Summary of Program

In essence, the goals of UK GROW are the following:

(1) To make student employment a high-impact practice by providing structured opportunities for students to reflect on and integrate what they are learning, and

(2) To help students better articulate what they have learned from their job.

Basically, we want these conversations to help make the learning that is occurring through student employment more “visible” to the students.

The four questions to ask are:

(1) How is this job fitting in with your academics?

(2) What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?

(3) What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?

(4) Can you give me a couple of examples of things you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?
Quick Start Guide for Supervisors

Most supervisors regularly chat with their student employees. However, we realize not every supervisor feels comfortable having UK GROW® conversations that focus on what students are learning on the job and in class. This Quick Start guide is meant to help supervisors who:

1. Desire more structure for the UK GROW® conversation,
2. Don’t feel comfortable yet with the four main UK GROW® questions, and/or
3. Work in a high production unit such as dining services, where making time for the conversations may be more difficult.

Students learn a lot from working on campus. They learn to do things like cook, clean, and provide customer service. But they also learn how to manage time, how to work as a part of a team, and how to handle disagreements or unhappy customers. We call these transferable skills because they transfer from one place (work) to other places (classes, student organizations).

UK GROW® helps students get important practice in talking about what they are learning in their campus job. We want them to think about transferable skills and how those might help them in other parts of their lives.

Your role as a supervisor for the UK GROW® conversation is actually pretty simple – you get to listen and support what your students are learning, and if you have ideas of what you think they are getting out of work that they don’t think of, throw those into the conversation.

Student employees spend a lot of time in the workplace. Your role as a student supervisor means you are one of the caring adults that your students see nearly every day, and you serve as a great support for them. UK GROW® conversations are just another way for you to show that support.

As a start, try choosing one of these three skills to focus on for your conversation:

1. Time management,
2. Working as a part of a team,
3. Handling conflict or unhappy customers.

Then, ask these three questions:

1. What have you learned about [time management/working as a part of a team/handling conflict] through your job here?
2. How do you think what you have learned about [time management/working as a part of a team/handling conflict] can help you in your classes?
3. How do you think what you have learned about [time management/working as a part of a team/handling conflict] can help you once you get done with college and start working full-time?

After some practice, you will be more comfortable asking the general UK GROW® questions, and that’s great! By having these conversations, you are showing your students that you care, and that you want them to learn. Thank you for all you do to support our students!
Instructions at a Glance

Steps for Conversation One:
1. Determine whether a small group meeting or individual meetings work best for your student employees.
2. Send your student employees an email or paper memo (whichever works best in your area) a week before your meeting with the following information:
   a. An explanation of why you are having these conversations,
   b. The list of questions you’ll be discussing,
   c. Instructions to think about these questions and have answers prepared for the meeting.
3. Approach these questions as if you are having a conversation. Feel free to ask the questions in any order and let the conversation flow naturally. You may find it useful to brainstorm with other supervisors or Tony on the key things you expect students to learn from jobs in your area.
4. If your student employees are having a hard time answering these questions, feel free to share your ideas or observations on what they are learning on the job.
5. You may find it useful to take notes during the conversation to refer to in the next conversation.
6. Wrap up the conversations by reminding your student employees that you will be meeting again later in the semester for a similar conversation.

Steps for Conversation Two:
1. Determine whether a small group meeting or individual meetings work best for your student employees.
2. Send your student employees an email or memo a week before your meeting with the following information.
   a. Refer to the previous meeting and inform students that the questions you will be asking are the same questions as in the last meeting,
   b. The list of questions you’ll be discussing,
   c. Instructions to think about what they have learned this semester, particularly anything new they have learned since you last met,
   d. Note that the student may repeat some of the same things you discussed in the earlier conversation. This is fine.
3. If your student employees are having a hard time answering these questions, feel free to share your ideas or observations on what they are learning.
4. You may find it useful to take notes during the conversation to refer to in the next conversation.
Tips for Facilitating Conversations

Utilizing facilitation skills can help your UK GROW® conversations flow better and be productive. Key facilitation skills are outlined below.

**Open-ended questions**: Asking questions in such a way that they can’t be answered by yes, no, or a one-word answer. The UK GROW® questions are already phrased as open-ended, but make sure that any other questions you ask are open-ended as well.

- **Open-ended question**: “What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?”
- **Not an open-ended question**: “Have you learned anything here that’s helping you in school?”

**Paraphrasing**: Paraphrasing means summing up what the other person says, in your own words. It’s a good way to show that you understood what the person is saying, and can also help you make connections to other points. In your UK GROW® conversations, paraphrasing can bring relevance back to the conversation or reiterate the connections students have made about their learning.

- **Examples**:
  - “So it sounds like you are learning time management skills here at work and you’ve used these skills to ensure you are getting your homework and other tasks complete every week.”
  - “Let’s go over what we have talked about so far.”

**Follow-up probes**: Follow-up probes are questions you might add to help the student think more deeply. Probes are very helpful if the student doesn’t seem to be able to think of an answer to one of the questions.

- **They can be very simple**:
  - “What’s an example of that?”
  - “How so?”
  - “Tell me more.”

- **Or more specific**:
  - “Tell me about a way you’ve improved your time management skills.”
  - “As a part of this position you are developing customer service skills. Tell me how you’ve improved your customer service skills.”
Keep in Mind:

Students and supervisors benefit from reflection before the conversation.
- Sending out the questions before the conversation gives students an opportunity to think about their answers before you meet, leading to deeper and more authentic reflection.
- Reflecting on what students are learning as a result of working for you can help you prompt students about their learning during the conversation.

You are the air traffic controller, not the pilot.
- It can often be difficult to give students the space to reflect on their learning. During these conversations you are providing direction for reflection, but the student is responsible for driving the conversation. Your job isn’t to provide the correct answer, but give students the space to reflect and make connections.

Make peace with silence.
- Give students the opportunity to reflect. Don’t immediately ask and answer the question.
- It’s not unusual for someone to need 15-30 seconds to think of an answer to a question.

Make sure to wrap up the conversation.
- Remind students why you had the UK GROW® conversation and that you will continue to talk about learning in the workplace. Frequent reminders create an environment where learning is a key aspect of the student employment experience.
Email or Memo Templates

Conversation #1:

Hi, (Name).
I just wanted to send out a quick reminder about our meeting next week and give you a little more information about our conversation. Across the Division of SAL, we participate in a program called UK GROW® that is designed to help you make meaningful connections between what you’re learning in the classroom and what you’re learning on the job. Making these connections contributes to your overall academic and social success. Below is the list of questions that we will discuss during our conversation. Please take few moments to look over these questions and think about your answers prior to our meeting.

1. How is this job fitting in with your academics?
2. What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of things you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?

See you next week!

Sincerely,

Conversation #2:

Hi, (Name).
I just wanted to send out a quick reminder about our meeting next week. We will be discussing what you are learning in the workplace and how this connects to your academics. Below is the list of questions that I will be asking you during our conversation. You may notice that these questions are the same ones we talked about last time. For this meeting think about anything new you have learned or noticed since we met last time.

1. How is this job fitting in with your academics?
2. What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of things you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?

Look forward to seeing you next week!

Sincerely,
Supervisor Notes Template

Student’s Name __________________________  Position Title __________________________

Date ______  Semester/Year _________  Semester Meeting  □ one  □ two

Department ____________________________  Supervisor ____________________________

(1) How is this job fitting in with your academics?

(2) What are you learning here at work that is helping you in school?

(3) What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?

(4) Can you give me a couple examples of things you are learning here at work that you will use in your chosen profession?

Supervisor Comments: