



guide

Mentoring is a professional activity, a trusted relationship, a meaningful commitment. The concept of mentoring faculty and administrators is relatively new to higher education and rare in information technology circles, where staff professional development often takes the form of technical manuals and certifications. It is precisely this type of support organization, however, that needs a strong foundation of mentoring to build and retain a healthy workforce that can react quickly to change and can develop, adapt, and regenerate itself over time.

Preparation

Negotiating

Enabling Growth

Coming to Closure

4 Phases of Mentoring Relationships

Successful mentoring relationships go through four phases: preparation, negotiating, enabling growth, and closure. These sequential phases build on each other and vary in length.

In each phase, there are specific steps and strategies that lead to mentoring excellence. This guide will provide some strategies for success and checklists to help guide your progress in each phase of your mentoring relationship. Use the guide for notes, gauging progress and to assist with accountability.

Preparation Checklist

Review the following items in preparation for the relationship:

- I have a sincere interest in helping this person or being helped by this person.
- We have mutual interest and compatibility.
- I am clear about my role.
- I can commit adequate time for the mentoring relationship.
- I am willing to use my network of contacts to help in the progress.
- I have access to opportunities and resources to support learning.
- I am committed to developing my own mentoring skills.

Many Mentors

Over the course of your life's journey, you will have many mentors, each serving a purpose to move you forward in your career or other ambitions.



Preparation

Strategies for Preparing the Relationship

- Initiate contact with your mentee.
- Exchange background information before you talk for the first time.
- Take time to get to know each other.
- Share past mentoring experiences and those who influenced us.
- Talk about the learning and development goals.
- Determine the personal expectations of the relationship.
- What do you need from your mentor?
- Define the "deliverables" and desired outcomes.
- Candidly share personal assumptions and limitations.
- Discuss personal and learning styles.
- Participate in Strengthsfinder2.0 survey. (approximately \$13.00 for book)

Based on interviews with three senior administrators at the University of South Carolina, co-mentors William Hogue and Ernest Pringle³ developed a "work in progress" set of Mentor Guiding Principles:

- **Strive for mutual benefits.** The relationship should be defined from the beginning as mutually beneficial. Each participant has committed to the relationship by choice. Each should openly share his or her goals for the relationship and work collaboratively to help achieve them.
- **Agree on confidentiality.** Maintaining an environment of confidentiality is a critical component in building trust between the participants. Without a mutually understood ability to speak freely as the situation warrants, the relationship is unlikely to reach its full potential.
- **Commit to honesty.** The participants should be willing to candidly share what they expect to gain from the relationship and their vision for getting there. They should be prepared to offer frank feedback as appropriate, even if the feedback is critical.
- **Listen and learn.** Mutual benefit and honesty can only be achieved when both members feel their viewpoints are heard and respected. Mentors, especially, need to remember that the relationship is not primarily about them. Co-mentors should not be intimidated or made to feel their views are not valued.
- **Build a working partnership.** Consider structuring a working partnership that includes project consultation or active collaborations rooted in the common ground of shared professional goals. These collaborations can lead to discoveries about each participant's preferred working style, daily obligations, and professional aspirations.
- **Lead by example.** Actions create the most lasting impression.
- **Be flexible.** It might help for a mentoring relationship to have defined goals, but the process may be as important—or more so—than the goals.

Interview Questions

Take time to discuss the following in the beginning of the mentoring relationship. As you are talking, jot down any ideas that come up regarding short and long term goals. This will help in determining the goals for the mentoring relationship.

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1. What are you looking forward to in this mentoring relationship?
2. What do you see are your strengths?
3. What do you perceive are areas for improvement?
4. What areas would you like to see worked on in this mentoring relationship?
5. Are you able to prioritize those things to work on so that areas most important to you are addressed early in the relationship?
6. Are you familiar with your learning style? What are the best ways for you to learn new information? Are you comfortable with seeking our experiences that may be out of your current comfort zone in order to build confidence in areas of improvement? How do you feel about this?
7. Tell me about your current job and responsibilities.
8. What are the most challenging things about your job?
9. What are the most exciting things about your job?
10. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years?
11. What motivates you? What stresses you?
12. How do you relax?
13. What else do you want to tell me?

Goal Notes:

Mentoring Goals (S.M.A.R.T.)



Specific

State the goal in simple, but specific terms.

Measurable

How will we measure progress?

Attainable

The goals need to be appropriate and achievable.

Realistic/Relevant

The goals need to be realistic, often we reach too far when setting goals. It is better to do things in smaller steps than to be disappointed when expectations are not realistic.

Timely

What is the time frame of the goal's success? What are the check points?

Assign a time, even if only a guess, to each goal to check progress.

.....

Goals to work on in mentoring partnership:

1.

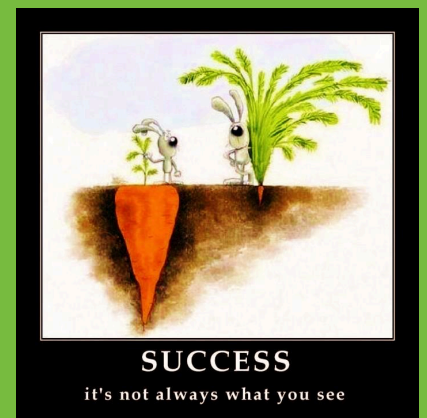
2.

3.

Agreement

As a mentor pair, negotiate the following:

1. How much time can be committed to the relationship on a regular basis? Be realistic.
2. Write down goals and analyze them to meet the SMART criteria.
3. Agree on a discussion format. (e.g. Formal agendas, topic-driven agendas, check-in conversations, etc.)
4. Use a journal to help stay focused, monitor progress and capture follow-up items.
5. Establish any ground rules. (e.g. Confidentiality, boundaries and "hot topics")
6. Be flexible! Expectations and plans will change as your relationship progresses.
7. Evaluate progress, milestones, goals, regularly.
8. Learning styles are important, identify and discuss successful learning.
9. Articulate criteria for success. What does success "look" like?



Strategies

- ★ Regularly check in
- ★ Actively listen/advise
- ★ Ask for and give feedback so that the learning experience is satisfactory and the pace is comfortable.
- ★ Provide timely support, create appropriate challenges to facilitate learning.
- ★ Solicit feedback from other sources.
- ★ Use the time together productively.
- ★ Evaluate goals and deadlines throughout the process.
- ★ Give constructive criticism and accept and reflect on it.
- ★ Advise on what you know, don't be afraid to admit what you don't. Find other resources if you can't provide guidance.
- ★ Don't shy away from difficult conversations. It is a safe place to talk.
- ★ Celebrate each small success!

Tips

- Identify the real issue.
- Define how you are contributing to the problem.
- Challenge yourself to think in new ways.

Investigative Questions

- Solicit facts, objective data
- Tell me what you have accomplished so far.
- What happened?

Discovery Questions

- What did you learn from this?
- If you had it to do again, what would you do?
- What worked best?
- What advice would you give someone else just starting the same project?
- What concerns you?
- What are your ideas?
- What would happen if you did _____?
- What scares you about this?
- Tell me three things that you would consider in making a decision on that.
- What are you most comfortable with?
- What conclusions can you draw from the experience?
- What is your reasoning?
- What did he/she do to help the most?
- Give me two alternative ways of thinking about this.
- If he/she says this, what could you say back?
- What else could you have done?
- What is most important to you?

Empowering Questions

- What outcome are you looking for?
- What will you do first?
- What must you do to make that happen?
- How will you begin?
- How will you know when you have it?
- Who else needs to know this?
- What resources do you have/need?
- What is the risk of doing this? Not doing it?
- How might you get in your own way?

Enabling
Growth

ENCOURAGE
&
EMPOWER

Follow Up Tasks/Ideas

Due Date

Who?



Journal Date

/ /

Discussion

Notes:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

3-2-1

- Write down 3 things you learned today.
- Write down 2 actions or changes you will make.
- Write down 1 thing you will never forget.

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The End is the Beginning...

Consider what you want your mentoring relationship to look like after the formal relationship concludes.

1. Be sensitive to when the relationship should end.
2. Find a personal way to express your feelings about the experience.
3. Give and receive thanks.
4. Even if you are disappointed in the outcome, identify and express the positive benefits you gained as a result of being in the mentoring relationship.
5. Take time to consider what you learned and identify what you will do differently in another mentoring relationship.
6. Celebrate!

Often you have gained a life-long professional colleague whom you can continue to share experiences and seek advice.

Even though you have met goals and had personal growth through the mentoring experience, the formality may end, but a new type of relationship begins....

Once the mentoring relationship has been established and fostered, it is important to understand the parameters for when the association should change or end. Ending a mentoring relationship does not mean it has failed. Often, it simply means that the initial goals of the mentorship have been attained, and it is time to "graduate" and move on.

When ending a mentoring relationship, remember to thank a mentor for the knowledge and time provided. In the ensuing years, communicate your career progression. A mentoring relationship often evolves into a long-term professional friendship.

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The Importance of Mentors, Chapter 5
The Ohio State University

As part of the SIGUCCS mentoring program, you will be asked to provide continued feedback on your progress and share ideas for improving the program. Your participation and contribution is very important to the success of this program. Thank you for your time and commitment to successful professional development.

The Mentor Advisory Team

Advisory Team

The SIGUCCS advisory team is available for you to lean on as you need assistance or run into obstacles in your mentoring relationship. Please note your assigned team member and their contact information.

Brian Allen

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SUCCESS!

- Spend sufficient time getting to know your mentoring partner.
- Meet on a regular basis; always have a date scheduled on the calendar.
- Keep focused on goals as well as the day-to-day challenges.
- Follow through on your commitments; hold each partner accountable for tasks and commitments.
- Be open to learning and new approaches. There isn't always just one way of doing something!
- Periodically reflect on what each partner is learning.
- The relationship is about growth and development. There has to be commitment to reach goals.
- Provide regular feedback; seek and welcome feedback from other sources.
- This is a learning experience for mentors as well.
- Use your time well.
- Expect to make mid-course corrections.
- Check in with your advisory team as necessary. Provide feedback about your successes and challenges to share with others.