



Principles of Mentoring- Mentees

Mentoring is an interactive learning and educational experience, provided to assist in personal and career development.

Below are some principles that may be helpful before starting a mentoring relationship.

Mentees who participate in the programme understand that mentors are busy professionals volunteering their time and experience. They understand that the mentor's role is to inspire and guide, and not necessarily to help organise work or offer employment.

1. **Complete your profile.** Mentors have a limited amount of resources available to them and they may have to decide which of several mentee applicants to choose from first. Give yourself the best chance of selection by having a complete profile including your interests, aspirations and what you studied. Putting a face to a name always helps, so upload a photo!
2. **Initiate.** In order to sustain the mentoring relationship, take the initiative to ask your mentor a question, let them know your educational and professional interests and objectives, and ask about their own experiences. The mentor has already made clear what services they are happy to offer so don't be afraid to ask for one. Please do not ask for one that they have not offered!
3. **Honour your commitment.** Your mentor probably has a very demanding job. They have volunteered to take on the added responsibility of mentoring. Please be appreciative of your mentor's time and investment; respond in a timely manner to your mentor's questions and comments. If you don't have the time to respond at length, send a short message letting your mentor know you will be in contact when you have the opportunity.
4. **Expect support, not miracles.** You can expect a certain level of support and advice from a mentor, but he or she can't solve your problems for you. Perhaps the most valuable quality a mentor can offer is an objective point of view. A mentor can put the situation in perspective, offer feedback, serve as a sounding board, and identify others who could potentially help. They may suggest activities you can engage in or small ways you can position your work to meet your goals as well as resources that may be helpful to you.
5. **Communicate clearly.** Initiate contact with your mentor if you have questions or would like to discuss something. Identify your needs and communicate them as clearly as possible to your mentor. It may be helpful to put some focused energy into organising your thoughts and concerns before talking to your mentor, so that the time is spent wisely.
6. **Be receptive.** Be willing to learn new things, obtain another perspective, and be responsive to suggestions and constructive criticism.
7. **Follow through.** When you decide to act on your mentor's suggestions, act in a timely manner and then report back to him/her.
8. **Remember that you own your development.** It's up to you to identify objectives as well as keep the relationship focused and moving forward. Do come to meetings prepared.
9. **Ask for specific advice.** On your skill set, ideas, plans, and goals. The more specific you are, the easier it will be for your mentor to respond.
10. **Remember to say thank you!** Once you have achieved everything you wish to achieve from a particular mentoring relationship please take the time to thank the mentor and then close the relationship via the mentoring system so that the mentor is available for someone else.