conscious of creating an inclusive and culturally responsive environment when interacting with members of diverse groups within the Education Outside community, their school community, and among other stakeholders						
Educator follows the dress code at site and during training						
Educator is able to accept, utilize, and offer constructive feedback effectively and with respect						



ORGANIZATION	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>CM Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator supports organizational data tracking by accurately collecting and inputting data related to garden educator activities						
Educator demonstrates the ability to organize tasks effectively, complete quality work, and follow through on commitments						
PROBLEM-SOLVING & INITIATIVE	<i>Beginner</i>	<i>Developing</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Not Observed</i>	<i>CM Comment</i>	<i>PM Comment</i>
Educator is solution-oriented when challenges arise and maintains a positive approach to situations that are difficult						
Educator demonstrates initiative in problem-solving and project management						
Educator assumes best intentions of community partners, corps members, and/or Education Outside staff						
GARDEN EDUCATOR GENERAL COMMENTS			PM GENERAL COMMENTS			

SIGNATURES OF ACCEPTANCE		
Garden educator signature:		Date of review:
Program manager signature:		