



Protégé Toolkit

Identify what you are interested in exploring or learning through mentoring, and learn what skills can help you get the most from a mentoring relationship. Once you have a mentor, set up a Partnership Agreement.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
HUMAN RESOURCES

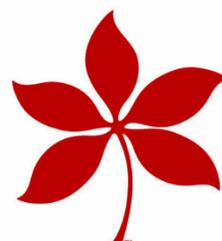


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Introduction

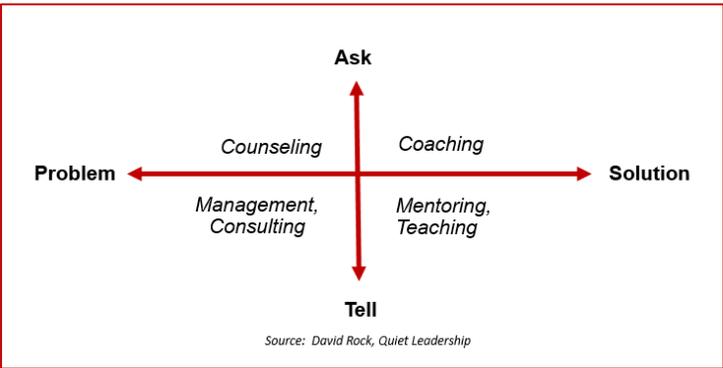
This Protégé Toolkit provides a roadmap to understand your goals for mentoring and establish a fruitful relationship. You will find resources, tips and tools to use throughout your mentoring experience. The toolkit is organized into three sections:



- 1. REFLECT: Understand Your Role**
Using questions and tools reflect on your career and why you are seeking a mentor at this time. Think about who you will approach as a potential mentor and how. Learn to make the most of this valuable relationship by having a mentoring mindset and listening actively.
- 2. BEGIN: Establish the Relationship**
Lay a solid foundation with your mentor by developing a Partnership Agreement. To continue a strong and productive relationship, evaluate it on a regular basis.
- 3. END: Navigate the Transition**
Reflect on your growth and provide feedback to your mentor about his/her contribution and the value of your relationship.

Mentoring versus Coaching

Comparing mentoring and coaching can be helpful since both approaches can help individuals accelerate their development and find solutions. Here are some key distinctions.



Coaching

Coaching emphasizes supporting someone through their own intentional change and discovery. The coach focuses on eliciting client-generated solutions and strategies (versus “telling” or “advising”). Professional coaching focuses on setting goals, creating outcomes and managing personal change.

Mentoring

A mentor is an expert who provides wisdom and guidance based on his or her own experience. Like coaching, mentoring focuses on solutions rather than problems. There is more “telling” in mentoring than in coaching, since the mentor serves as an advisor and guide. Mentoring may include advising, counseling and coaching.

For a more detailed explanation of how coaching differs from mentoring, therapy, consulting, training or athletic development, refer to this page at the International Coach Federation website:

<http://www.coachfederation.org/need/landing.cfm?ItemNumber=978&navItemNumber=567>

REFLECT: Understand Your Goals and Your Role

Use these resources to articulate where you are in your career and professional development, what you would like to explore or learn through mentoring, and other expectations. The answers can guide you in the selection of a mentor and help both of you make the most of the mentoring relationship.

Mentoring Self-Assessment

Thoughtfully consider the following questions about your career progress and goals.

Where am I in my career? Why am I seeking a mentor at this time?
1. What are my professional goals – short-term and long-term?
2. What are my personal goals – short-term and long-term – particularly those that directly impact professional goals?
3. In what ways am I satisfied with my progress in my professional and personal goals at this point?
4. In what ways am I dissatisfied with my progress in my professional goals? What skills or competencies do I need to develop?
5. Am I facing a particular change or challenge where a mentor could help? What is it?

<p>6. What groups/networks am I already involved in that help me professionally and personally that I can continue to leverage?</p>
<p>7. What groups might I join or what people might I get to know for professional or personal development in the areas most important to me?</p>
<p>8. What role(s) do I see my mentor playing (guide, trusted counselor, advocate, friend, sympathetic ear, resource for information or to develop a new skill, other)? Which role(s) are most important to me?</p>
<p>9. What kinds of activities would I like to engage in with my mentor?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Go to format mentoring eventsb. Meet informally over coffee, lunch or dinnerc. Go to educational events (lectures, seminars, professional meetings, etc.)d. Participate in structured activitiese. Engage in non-professional activities (hobbies, etc.)f. Other:
<p>10. What kinds of things would I consider off-limits in our mentoring relationship?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Meeting in restaurantsb. Meeting in non-public placesc. Sharing private aspects of our livesd. Other:
<p>11. How much time can I spend with my mentor(s) each week/month?</p>

Prioritize Your Mentoring Goals

Consider these common mentoring goals and add others you identified in your self-assessment. Which ones are most important at this time in your life and career? Rate your highest priority 1, your second highest 2, and so on. Limit yourself to no more than five priorities.

What am I hoping to accomplish in my mentoring relationship? Select those that apply.

- Help in establishing professional relationships
- Help in establishing professional relationships
- Help in establishing social relationships
- Advice about navigating OSU/OSUWMC politics or work environment
- Advice on work-life issues
- Support or a safe sounding board
- Help finding resources at OSU/OSUWMC
- How to develop a specific competency: _____
- Accountability for progressing on _____
- Advice about service – best committees on which to serve, how to balance responsibilities
- Institutional sponsorship – endorsement for me or my successes, exposure to people and opportunities

Faculty:

- Guidance for conducting research and scholarship
- Guidance about the promotion and tenure process
- Guidance about scholarly publications
- Guidance about teaching
- Advocacy – active support and “running interference” for me (i.e., more lab space, release time, fewer service commitments, etc.)
- Other: _____
- Other: _____



Common Mentoring Scenarios

Here are examples of common mentoring scenarios and how the protégé might express the mentoring need. Do you see yourself in any of these?

Common Mentoring Scenarios
<p>New to job, new to OSU, new to role, learning to navigate, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I'm new and would like to have someone to go to with questions or concerns. I'm still figuring out how things work around here.• I'm looking for help learning to navigate around here. How are decisions made? How do all these committees work and how do they relate? When do I have to take something to the senior management council? When do I make a decision and when is it made by a committee?• I'm new to being a manager/senior manager/director. I would like to have someone who "knows the ropes" who can be a sounding board and provide insight.
<p>Interpersonal concerns or new territory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I'm having trouble collaborating with someone. I thought you might have some suggestions. I want to understand more about the dynamics going on.• I'm speaking up at meetings but I feel like I'm not being heard. I'm looking for suggestions and some insight into what's going on.• I have some challenging conversations coming up. I'm not sure how to approach them. Could we talk about it confidentially?
<p>Build a skill or background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I would like to further develop my ____ skills. Could we talk about my goals and see if you perhaps you could mentor me short-term, very informally?• I'm not used to using [tool, program, etc.] the way my group uses it. Could you please give me some pointers?
<p>Expand your network (not necessarily a mentoring request but fostering more relationships)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I'm trying to get to know people in different functions/parts of the university. [Share something about the person or her work that interested you.] Could we meet for lunch or coffee?• I really enjoyed your presentation. I have some questions about... I would like to learn more about... Could we get together?
<p>Career exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I'm feeling stagnant in my career. I'm working with my manager and want to have a mentor too to help me refine a new direction. (Note: Reflect on your career using the exercises in the Protégé Toolkit.)• I'm intrigued by what you do and would like to find out more about your area. Maybe there is a project I could help with.
<p>Reverse mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part of the audience for my project is millennials. Could I please share it with you to see if it resonates or if I need to make some changes?

Finding the Mentor(s) or Mentoring You Need

You may have a mentor assigned to you through a formal mentoring program or by your manager, or you may be searching for an informal mentor. Use the following table or mind map to identify potential mentors who may meet the criteria you identified in your self-assessment.

Mentors Who Match Your Criteria

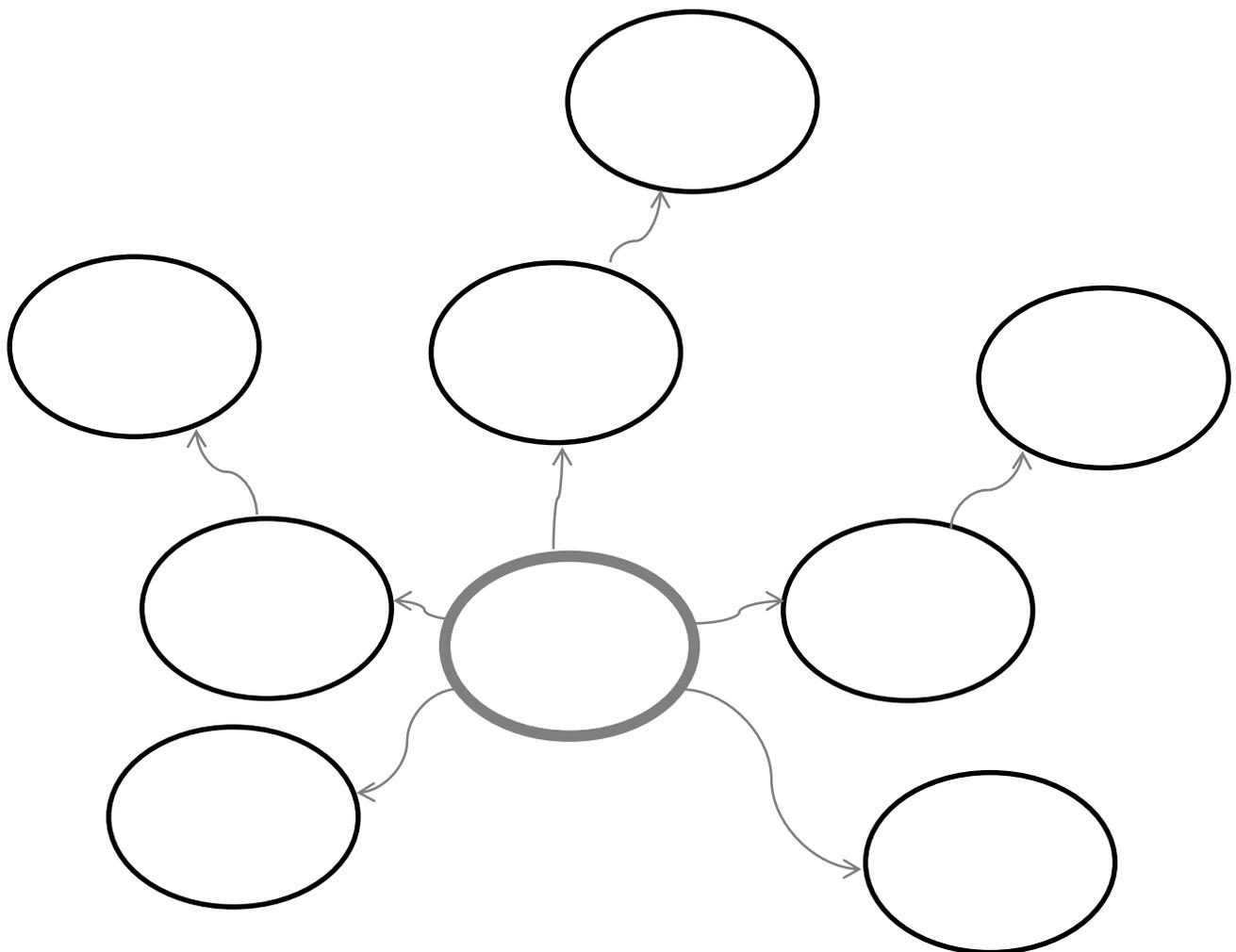
Identify five important criteria for a mentor using your responses to the self-assessment questions earlier. List your criteria in the top row and the names of potential mentors in the left-hand cells. Considering your goals, who would be the best match(es)?

	Criterion 1:	Criterion 2:	Criterion 3:	Criterion 4:	Criterion 5:
Potential Mentor 1:					
Potential Mentor 2:					
Potential Mentor 3:					
Potential Mentor 4:					

Developing a Mentoring Network through Mind Mapping

No one person can (or should) meet all your mentoring needs. Mind mapping will help you explore possibilities for a network of mentors. Rather than focusing just on finding a mentor, this mind map helps you find the mentoring you need, which makes better sense. Mentors provide many different functions, and different people provide different kinds of support and information. A mind map encourages many ideas, with one idea leading to other ideas and no right or wrong answers. At this point, you are expansively discovering options – all that comes to your mind and perhaps ones that others suggest. See the sample on the next page for ideas. Note that it includes self-study and experiences as well as potential mentors.

To create your mind map, enter your name in the **middle oval** (bold gray outline) below. Enter your highest priority mentoring needs in the ovals that extend from the middle one. Then brainstorm who might fulfill the need or how you might go about identifying someone to fulfill the need. Add more ovals and arrows as needed.



Considerations for Developing Your Mentoring Network

Adapted from W.C. Crone, 2010.

To help with your mind-map brainstorm, consider the following questions and suggestions:

- Have you asked members of your department to introduce you to others?
- What advice might you receive from your co-workers about a specific contact you want to make?
- Are there events or committees where you could get to know more people (charity event, potluck, health-related activity, book club, etc.)? This can help you start “crossing paths” with more people who could be formal or informal mentors or who work in an area of interest.
- Organizations
 - What university or professional organizations might you join?
 - What mentoring activities are sponsored by one of your professional organizations or a conference/meeting you regularly attend?
- Lectures or seminars
 - Could attending a lecture series help you expand your network? For instance, you could ask the speaker a question afterward or later, or say how much you enjoyed the topic. If the series has somewhat regular attendance, you may get to know some “regulars.”
 - Examples: Matinees That Matter, Leadership Academy Express
- Networking at conferences
 - Consider reaching out to someone before the start of the conference to set up a brief meeting at the conference.
 - Have you tried connecting with a speaker after a conference?
- How are you informing people in your field about your work, research, or professional interests? Consider:
 - Inviting someone to give a seminar or presentation in your department
 - Organizing the department seminar for a semester or year
 - Making sure your desire to share your work with others (internally or at other institutions) is known by your leader
 - Giving talks at meetings or conferences
 - Serving on review panels or relevant committees
- How can you get to know people in your field locally, regionally, nationally and internationally? Could you comment on or follow their blogs?
- How can you use the internet or social media to meet people and expand your network?

Passive Mentoring

As you consider who is or could be in your network and a source of mentoring, also consider the “passive mentors” in your life. An active mentor knows the protégé and actively builds the relationship; a passive mentor is not aware they serve as a mentor to someone. We all have passive mentors – people we admire whose actions or style influence us from a distance. They could be a business, political or spiritual leader; a humanitarian; a talk show host or someone in any walk of life.

Passive mentors are a source of inspiration, wisdom or insight through their example or words. Consciously recognizing who serves as a passive mentor for you can help you learn more intentionally from that person and make keener observations about their presence or actions.

My Passive Mentors	How They Influence Me

Contacting Potential Formal or Informal Mentors

Now that you have reflected on *how* you want to develop yourself and your career and *who* may be able to assist you, how can you begin to build these relationships? Your approach depends on your sense of the environment and the person.

- **Consider your contact method**

Send an email, call or approach them in person? Invite them to coffee or lunch? Request an information interview?

- **Consider your approach**

Keep in mind you are first trying to build a relationship. It may evolve into an informal or formal mentoring relationship, or you may simply be adding a new person to your network or finding out some things you want to know. Those outcomes are valuable, too!

Practice putting into words what your development interest is and why you are reaching out. What would you like to learn from that individual? To help frame your request, refer to your Mentoring Self-Assessment, the Common Mentoring Scenarios and the following suggestion.

“I would like to ____ (advance to the next step in my career, find out more about your work/organization since I’m considering a career change, learn how to better navigate the politics here, figure out how to handle a challenging person/conversation, etc.).”

When you meet, let the conversation flow naturally versus being scripted. Have an idea of what you want to talk about, though, so you don’t waste anyone’s time.

Some people find this approach useful in expanding their network and seeing if a mentoring relationship evolves:

1. Introduce yourself; make the first contact – always on a professional subject. Go up after a meeting. Write an email or letter to someone you admire or an expert, asking an important question. Comment thoughtfully on his or her work or a

recent achievement or presentation. Send your conference or meeting presentation draft and ask for comment.

2. Reach out again, respectfully and intelligently.
3. Begin to ask for help in a particular area, or ask about what you are doing well and where you can do better.

- **Assess interest**

How do you judge the other person's sincere interest in being in your network or being your mentor? Unless you are matched as mentoring partners by someone else, build your relationship with your new contact to give you both time to see if a more formal mentoring relationship seems right.

- **Set frequency of meetings**

Do you want to ask to meet with a potential mentor weekly, monthly or when a specific need arises? Or do you want to ask the other person to suggest how often they think they would have time to talk with you? The Partnership Agreement in this toolkit includes valuable discussion points for setting up a mentoring relationship including frequency of meetings and goals.

Planning Next Steps

Create a plan for reaching out to one or more people. Who will you contact and how? When will you do this? What will you say? What will be the purpose of your first meeting?

Who	Contact Method	By When	Talking Points / Purpose

Skills and Tips for Being a Successful Protégé

Enjoy these tips for getting a great start with your mentor. Later in this toolkit you will find tips for evaluating your relationship once it is underway and resolving differences that may surface.

Have a Mentoring Mindset

Adapted from L. Searby, “Do You Have a Mentoring Mindset?” and Dr. Phil Binkley on behalf of the Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS) Mentorship Working Group, The Ohio State University

Having a mentoring mindset helps you realize the maximum benefits from your mentoring relationship.

1. **Take initiative.** Initiate contact with your mentors to set up meetings. Come to the meetings with questions and/or conversation starters.
2. **Be a learner.** Exhibit curiosity and ask probing questions. Keep a continual “I want to know” learning orientation.
3. **Be open and honest.** Being open involves seeking feedback and accepting it graciously. It also involves being willing to ask for help, being honest about career goals and progress towards career benchmarks, and expressing concern or dissatisfaction in the relationship.
4. **Be knowledgeable.** Share what you know with your mentor; talk about what you’re reading and learning.
5. **Be bifocal.** A bifocal perspective allows you to see the big picture of your career and to prioritize short-term goals to reach the vision.
6. **Communicate.** You may meet formally once a month, but a short email or quick message to touch base with your mentor between meetings will be appreciated. Active listening in the mentoring sessions is also part of being a good communicator.
7. **Contribute ideas, goals and career plans.** Although the mentor serves as an important guide and counselor for career development, you as the protégé must share your own ideas for career growth. This is an important step in establishing career independence.
8. **Demonstrate relational savvy.** Relational savvy is the ability to build relationships with others. Be sensitive to others in social situations and act with confidence, but not arrogance.
9. **Be reflective.** Be transparent and share your private reflections aloud with your mentor. Humbly admit your mistakes and learn from them.

10. **Be ethical.** Trust is earned through being honest, keeping confidences and doing what you say you will do. Make a valid effort to achieve the steps/milestones suggested by the mentor and that you've agreed upon. If this isn't possible, identify the barriers and propose solutions.
11. **Respect your mentor's time.** Just as your mentor must be able to devote the time to the relationship, you must respect this commitment in both requesting meetings and during meetings. Ensure they are efficient by targeting specific issues and preparing in advance.
12. **Be personable.** Keep a positive outlook and show appreciation to your mentor through your words and tokens of gratitude.
13. **Be reciprocal.** As a protégé, the conversations you have with your mentor will likely revolve around your interests, goals and ambitions. The relationship can also be reciprocal in nature, by you providing information, resources, and/or expertise that might be helpful to your mentor as well. Often the best mentoring relationships involve a "give and take" of information for both partners as the relationship evolves over time.

Hone Your Listening Skills

Adapted from The University of Washington, Mentoring Program Guidelines

All the best questions in the world aren't helpful unless you can actively listen for the information you're given. Here are four points to bear in mind to help you listen:|

- **Listen for central ideas.** Listen for ideas that your mentor repeats and illustrates with examples. Typically, when an idea or concept is core to us, we repeat and expound upon it to ensure the other person understands us.
- **Determine what is of personal value to you in your mentor's conversation.** Once you've identified the central idea, consider how it applies to you. This will help reinforce the learning, since you can now better identify with your mentor's message.
- **Identify and eliminate as many of your "trigger" words as possible.** Almost everyone has certain words that cause an emotional reaction. These emotions can cause us to get off track in our listening and our thinking. To combat these reactions, become familiar with your trigger words. Keep track of your next few conversations to see what words or phrases trigger an emotional reaction in you. Think about why those words trigger those reactions. Once you've identified your trigger words, you can be more conscious when you hear them and will find it easier to maintain attention and concentration.
- **Learn to keep pace – speed of thought versus speed of speech.** Most people can think five to six times faster than another person can talk. Regardless of how interested we are in the speaker, this difference in pace of thought and speech often results in daydreaming or mind-wandering on the part of the listener. Think about how you can stay engaged when your mind starts to wander.

Find Your Comfort Zone

Adapted from The University of Washington, Mentoring Program Guidelines

Many mentoring relationships pair a protégé with a high-level or prominent leader. These relationships are sometimes slow to develop because the protégé is often uncomfortable with the mentor. This discomfort can come from a variety of factors. Protégés report they were afraid to make mistakes or appear vulnerable in front of their mentors, they had trouble viewing their mentors as partners, or they considered their own problems and needs as insignificant. A reluctant or hesitant protégé can be frustrating to a mentor, particularly one who is high-level or prominent, so it's important that you develop techniques to become comfortable early on in your mentoring relationship. How would you find your comfort zone with a high-level leader? Most of us can become more comfortable in any situation by being prepared. Try these ideas to be more prepared:

- Prepare a concrete set of goals and objectives for your mentoring relationship
- Have a written list of questions before each meeting
- Research your mentor's background
- Visualize conversations between your mentor and you as if you've known him or her a long time
- Prepare conversation points

Make the Moments Count – Keep a Journal

Unless we reflect on our experiences, we can often miss the gems in the moments we spend with others, including our mentor. Keeping a journal during your mentoring can help you capture and remember the lessons you learn and chart your progress through this important relationship. After each meeting, ask yourself what you learned from the meeting and how you can apply the learning.

You can capture your thoughts in a stream of consciousness way in your journal or organize it as a learning journal (a formal strategy for collecting and organizing experiences).

Simple Way to Organize a Learning Journal	
1. Experience Description of the experience (what happened in as many behavioral terms as possible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A colleague's comment• A new idea• What happened during a meeting
2. Reaction: Your reaction to the experience (what you thought, felt, did)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal thoughts and feelings• External reactions of others
3. Reflection What you learned by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What worked well?• What didn't work well?

reflecting on how you reacted to what happened

- What would I do differently in a similar situation?
- Things I need to change
- How is my reaction preventing me from getting what I want or need?

Tips on keeping your journal

The format of your journal is unimportant – a computer file, a bound notebook or a folder all work. What is important is that you regularly write in your journal. Over time, you will see themes and patterns emerge. If you find you are repeating ineffective or non-productive patterns, you have ample evidence about what you need to learn or change. You can also use this process to identify issues or ideas to discuss with your mentor. The journal is your tool – you don't need to share it with anyone.



BEGIN: Establish the Relationship

By creating a Partnership Agreement, you and your mentor can find out more about each other and the focus you have in mind for your relationship. Also included here are possible agendas to guide your meetings and tools to evaluate your relationship on a regular basis.

Partnership Agreement

Use this 3-step Partnership Agreement with your mentor to find out more about each other and set goals and expectations. The Partnership Agreement is also included in the Mentor Toolkit.

Partnership Agreement Step 1: Who Are We?

- **Personal Background:** Life history, career history, experiences, core values, personal motto...
- **Goals:** Personal, career, progress toward achieving, obstacles in achieving...
- **Perspectives:** Keys to success, development needed, about work, about organizations, your commitments...
- **Thinking Process:** How you like to learn, solve problems, or make decisions...your new areas of interest...
- **Skills and Abilities:** What you do best, what you want to do more of, what you want to learn to do...

More Mentoring Conversation Starters

Adapted from America Corporate Partners

- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- What books have influenced your thinking? What newspapers and magazines do you read often?
- Who do you talk to when you need advice?
- How do you handle professional obstacles/roadblocks?
- What was your biggest career move so far?
- How do you deal with criticism? What's the best way to get feedback at work?
- What skills do you find new professionals lack? How can I get better at these skills?
- What part of your job is the most challenging?
- What strategies do you use to deal with difficult people at work?
- How do you stay motivated? How do you handle stress?

Partnership Agreement Step 2: What are Our Goals and Expectations?

One of the most important things both partners can do is agree to expectations, goals and ground rules as well as a timeframe for your mentoring partnership. Periodically come back to these and evaluate “how we are doing”.

Write your thoughts to the questions below individually, then fully discuss them with each other.

1. Why do I want to be a mentoring partner?
2. What do I want from you?
3. How do I want this partnership to function?
4. How much face-to-face time can I invest?
5. What should be the approximate length of our meetings?
6. What other support will/do I need from you?
7. What ground rules do I want for our meeting/relationship (e.g., confidentiality, reciprocal trust/respect, commitment, etc.)?
8. What is the time commitment? There is flexibility around the duration of a mentoring engagement, depending on the goals of the protégé and the availability of the mentor. Mentoring pairs often agree to 3 or 6 months, then re-evaluate at that point.

Mentor/Protégé Worksheet

This worksheet sets the parameters of a mentoring relationship to meet the needs of both the mentor and the protégé. Any questions and answers from the previous two pages can be used for this worksheet.

Planning Meeting

Date:
Time:
Place:

Goals/ Expectations

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
-

Teaching/ Learning Styles

Mentor's Teaching Style	Protégé's Learning Style

Preferred Method of Communication

"Hot Buttons"

Ongoing Meeting Schedule

Partnership Agreement Step 3: What Are We Going To Do?

Work together to define at least one action item that will help reach the protégé's goal(s). Mentors are there to facilitate the discussion and move it toward a definable action chosen by the protégé – it is the protégés who take action and make something that is easily incorporated into daily activities and is short term.

1. **Incorporate practice:** Consider simulating the actual situation, asking “what if” questions and role playing or rehearsing what the action will look like in real time.
2. **Reflect on outcomes:** Did things go as planned? If not, what actions are needed? What was learned that has broader application?

Move to action!

- The first action plan is:

- The target date for completion is:

- What do we want to work on together, or what does the protégé need to practice?

Tips and Agendas for Mentors and Protégés

- Have a focus for each discussion: compelling question, case study or article, new experience, etc.
- Consider sharing resumes or LinkedIn profiles.
- Be open and honest. Ask for what you need, solicit feedback, share what you are learning.
- Keep confidences. It's important that you can count on each other to treat confidential information with integrity.
- Honor the commitments you make to each other (meetings, follow up, etc.).
- Ask powerful questions and continue to be curious about each other as individuals.
- Enjoy the experience! It's a gift to have someone who is interested in the same work you are and wants to learn and share knowledge.

Possible Mentoring Agendas

<p>Meeting 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know each other • Bring completed biography and activity sheet • Clarify mentor and protégé experience • Program objectives, roles, processes • How to measure success of the mentoring relationship • Determine future meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Location, frequency, meeting length, how to schedule • Communication between meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Acceptable time of day to contact ○ Best method: phone, email, etc. • Confidentiality • Set up the next meeting 	<p>Additional areas to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs, functions, and roles the protégé might benefit from and enjoy • Current job functions, skills, successes, failure, and obstacles/challenges • Challenges or concerns created by change • Opportunities for further exposure and challenge • Managing work-life balance • Challenges in the development toward goals • Influences of the functional group and management perspectives of protégé's performance • Options for training, education and continuous learning • Organizational culture and how to influence and impact the organization • Networking and creating social capital • Mutual feedback on your relationship and progress
<p>Meeting 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possible career interests and questions • Set clear professional development goals • Identify potential action plans 	<p>Last meeting prior to closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss final project outcome • Evaluate results • Discuss future actions and potential actions
<p>Meeting 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidify the action plan(s) • Create a series of achievable goals • Agree on how relationship will come to a close at the end of the mentoring period 	<p>Closing Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss closing items for the action plan • Reflect on the mentorship process • Discuss positive changes that occurred for both of you • How are you going to apply and integrate what you have learned through the mentoring? • Redefine the relationship • Any terms going forward • Celebrate your success
<p>Subsequent Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss any situations which occurred between meetings • Discuss action plan • Offer positive and constructive feedback 	<p>Potential Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has taken place since we last met? • What questions or issues were raised for you by the experience? • What did you learn from the experience? • What will you do differently in the future? • What could you do to continue to advance your growth?

Evaluating Your Mentor Relationship

Candidly evaluating the mentoring relationship on a regular basis allows both mentors and protégés to make adjustments to ensure the highest quality mentoring relationship. These prompts can prepare you to talk about how you are each doing and how the relationship is going overall.

How Are We Doing? Evaluation Questions for Mentors and Protégés
Aspects of our relationship that are working well are:
Our relationship could improve if:
I need more of:
I need less of:
What has been the most useful to me is:
What has been the least useful to me:
The quality and frequency of our communication is:
My overall evaluation of our relationship is:

Evaluating Yourself as a Protégé

Evaluating your own engagement and interactions at regular intervals in the mentoring relationship can be useful. Circle the number on the scale that corresponds to your perception.

Scale: 1=Never, 5=Always, NA=not applicable/no opinion.

Protégé Self Evaluation						
1. I am sensitive to (and connect with) my mentor's suggestions during our meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. I am motivated by the information and suggestions given to me by my mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. I am enthusiastic about my mentoring relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. I look for ways to continuously improve my professional practices and the relationship with my mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. I demonstrate active listening skills with my mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. I meet with my mentor consistently.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. I receive (and give) honest feedback during our mentoring meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. I enjoy brainstorming and problem-solving with my mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. I am clear and concise in my communication with my mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. I seek new information to help me grow professionally and share that with my mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11. I keep my conversations with my mentor confidential.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
12. I feel my mentoring relationship is based on mutual respect and trust.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
13. My mentor and I stay focused on accomplishing our mentoring relationship goals.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
14. This mentoring relationship is mutually beneficial to improving professional practice.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
15. I track and reflect on the time spent in mentoring activities.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Reflect on the statements where you rated yourself 1 or 2. Do you see a need for any changes in yourself or in your meetings?

Resolving Differences

Adapted from The University of Washington, Mentoring Program Guidelines

As in any relationship, there can be disagreement or misunderstanding in a mentoring relationship. Keeping in mind that mentoring relationships are partnerships: you have a right to express yourself when you want to make an adjustment to the relationship. However, it is just as important to make sure you resolve differences appropriately, professionally and respectfully. Some examples of differences that might arise include:

- **Getting advice or guidance that you don't agree with.** Instead of arguing with your mentor or just ignoring the advice, approach the situation with a sense of curiosity. Ask yourself and/or your mentor questions about the advice. For example, "That suggestion doesn't feel right, but I'm not sure why," or "My situation doesn't seem quite right for that idea. Can we talk about what doesn't fit and why?"
- **Your mentor doesn't show up for an appointment you had scheduled and didn't call.** This is another time for curiosity. Instead of saying, "you missed our meeting yesterday," approach your mentor with the goal of finding out information rather than blaming. "I had on my calendar that we were meeting yesterday. Did I get confused?"
- It feels like your mentor is telling you what you should do, rather than letting you rely on them for a sounding board and then solve your own problems. Often, mentors feel that giving advice is what they're supposed to do and what is expected of them. You can help your mentor build their mentoring skills by articulating what you expect of them up front. You might say something like this: "I have a situation at work that I'd like to talk with you about. I have some ideas on how to approach it, and I'm hoping you can listen to my ideas and ask me questions to help me get to the right solution." Or at the beginning of your relationship, let your mentor know you don't expect them to know all the answers, but you look forward to exchanging ideas and insights that could broaden your perspective and help you solve your own problems.

END: Navigating the Transition

There will come a time that you feel you no longer have needs or goals to be met with your mentor and it is time to wrap up the relationship. Ending the mentoring relationship well is important to your continued success – first impressions and last impressions are what we remember most about others.

Use these tips to end your mentoring relationship on a positive note:

- Be clear about why you want to end the relationship. If you have achieved your goals – celebrate! Let your mentor know how he/she has helped you and show your appreciation.
- If you're ending the relationship for other reasons, let your mentor know why. Perhaps the relationship is not moving you forward and you'd like to spend time engaging in other professional development activities.
- Regardless of the reason, it's important to give mentors clear feedback about what they did well, how they helped you, and what they might do differently in future mentoring relationships.

Remember that a mentoring relationship is not a permanent commitment. The goal is to help you move forward in your career and life goals. If this is not occurring and you do not see adjustments that can be made in the relationship to meet your goals, end it, respectfully and honestly.

It may be that your “formal” mentoring relationship shifts to a more informal, infrequent interaction. That is another reason to be appreciative and positive. You never know when your paths may cross again, under what circumstances, and when you may need the help and support of your mentor in the future!

Reflections you may want to share with your mentor in your final meeting

1. What changes do you see in yourself as a result of your mentoring experience?

2. What capabilities did you enhance?

3. What development or career goals did you meet? Consider looking back at your earlier reflections on your career, notes on your Partnership Agreement, or your learning journal.

4. How did your mentor contribute to this experience?

5. What challenges lie ahead? What other types of support will you need?

6. Will the relationship continue informally? If so, how?