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### Best Practices in Peer Learning Sessions: Advice from Peer Leaders

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## BEST PRACTICES IN PEER LEARNING SESSIONS: ADVICE FROM PEER LEADERS

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Peer learning/mentoring programs allow students to engage in deeper and more effective learning. At Washington University in St. Louis, students in our General Chemistry sequence are offered the opportunity to enhance their studies through our Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) program. New Peer Leaders are trained through a seminar course on academic mentoring. Available to them is a book with essays providing advice from the previous generation of leaders, a project which the new leaders themselves will undertake at the end of the semester to pass on their own tips, experience, and support to the next class. We developed a coding guide using thirteen years of Peer Leader advice books, and fully coded three of the latest books using qualitative discourse analysis and a community of practice theoretical lens to identify which challenges Peer Leaders encountered during their first semester of leading and the strategies they suggest to deal with each challenge. The program itself has grown and been reshaped with each new year of feedback, and here we present what our three most recent years of Peer Leaders believe to be the main challenges of PLTL programs, as well as their advice or best practices to handle them. This advice may be useful for instructors in their own courses or for training in their Peer learning/mentoring programs.