

The Mentor's Guide - Linda Phillips-Jones, Ph.D.

"It is no wonder, then, that when people tell us about the leaders who really make a difference in their lives, they frequently tell us about people who believe in them and encourage them to reach beyond their own self-doubts, to more fully realize their own greatest strengths. They talk about leaders who treat them in ways that buoy their self-confidence, making it possible for them to achieve more than they themselves initially believe possible." - James M. Kouzes & Barry Z Posner *Encouraging the Heart: A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others*

Introduction

The Mentor's Guide is designed to help you have a successful partnership with your mentees. Notice how the **Guide** is divided into separate sections:

- Introduction
- Planning for Mentoring
- Building the Relationship/Negotiating Agreement
- Developing Mentee/Maintaining Momentum
- Ending the Formal Relationship
- Additional Learning

MENTORING THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE:

Benefits of Effective Mentoring

Mentees gain opportunities to: observe and interact with successful experts; receive personalized feedback and encouragement; acquire and improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes; save time by learning shortcuts and strategies normally learned by years of trial and error.

Mentors have opportunities to: increase their mentoring skills, which they can use in numerous personal and professional areas of their lives; learn new technical knowledge and skills; indirectly "pay back" their own mentors for help received; increase their professional network; pass on years of experience; demonstrate their ability to recognize and develop talent; gain tremendous satisfaction from contributing to the development of capable individuals.

Professor Albert Bandura

First, we do most of our learning from observing successful and unsuccessful models.

Second, we respond well to positive reinforcement from certain people. That is, we learn faster and more effectively when we receive positive feedback from someone we respect

Third, we learn best not only from positive reinforcement but also from having "mastery experiences." That means we leap ahead in our learning if we master something difficult.

Effective mentors encourage their mentees through positive words-genuine timely praise.

Finally, mentees not only learn a tremendous amount but build their self-confidence in the process. People's lives change dramatically when they are mentored well.

What Mentors Can Expect from Mentees

In any formal mentoring partnership, you can expect your mentee to:

- accept the relationship on a temporary basis, for six-12 months or until one or both of you decide it is time to end it.
- meet with you as often as time permits.
- ask for suggestions or advice.
- listen to you, apply at least some of your advice, and let you know the results.
- keep any commitments made.
- keep confidence between you.
- evaluate the relationship at various points within the agreed-upon time frame, considering what you've accomplished and what next steps to take.

What Mentees Can Expect from Mentors

- have regular meetings by telephone, in person, or through on-line connections.
- provide sound advice on her/his development activities and professional development concerns.
- keep confidences between you.
- follow through on commitments made.
- help resolve conflicts between the two of you.
- provide honest yet fair and diplomatic feedback.
- evaluate the relationship at points during the agreed-upon time period.

Your mentee should **not** expect you to:

- provide him/her with personal introductions to other people until-and unless--you wish to offer them.
- spend more time on the relationship than you are willing or able to give.
- continue the relationship beyond the agreed- upon time period.

THE FORMAL MENTORING PROCESS

Planning for Mentoring

This doesn't mean extensive, formal planning. But it does mean thinking about important things: where you've come from, where you are now, and where you want to go next. What vital lessons have you learned up to now? What's your vision for the rest of your life? What can you offer as a mentor? How could you help others excel?

Building Relationship/Negotiating Agreement

You focus on getting to know one another, exploring each other's experiences, talking about other helping relationships you've experienced, and building trust. Exchange contact information such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers. Ask your partner about when it's all right to call him/her.

Effective mentoring can occur in as little as one to two hours of contact a month. The mentee should take responsibility for setting up and managing the meetings.

Schedule. Discuss the probable length of your formal partnership. If you're unsure about the relationship, suggest a "trial run" of three or four meetings so you can see if you're a good fit for each other.

Meeting Logistics. Decide when and where you'll meet. If meeting in person, pairs usually find that offices are too hectic and prone to interruptions. Consider meeting at a quiet restaurant, in an empty classroom, outdoors on a park bench, or in some other relaxed setting.

Expectations. Explore roles you picture for each of you. For example, do you want to be more of a sounding board than a teacher? Many mentors act the role of a "learning broker," helping their mentees find the information and other help they need. Or do you and your mentee favor a teaching or coaching role for you? Would you like to be an accountability partner?

Confidentiality. The best mentoring relationships maintain confidentiality between mentors and mentees. Ideas, feelings, and plans stay between the two of them. Talk about confidentiality, including what is and isn't acceptable to share with others.

Feedback. Come to agreement on how you'd like to give and receive positive and corrective feedback from each other. Ways to give these are covered in the chapter, **Skills for Successful Mentoring.**

Any Limits or Preferences. Discuss your learning and communication styles so you can work well together. State preferences, limits, and even pet peeves. For example, is one of you a stickler for punctuality? Can you contact each other between your scheduled meetings? Does each of you prefer voice mail or e-mail?

Developing Mentee/Maintaining Momentum

These mentee development objectives can focus on skill development, knowledge gain, or attitude change. This is the longest phase of the relationship. Past experiences, goals, plans, skills, career paths, problem-solving strategies); attending meetings, conferences, workshops, and other events together (and discussing these later); working together on tasks; observing the mentor handling challenging situations.

The Awe Factor

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is to simply say, "Call me if you need me." Because of the so-called "Awe Factor" (your mentee could be in awe of you) he/she may not want to bother you. Relationships die because mentors think mentees aren't interested and vice versa.

Linda Phillips-Jones' research indicates that regular, scheduled contact is a must. Look at your calendars in your first or second meeting and schedule your meetings at least three months in advance.

To maintain momentum in your partnership, try a number of ideas to keep the relationship interesting, productive, and mutually beneficial. For example, give frequent genuine positive

feedback and appreciation to your mentee. Show that you highly value this interchange. Be willing to deepen your conversations if this is comfortable for you. (See Dialog Prompts.)

Ending Formal Relationship

It is important to have **formal endings**- closure-in formal mentoring partnerships.

Prepare for Departure Day in advance. *"We only have three more months in our formal mentoring partnership. What else do we need to accomplish?"* When departure is near, discuss several items:

- What you have accomplished
- What this experience has meant to both of you
- What and whom your mentee needs next to continue developing
- What each of you would like next for this relationship

Regarding what is next, both of you might choose to:

- continue the formal arrangement (see if your program allows it);
- change to informal mentoring (discuss your expectations);
- continue with a friendship (this might be difficult to implement); or
- celebrate, express appreciation, and part company with no future contact plans.

Exercise

Using a Formal Mentoring Process with My Partner

Phase 1: Planning for Mentoring

1. (Example) Make a list of my expectations and hopes for this partnership.

Phase 2: Building the Relationship/Negotiating Agreement

1. (Example) Exchange resumes with my partner.

Phase 3: Developing Mentee/Maintaining Momentum

1. (Example) Propose using a written development plan.

Phase 4: Ending the Formal Relationship

1. (Example) Write a letter summarizing what I've gained from the experience.

CREATING YOUR PERSONAL VISION

As a mentor, creating or updating your vision will help you recognize your own growth as you help your mentees develop and reach their own personal visions.

Experts on leadership and personal development emphasize how vital it is to craft a personal vision for your life. Peter Senge, author of ***The Fifth Discipline***, defines vision as *what you want to create of yourself and the world around you*.

What are you good at? What do you *love* to do? What aren't you good at now but would like to be? All these important questions are part of identifying your personal vision.

Crafting a Personal Vision Statement

Your vision must be *unique and appropriate for you*, so the following Personal Vision Statement is *only an example*:

EXERCISE

Part I. Personal Research

Directions: Find a place without distractions such as a quiet table at a restaurant. Try to answer all the questions and discuss your responses with someone you trust.

What Brings Me Happiness/Joy	The Two Best Moments of My Past Week	Three Things I'd Do If I Won the Lottery
My Most Important Values (Circle) • Having integrity. • Serving/pleasing God. • Being fit and healthy. • Having a nice home and belongings. • Leaving the world a better place. • Having fun. • Learning and improving myself. • Making others' lives easier or more pleasant. • Enjoying my family. • Being creative. • Others? (Add)	Things I Can Do at the Good- to-Excellent Level	What I'd Like to Stop Doing or Do as Little as Possible

Part 2. Personal Vision statement

Directions: Review your research data and record your findings below.

Based on my personal research, these are the main things that motivate me/bring me joy and satisfaction:

My greatest strengths/abilities/traits/things I do best:

At least three things I can start doing/do more often that use my strengths and bring me joy:

This is my Personal Vision Statement (in 50 words or less):

SETTING COMPELLING GOALS

To avoid these mistakes-and potential feelings of failure-your mentee's development goals ought to meet the following criteria:

Desirable - What does your mentee feel passionate about? What makes him/her want to get up in the morning? What can be enhanced to keep this powerful motivation going?

Feasible - It can be challenging to create goals that are realistic and attainable-without being too simplistic. At most, help your mentee manage three goals at a time.

Measurable - How will both of you know when each goal is reached? What will success look like? What will the mentee have, do, feel, or know because of attaining the goal?

Written, not Mental or Oral - The mentee's written goal should be no more than 15 words in length, focus on one (not multiple) action, and be recorded in a notebook, day planner, or computer/PDA file.

Focus on at least one non-work-related area - If allowed in your program, help your mentee choose at least one non-work goal, one related to personal growth. This can be a goal related to any of the five life dimensions: social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. These examples may help.

Add at least six people to my professional network. (Social)

Take my family on three trips of their choice. (Social)

Walk a marathon. (Physical)

Beat my brother in tennis. (Physical, Social)

Write an article that's accepted by a professional journal. (Intellectual)

Lower my public speaking anxiety from a 9 to a 5. (Emotional)

Attend (religious) services three out of four weeks/month. (Spiritual)

Three Other Factors to Consider

1. Once your mentee chooses and writes compelling goals, identify any obstacles to reaching them (and solutions for overcoming these).
2. **Rewards** for goal attainment (What internal feelings or external "prizes" will help her/him make this happen?)
3. How you can **encourage and help** with attainment and accountability

ROLE OF YOUR MENTEE'S IMMEDIATE MANAGER

Mentoring Outside a Program

Individuals can set up informal and formal mentoring relationships on their own-without being in any formalized initiative. If they do this, and if they believe the information will be well received, they can let their managers know that they're pursuing mentoring outside the group and gaining from it. This proof of initiative is likely to increase a manager's commitment to the person.

Awareness level

Your mentee might simply mention that he/she is participating in the effort, thank the manager for support given, and ask if he/she would like to keep posted on the mentee's general progress.

Building the Relationship/ Negotiating Agreement

SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORING

Effective mentoring requires more than common sense. Research indicates that mentors and mentees who develop and manage successful mentoring partnerships demonstrate several specific, identifiable skills that enable learning and change to take place.

Some people were able to find mentoring relationships... one of the most powerful development strategies ever devised.

On the "demystifying" side, Phillips-Jones discovered that effective mentors and mentees use *specific processes and skills* throughout their relationships. Further, the **skills** and processes can be *learned*, and relationships can be better-more enjoyable, productive, and even time-efficient-as a result.

Additional research by The Mentoring Group revealed that unless a fairly *structured process* and specific skills are applied, mediocre mentoring relationships occur. Not much happens, and participants become frustrated with their well-intended but haphazard efforts. Worse, disappointed participants become convinced that mentoring doesn't work.

Listening Actively – you're listening intently is by performing several observable behaviors.

- appear genuinely interested by making encouraging responses such as "*Hmmm*" and "*Interesting*"
- use appropriate nonverbal language such as looking directly into people's eyes, nodding your head, leaning slightly toward them, frowning, or smiling where appropriate;
- avoid interrupting mentors and mentees while they're talking;
- remember and show interest in things they've said in the past ("By the way, how did the meeting with your manager go?"); and
- summarize the key elements of what each of you said.

Resist the impulse to always turn the conversation to *your* experiences and opinions and to find *immediate solutions* to problems you may be hearing.

Building Trust

- keep confidences shared by your mentors and mentees;
- spend appropriate time together;
- follow through on your promises to them;
- respect your mentors' and mentees' boundaries;
- admit your errors and take responsibility for correcting them; and
- tactfully tell your partners if and why you disagree or are dissatisfied with something so they'll know you're honest with them.

Encouraging - While there are many ways to encourage, and mentors and mentees can differ in the types and amounts of encouragement they like, you can:

- compliment your mentoring partners on accomplishments and actions;
- point out positive traits (such as perseverance and integrity) in addition to their performance and accomplishments;
- praise them privately, one-on-one;

- commend them in front of other people (being sensitive to any cultural and style preferences regarding public praise);
- express thanks and appreciation;
- write encouraging memos or e-mail and leave complimentary voice mail; and
- let them know how you use any help they give you.

Identifying Goals and Current Reality - As a mentor, be clear on and talk to your mentees about their visions, dreams, and goals. You should know your tentative goals, strengths, what development you need, and the *specific* help you'd like. Discuss these with your mentors.

- know what's important to you, what you value and desire most;
- recognize areas in which you're able to perform well, very concrete examples of behaviors you can perform at the good-to-excellent level;
- identify specific weaknesses or growth areas observed in yourself and ones noted by others;
- set tentative one- to five-year goals to reach in your personal life and career; and
- describe accurately the reality of your abilities and situations.

Effective mentors and mentees are constantly fine-tuning this self-knowledge, incorporating new feedback and observations on a regular basis. Peter M. Senge (1990), in *The Fifth Discipline*, mentions these skills as part of "personal mastery," which he calls a journey, not a destination.

Critical Skills for Mentors

Instructing/Developing Capabilities

- be a learning broker as you assist your mentees in finding resources such as people, books, software, websites, and other information sources;
- teach your mentees new knowledge, skills, and attitudes by explaining, giving effective examples, and asking thought-provoking questions;
- help your mentees gain broader perspectives of their organizations including history, values, culture, and politics;
- demonstrate or model effective behaviors, pointing out what you're trying to do; and
- help them monitor performance and refocus steps as needed.

Inspiring

- do inspiring actions yourself which challenge your mentees to improve;
- help them observe others who are inspiring;
- arrange other inspirational experiences for them;
- challenge them to rise above the mundane and do important things in life; and
- help them recognize inspiring actions they took in the past and ways to excel again.

Some outstanding mentors use language-- stories, metaphors, and powerful phrases -- to inspire their mentees.

Providing Corrective Feedback - letting them know what you perceive and providing some better ways for handling the situations. People are more willing to hear corrective feedback if they've given permission and know in advance it's coming.

- use positive, non-derogatory, businesslike words and tone of voice with mentees when their behaviors or products aren't satisfactory;
- give corrective feedback in private;

- give the feedback as soon as feasible after the performance;
- give specific (as opposed to vague} feedback on behaviors; and
- offer useful suggestions for them to try next time, offering to be a resource.

Managing Risks

- help your mentees recognize the risks involved in actions, including some risks (and mistakes) you've experienced;
- make suggestions to help them avoid major mistakes (business, career, financial, personal, and other) in judgment or action;
- help them learn to prepare well, get wise counsel, then trust their own decisions and actions; and
- if requested in difficult situations, intervene as your mentees' advocate with others.

Opening Doors - *Research has shown that when mentors vouch for mentees in this way, their work is much more likely to be well received.* To open doors, you'll:

- put in a good word to people who could help your mentees reach desired goals;
- personally introduce your mentees to appropriate contacts;
- make certain your mentees' abilities are noticed by others;
- give your mentees assignments or opportunities that enable them to interact with important colleagues, suppliers, or customers; and
- suggest other resources to pursue.

Critical Skills for Mentees

Acquiring Mentors

Becoming a successful mentee isn't a passive experience.

Learning Quickly

- apply the knowledge and skills presented to you, and be ready to tell your mentors how you applied them;
- observe carefully and learn indirectly from the modeled actions of your mentors and others;
- study materials (those given by your mentors and materials you seek out) related to your development areas;
- integrate new learning into your conceptual framework for problem solving; and
- receive feedback nondefensively.

An informal poll of mentors by the author revealed that several were frustrated with mentees who failed to follow through on agreed upon tasks. Some mentors even refused to enter new mentoring partnerships. They concluded that they were working harder on their mentees' lives than the mentees were doing for themselves!

Showing Initiative

As an effective mentee, you:

- know when and when *not* to show initiative;
- ask appropriate questions to clarify and get more information; pursue useful resources on your own;
- take informed risks (stretch beyond your usual comfort level) in order to acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitudes; and
- go beyond what your mentors suggest; that is, take their ideas and show creative or ambitious ways of using them.

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Following Through

- keep all agreements made with your mentors;
- complete agreed-upon tasks on time;
- try out their suggestions and report results;
- explain in advance if you want to change or break an agreement; and
- persist with difficult tasks even when you're discouraged.

Managing the Relationship

- describe the general process of being mentored-how it works and why it's powerful;
- stay up to date with each of your mentors on issues between you, goals to reach, satisfaction with your meeting schedules, etc.;
- analyze the current status of your mentoring partnerships, and determine where to go next with them;
- prepare for the end of your mentoring relationships; and
- leave the formal relationships on amicable terms.

THE ETIQUETTE OF MENTORING

Suggestions for Mentees

Do

- Take time to identify your goals.
- Be considerate of your mentor's time.
- Return phone calls and e-mails promptly, be on time. Let your mentor suggest extra minutes or activities.
- Listen attentively to all (or nearly all) your mentor has to say. Store what seems irrelevant for some future use.
- Be complete yet succinct in your comments and explanations. Ask directly if you're talking too much.
- Seriously consider all the advice you receive.
- Show appreciation for every form of assistance your mentor gives you. Say thanks, praise him/her to and in front of others, write a note, etc.
- Make it easy for your mentor to give you corrective feedback. Ask for it early.
- Assume the relationship will be strictly professional.
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to other
- Keep the doors open to return to your mentor for advice or other help later.
- Keep in touch once you part company.

Don't

- Depend on your mentor to identify your goals for you.
- Assume your mentor has unlimited time for you.
- Tune out when the topic seems irrelevant to your immediate needs.
- Ramble on, ignoring clues that you're talking too long.
- Say "Yes, but "
- Forget to share the outcome of the help your mentor gave.
- Take your mentor for granted or assume he/she doesn't need this reinforcement.
- Immediately defend or explain yourself, or worse, criticize your mentor.
- Intrude into your mentor's personal life or expect to be close friends.
- Talk negatively about your mentor behind his/her back.
- Hang onto your mentor indefinitely.
- Leave on bad terms.

Suggestions for Mentors

Do

- Help your mentee take the initiative in your relationship. Be open to the mentee's ideas, discuss topics, etc. Help him/her learn to manage mentors such as you.
- Respect your mentee's time as much as your own.
- Be explicit about your own needs and limits (e.g., time constraints, style of interacting).
- Always ask if you can make a suggestion or offer criticism.
- Tell your mentee that you don't expect him/her to follow all of your suggestions.
- Expect your mentee to move toward his/her (not your) goals.
- Express appreciation to your mentee for help given you or other steps taken.
- Recognize and work through conflicts in caring ways. Invite discussion of differences with your mentee. Ask a third party to assist when necessary.
- Keep your relationship on a professional basis.
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentee to others.
- Be prepared to end the relationship (at least the formal mentor-mentee aspect) at the end of a year-or sooner if agreed on by both parties.
- Keep the doors open for your mentee to return in the future.

Don't

- Insist on waiting for the mentee to suggest every activity and do all the leading.
- Assume, particularly if she/he is more junior, that your schedule always has top priority.
- **Make** your mentee have to guess or learn by trial and error.
- Automatically give advice or criticism.
- Assume your advice will be followed.
- Expect a clone of yourself.
- Take your mentee for granted or assume she/he doesn't need reinforcement.
- Avoid discussion of touchy subjects or force your solutions in conflicts.
- Move too quickly into friendship, if at all.
- Talk negatively about your mentee behind his/her back.
- Hang onto your mentee indefinitely. End the relationship on bad terms.

Being involved in a mentoring relationship is a *privilege* for both members of the pair, so you should go out of your way to be gracious and thoughtful to each other.

DIALOG PROMPTS

Here are several conversation "prompts" and "deepeners" to help you in your meetings with your mentoring partner.

First Meeting Tool

Directions: *This is a tool for your first meeting with your mentee. (For future meetings, use the **Meeting Tool**) Use this form to plan the meeting. Fill in what you can beforehand. To the meeting, take copies of your **application** and **Personal Vision**. Be ready to review her/his **Goals for Mentoring Partnership**. Discuss a proposed agenda, adjust as needed, and write notes as you proceed through your meeting.*

Background information on each other (Mentee has own form in **The Mentee's Guide**):

Name of Mentee _____

Prefers to be called _____

Best contact address _____

Phone – Cell _____ Home _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Educational Background:

Professional/Work Background:

Other Information:

Our partnership will go until _____

Assistance (knowledge, skills, attitude changes, resources) mentee needs (Go over mentee's **Personal Vision** and **Goals for Mentoring Partnership**; discuss strengths/areas to leverage as well as growth areas to improve.):

- Immediate:

- Longer Term:

First Meeting Tool – Page 2

Mentee's greatest challenges *(What's been the biggest challenge of the month? Is it part of a bigger challenge? What will it take to overcome it? What options does the mentee have?):*

Specific assistance mentor can/would like to provide *(Keep this general at this point.):*

Other resources that may be helpful:

Our limits or constraints in this partnership:

Preferences for communication/feedback *(Discuss how to avoid ambiguities and miscommunication; how to give each other feedback, and how much pressure from mentor is appropriate; bring up pet peeves; and discuss plans for contact, if any, between meetings.):*

Mentor:

Mentee:

How we'll know we've been successful: *(Discuss how you'll measure progress both on the mentee's goals and on the partnership itself.):*

First Meeting Tool – Page 3

(In general) Best times/places to meet:

Dates/times/places for next meetings *(Give priority to mentor's convenience; note date, time and location.):*

Action items to be completed before next meeting:

- Mentee

- Mentor (if any)

Mentoring Agreement

Directions: *This form is designed to assist you in establishing and defining the parameters of your mentoring relationship. Discuss the topics with each other and write a tentative agreement. Remember, the two of you can update and modify your agreement throughout your partnership.*

This agreement will cover the period from: _____ to _____

Mentee: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Mentor: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Expectations we have of each other:

How often, when, and where we'll meet:

Beyond face-to-face meetings, other ways we'll communicate with each other and how often:

Any limits or constraints that will affect our interaction (time constraints, travel, etc.) and how we'll handle these:

Mentoring Agreement, page 2

How does the mentee prefer to receive positive and corrective feedback from the mentor (direct and to the point, "sandwich approach," privately, etc.):

Our agreement for handling confidentiality (everything discussed between us is considered confidential or only things that are specified during our discussions):

Role of the mentee's immediate manager in our mentoring relationship:

Challenges we're likely to face and what we can do to prevent or manage these:

Other agreements, if any:

This mentoring agreement sets forth how we'll work together. We agree to commit ourselves to the mentoring initiative for the specified period and to make a good faith effort to resolve any issues that may arise between us during the term of this agreement.

Mentor Signature & Date

Mentee Signature & Date

Development Projects

Encourage your mentee to use the blank (or a modified form) to identify *development objectives*, *measures*, *development activities* (including a project, if appropriate), *timeline*, and *resources/support* on which you'll focus during your partnership.

SAMPLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mentee: _____		Mentor: _____		Date: _____
GOAL: <i>by the end of 8 months, become a more effective project manager as judged by my manager, team, and objective assessment.</i>				
Development Objectives	Measures	Development Activities	Timeline	Resources/ Support
1. Choose project management knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop.	• Prepared list of target areas.	• Interview project management experts • Summarize ideal competencies of project manager. • Assess my current competence • Choose 1 strength to leverage and 2 development areas.	• All by end of month 1	• Manager, mentor, other experts plus contact info • Project management assessment tool • Manager
2. Build competence.	• I score 50% higher on the competency assessment tool • Manager says I'm improving	• Subscribe to journal, search web • Shadow mentor and at least one other person • Take two classes • Study past project reports	• Month 1 • Month 2 • Month 2 & 3 • Throughout the year	• Mentor • Funding for classes • Self-study material
3. Successfully manage a challenging project	• Project is completed on time and within budget. • I'm more confident managing a project (from 5 to 9 on a 10-point scale) • Team members give me high approval rating	• Project tasks themselves • Meetings with managers & team • Self-study • Mentor observes me lead a team meeting • Re-take assessment tool	• M 3-8 • Month 4-7 • Months 8	• Mentor • Study materials • Post version of assignment

STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING MENTORING PARTNERSHIPS

Ideas for Building Trust

- Show your commitment to the person.
- Reveal personal information including mistakes you've made.
- Share your feelings.
- Remember what this person said to you before.
- Refrain from criticizing others.
- Do what you promise to do
- Give honest feedback
- Be clear on what you do and don't want communicated to others
- Refrain from any actions that are unethical immoral or illegal (or could look that way)

Deepen Your Conversations

Always respect your mentee's limits on sharing such information.

Showing Appreciation to Your Mentee

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ Mentees seldom ask for thanks or appreciation-or even consciously expect them. | ✓ Give a small gift that would mean something special to him/her. |
| ✓ Be considerate of your mentee's time. Although your schedule usually takes priority, do your best not to cancel or be late for meetings. | ✓ Smile and laugh when you're together. Comment positively on his/her sense of humor. |
| ✓ Write a letter spelling out ways you see your mentee developing and succeeding. | ✓ Ask for and carefully consider his/her advice, viewpoints, and reactions. |
| ✓ Compliment him/her on accomplishments as well as character traits (such as creativity and perseverance). | ✓ Follow-up on advice and suggestions that your mentee provides. Let him/her know precisely how it was applied and the outcome. |
| ✓ Leave a voicemail or send an e-mail that expresses how much you enjoyed a conversation or meeting. Try to mention something specific that had an impact on you. | ✓ Mention what you're gaining from this experience. Help her/him know it's an enjoyable two-way street. |
| | ✓ Invite her/him to a special event. |

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Lack of time or energy for desired personal contact between partners.

Troubleshooting. There's no solution for this ongoing challenge. If you or your mentee really are too busy for a partnership, postpone involvement until later.

Difficulty choosing mentee development goals and deciding on needed help

Troubleshooting. Be kind yet firm as you push goal setting. Encourage work on a Personal Vision. Establish yourself as a learning broker who can help with the big picture rather than as a content instructor or even a coach.

Overdependence on partner - Effective, dedicated mentors can easily get burned out by working harder on the mentees' lives than the mentees are working!

Troubleshooting. Share your reactions and decision-making and prepare to end the formal part of your relationship.

Conflict between mentees and their immediate managers

Troubleshooting. Think strategically about the role of your mentee's manager in your relationship.

Obvious differences between partners

Troubleshooting. While some partnerships clearly won't work, most can produce good results despite or even because of differences.

PREPARING FOR CLOSE

Best Practices of Other Mentors

1. Review mentee's goals and progress.
2. Decide on the next form of your relationship: Continue the formal partnership, change to a business friendship, or say thanks and goodbye.
3. Mark the close

OTHER MENTORING OPTIONS

Enhanced Informal Mentoring - Mentors and mentees choose each other and aren't matched or monitored in a formal program.

Best Practices Used in Enhanced Informal Mentoring

- Own your development, and continually look for people who can help you.
- Recognize people who could use your help to achieve their goals and thrive in their lives.
- Without necessarily calling yourself a mentor or mentee, start using mentoring skills and processes with everyone you encounter.
- Read materials on mentoring and suggest that your organization make mentoring resources available in the library or learning center.
- Learn the new language and structure of mentoring

Distance Mentoring - mentoring, remote mentoring, tele-mentoring, long-distance mentoring

Electronic tools - e-mail, on-line meeting software/ platforms, videoconferencing, phones, voice mail, faxes, and mail.

Why Use It? Sometimes the most effective mentor or mentee (in terms of skills, knowledge, attitudes, experiences, or contacts) is located elsewhere. Mentor location is less important than these other factors.

- Many partners travel extensively.
- The uniqueness of it lends focus
- Many shy participants find it easier to communicate
- New learning occurs

Best Practices in Distance Mentoring

- Formalize the Telephone and make use of voice mail. Use E-mail.
- Pay attention to confidentiality
- Discuss response time expectations
- Send short, newsy e-mails
- Always put your contact information below your name

Other tips for distance mentoring

You could experiment with on-line software, such as net meeting for your meetings

Mentoring Groups - mentoring groups, circles, or rings.

Reverse Mentoring - The "reverse mentor" has knowledge or skills that the "reverse mentee" needs.

Cross-Difference Mentoring

While mentors and mentees always differ in some ways, when the differences seem particularly large, we give it this name.

On the other hand, you could see cross difference mentoring as an **exciting chance to experience and learn something new.**

Tips for Telephone Meetings

- Send an agenda in advance. Mentees can take the lead in preparing when sending these in advance.
- Note each other's time zones and choose times that are most convenient for the mentor.
- Turn off computers; remove other distractions.
- Call (or be ready to receive the call) exactly on time.
- Have the agenda points and questions in front of you when you begin the meeting.
- Take notes and date them. Keep them in a folder so they stay together.

CHECKLIST: Building Relationship/Negotiating Agreement



Directions: Read through the Checklist, add additional items (if appropriate), and check each item as you complete it.



1.	Review the materials you prepared (program application, My Mentoring Experiences, Personal Vision, Goals for Mentoring Partnership) so you can be ready to discuss each with your mentor.
2.	Meet with your mentor (at the training event or by phone or in person) at _____ _____ (time, date, location).
3.	Using the First Meeting Tool , exchange personal information and why you're participating in the program.
4.	Take time to listen and start building rapport. Use Dialog Prompts . Find out some of your mentor's background, interests, and reasons for agreeing to be a mentor.
5.	Show your mentor your copies of My Mentoring Experiences, Personal Vision, tentative Goals for Mentoring Partnership . Discuss these, and make modifications in goals if needed.
6.	Complete the Mentoring Agreement with your mentor. If requested, give a copy to the coordinator.
7.	Complete the rest of the First Meeting Tool .
8.	Schedule two or more future meetings with your mentor. These can be in person or by phone.
9.	Clarify what you agree to do before the next meeting.
10.	Other tasks: <i>(List and check off)</i>

CHECKLIST: Ending the Formal Partnership



Directions: Complete these tasks when you're ready to end your formal relationship. Glance through the Checklist, add items, and check each as you complete it.

✓	1.	About a month before you're ready to end your formal partnership, reflect on what you've accomplished.
	2.	Complete evaluation activities.
	2a.	Complete the Final Review and give to the coordinator.
	2b.	Complete the Mentoring Program Evaluation and give to the coordinator.
	2c.	Meet in person or by phone with your mentor to discuss the status of your development activities and goals, your partnership, and any "unfinished business."
	3.	Follow-up your closure meeting with a note of thanks.
	4.	Express appreciation to the coordinator, team, and your manager.
	5.	Attend program final event, if offered.
	6.	As appropriate, touch base with your mentor in the future.
	7.	If appropriate, seek another mentoring partnership, either as a mentee or as a mentor.
	8.	Other Tasks: <i>(List and check off.)</i>