






Time management as a Digital Mentor

Mentoring sessions can easily disappear down a rabbit hole of 'while you're here' questions or long chats about the grandkids. While building rapport is lovely, staying on track ensures the learner actually walks away with a new skill. Managing your time effectively means you can be supportive without letting the session spiral out of control.

Here are a few suggestions to help keep you on track with timing:

-  **Set an agenda:** Agree on one or two specific goals at the very start of the hour.
-  **The 'Parking Lot':** If a random question comes up, write it down and promise to get to it if there is time at the end.
-  **Gentle redirection:** Use phrases like "That is a great point, let's finish this bit first so we don't forget where we are."
-  **Use a timer:** Having a soft end time helps both you and the learner stay focused.
-  **Quality over quantity:** It is better to learn one thing well than five things poorly because you rushed.

It is also worth keeping things moving along at a steady pace and knowing when to call it a day. People generally don't retain much information during overly long sessions due to something called Cognitive Load Theory.

Essentially, our working memory can only hold a small amount of new information at once. To keep the load manageable, try to stick to "micro-learning" chunks of about 10 to 15 minutes for a single new concept. If a session lasts an hour, ensure you are switching tasks or taking "brain breaks" every quarter of an hour. If you try to cram in too much for too long, the brain becomes overloaded and stops processing the new skills effectively. By keeping sessions punchy and focused, you ensure the learner actually remembers what they have achieved.