



## **What is Mentoring?**

Mentoring is a process based on the concept of apprenticeship, in which more accomplished individuals (Mentors) provide guidance, advice, and support to their less experienced counterparts (Mentees) who are determined to follow a similar path. Mentoring has been proven to be effective in enabling people to overcome challenges and uncertainties associated with an environment that they are not familiar with, such as new work roles or any other major transitions to new stages of their professional lives.

## **Key guides to an effective Mentor Mentee relationship**

### **1. Develop trust**

- Mentors and Mentees should develop a relationship of trust to ensure effective mentoring takes place
- Begin each Mentor and Mentee relationship with a getting to know you session
- Mentors should learn about the Mentee's educational background, experience, and share information about his or her own background and experience
- Mentors can then continue to build upon the Mentees strengths, needs, and goals in the mentoring sessions

### **2. Define roles and responsibilities**

- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of both the Mentor and the Mentee
  - A Mentee is more receptive to feedback if he or she feels like an active participant in the relationship
- Generally the role of the **Mentor** is to:
  - Teach, guide and help shape the professional and personal growth and learning of the Mentee and to serve as a positive role model
  - Shares his/her background, skills and interests to exhibit how he/she can help the Mentee
  - Helps Mentee set career/educational goals
  - Provides encouragement for building self-confidence and self-esteem
  - Actively listen to the Mentees concerns and provide solutions and/or guidance
  - Acts as a resource for information about their career/passion
  - Educates Mentees on workplace expectations
  - Value any feedback the Mentee may have
  - Serves as a positive role model
  - Maintains confidentiality at all times



- Generally the role of the **Mentee** is to:
  - Assesses his/her own educational and/or professional strengths, learning and developmental needs
  - Seek guidance and constructive feedback on his/her professional development and career or educational goals
  - Follows through on commitments and goals
  - Be coachable, actively listen and be receptive to the Mentor's guidance and input
  - Openly shares successes and failures
  - Takes advantage of opportunities presented by the Mentor
  - Takes responsibility for keeping in regular contact with Mentor and actively participates in the relationship
  - Respects the Mentor's time
  - Maintains confidentiality at all times
- Further questions to determine roles and responsibilities include:
  - What will the role of the Mentor be?
  - What types of mentoring will be most effective? This may differ with each Mentor and Mentee relationship
  - What are the responsibilities of the Mentee and Mentor?
    - For example, the Mentee may be required to meet for a mutually agreed number of hours per week

### 3. Establish goals

- Establish short and long-term goals
  - Mentors and Mentees should work together to develop mutually agreed upon goals
  - These goals become the basis for the mentoring activities
    - For example, a Mentor and Mentee might determine they want to break into a certain industry that the Mentor has prior experience in
    - The Mentor would then support the Mentee in reaching these goals
- **Mentors** need to provide constructive feedback to Mentees on their progress
- **Mentees** should have an opportunity to be reflective on their goals and be given timely feedback



#### 4. Collaborate

- Be collaborative in solving problems
  - **Mentors** should generally:
    - Allow Mentees the opportunity to identify concerns and potential solutions
    - Encourage Mentees to take risks and do things differently by implementing creative solutions
- **Mentors** can improve the outcome of their mentoring by doing the following together:
  - Identify the specific concern
  - Brainstorm possible solutions
    - The Mentor can offer ideas, but the Mentee should be allowed to choose which plan to put into action
  - Select a plan to try, and discuss desired outcomes
  - Implement the plan. The Mentor should be supportive and encouraging, and reinforce successful completion of the plan
  - Assess the outcome together
    - The Mentor and Mentee should be reflective and discuss the effectiveness of the activity and make adjustments as needed
  - Try another solution, if needed
    - It is important for Mentors to remember that there are many different ways to address an issue and that the Mentor's way may not be the most effective solution for the Mentee

#### Example Mentor Mentee Discussion Topics

- Learning about the Mentor's career or educational experience
- Learning how to break into the Mentor's career or get admitted to the Mentor's university
- Discussing what skills are needed to succeed in the Mentor's specific career or degree
- Guidelines on what makes a good CV and/or CV examples
- Tips on how to interview well
- Advice on what makes a good university application
- What courses to take in your educational journey to best prepare you for your career/passion
- How to balance your career or coursework with your personal life
- Specific industry terms and/or jargons to increase commercial awareness
- Applicable technical methodologies pertaining to the Mentor's industry or degree
- And many more...