

# Mentor Role

## General Guidelines for an Effective Mentoring Relationship

### **Commitment to mentoring and being mentored.**

Enter a mentoring relationship only if you are prepared to make the time available to meet your responsibilities with the other person. Don't overextend yourself beyond what you are capable of achieving.

### **Observe business etiquette.**

You are in a professional mentoring relationship and should use the same rules and etiquette you would with a work colleague.

- Always be punctual for your meetings (or phone calls).
- Give plenty of notice if you need to postpone a meeting or phone call.
- Stick to business. Small talk is a nice way to break the ice, but don't let this consume the time you spend together. Try setting an agenda if you find you digress too often.
- Speak respectfully of others. Always talk about your workplace, colleagues or personal acquaintances respectfully, during the course of your mentoring. Speaking critically of others reflects badly on you. There's always a way to rephrase what you say to get your meaning across.

### **Give the relationship some time.**

Mentors and mentees don't always "click" straight away; however, sometimes your differences can lead to the greatest opportunities for both mentor and mentee.

*(Make Your Mentoring Successful, Catherine Seton, [www.womensmentoring.com](http://www.womensmentoring.com))*

## **Tips for both mentors and mentees to help with establishing a relationship that works for both parties:**

1. Ensure a two-way dialogue. Mentorships are about listening and learning, but mentees need to be able to find their own voice, as well. Mentors must be willing to let their mentees speak freely while addressing any of their concerns or questions. Mentors who simply talk at individuals will offer little value. As a mentee, do not hesitate to pipe up and ask questions.
2. Mentorship is about sharing. If you are not willing to share, then neither party will experience the full benefits of having a mentor. Mentors should be willing to share their career experiences, and mentees need to be open and honest in return.
3. Clarity is essential. Before approaching or establishing a mentorship, it is the responsibility of the mentee to outline what they want out of the relationship, and a general structure for meetings, conversations and take-away tasks. The mentee must lead the course and ensure the relationship stays on track.

4. It is about working smarter, not necessarily harder. Mentorships require time from both parties involved. Time should be used wisely, focusing on concrete tips and tricks for becoming more efficient, flexible and resourceful at work.

5. Be open. Mentees have a lot more than just career advice to gain in a mentorship relationship. Mentors can also speak about education, motivation and work-life balance. Find out from your mentor what she sees as the key points to long-term success and happiness.

## Characteristics of Mentors

Mentors have a passionate interest in helping others grow. They see potential in younger, less experienced individuals and are willing to share their understanding to help develop that potential. However, they are selective about where and how they use their time, so they are unwilling to invest heavily in more than one or two individuals concurrently.

Mentors have perspective, and are able to envision "what could be" for a given individual. They are willing to offer suggestions to enable the person to move forward in that direction. They are aware of what is good for the organization and good for the individual, and they hold these in proper balance.

Mentors expect mentees to bring agenda items for dialogue. They are flexible and able to flow with the interests and attention of the mentees. However, they expect mentees to respect their time and respond thoughtfully to the suggestions offered.

Mentors are able to explain why they behave as they do, describing effective process and methodology. Mentors are usually gifted in the areas of teaching, giving, or encouragement. *"Mentoring- A Powerful Development Method" by Dennis Hooper. [dhooper2@juno.com](mailto:dhooper2@juno.com)*

## Being a Mentor- Six Things to Do It Right

1. Don't give advice; demonstrate how to do it. A mentor is not a teacher or a lecturer. A mentor has to get their hands dirty and actually work with the protégé.

2. Don't do the work for them. Teach them how to do it for themselves.

3. Even mentors need mentors. When uncertain how to approach or tackle a complex issue, mentors should go to another person at their level to help solve the problem.

4. Don't focus on becoming the protégé's friend. Mentoring is about a person's career. While a friendship may eventually come out of the mentoring relationship, it should always focus first on the betterment of the protégé's career.

5. Don't try to be everything to everyone. A mentor cannot be the sole resource for the entire organization. Focus your mentoring abilities on those who have the drive to take what you teach them and bring it to the next level.

6. You want them to do better than you. Don't hope that your protégé will someday be as successful as you are -- they should surpass you. This desire for the protégé to succeed and exceed expectations is the most important trait of a great mentor.

*"How to Find- and be- A Mentor" by Dennis Manning*

## 6 Steps to an Effective Mentoring Relationship

First, the basics. There are five key areas you should rely on while mentoring.

**Prepare.** These should be no surprises. The producers should know what to expect and what the objective is for the day.

**Explain.** Thoroughly describe in advance how the day will proceed and what shape success will take once the protégé achieves their goal.

**Show.** The mentor should demonstrate expected behavior for all elements of the selling cycle in order to provide an effective model that the protégé can emulate.

**Observe.** Progress occurs when the producer tests their wings and sees results while being observed and coached by a seasoned mentor. Afterward, tell them what you saw during their attempts, which brings us to our final tip.

**Critique.** Conduct a follow-up assessment to discuss your observations, both good and bad, and craft an improvement plan for the next experience.

## Key Differences Between Coaching and Mentoring

### Coaching

- Relationship is often finite and short term (1-2 months)
- Coaches are more frequently external to the organization
- Coaches are most often paid for their services
- Goals are clearly identified
- Action-oriented
- Results-oriented
- Relationship is a partner-approach
- Coaches may be the same age or younger than the person they are coaching
- Coaches may not necessarily be an expert in the area they are coaching
- A coach is not necessarily a mentor

### Mentoring

- Relationship is often long-term, on-going (1-2 years)
- Mentors are often found within the same organization (specialty)
- Mentoring is seen as a benevolent and goodwill gesture
- Goals are not always as clearly identified
- Process and relationship oriented.
- Outcomes are often oblique
- A mentor is usually higher up in the organization
- A mentor is usually older, more senior than the mentee
- A mentor is usually an expert in the area the mentee is aspirant to achieve in but not an expert at coaching the best out of people
- A mentor will usually have good coaching skills
- Mentors are not necessarily formally trained although they may be naturally good mentors

*"Mentoring and Coaching- Spot the difference" [www.womensmentoring.com.au/index.php/resources/articles/103-mentoring](http://www.womensmentoring.com.au/index.php/resources/articles/103-mentoring)*

## Mentor Responsibilities

1. Manage the mentoring process.

- a. At the first meeting, make a mentoring agreement with your mentee and mutually decide how your mentoring relationship is going to work.

b. Set goals and agendas with your mentee and follow up on things from previous meetings.

c. Evaluate how the mentoring is going at the end of the period. Find out what is going well and what could be done better.

2. Be generous with sharing information, expertise and knowledge that your mentee will find useful.

3. Promote your mentee by introducing them to new networks and people, and look out for opportunities on their behalf.

4. Encourage your mentee by being a guide and help them clarify their direction. Encourage them to develop skills, and help them maintain their motivation levels and think of solutions for the issues they face.

5. Ask your mentee what they want most from you, and how you can help them achieve their goal.

6. Be a role model for your mentee. After all, you were matched with your mentee because of your career, personal background, and status and because they believe you are the best person to help them achieve their goals.

*"Make your mentoring successful" by Catherine Seton*