

Mentoring Keys for Success

If you are interested in having—or being—a mentor to a student or colleague, consider developing a plan to help make sure that you both get what you want out of this experience.



A Learning Partnership

A learning partnership can benefit both people. Adult learners can build skills and take advantage of a colleague's experience and expertise through a customized plan designed to fit their specific needs and availability to engage. Before beginning, it's helpful to reflect on one's path to date by plotting a timeline with major events, accomplishments, and challenges. A review of these data points will inform your personal development—where your personal and professional goals, values, and commitments overlap or diverge. And perhaps act as a guide to future possibilities.

Looking for a Mentor?

As someone who is looking for a mentor, it will be helpful to recognize what kind of experience you are looking for, what you are hoping to accomplish, and who might be able to provide you with that kind of support. Knowledge about your own personal learning style will help you and your mentor play to this strength.

As a Mentor

As a mentor, understanding what experience and skills you bring to a mentoring relationship will help determine if you are a good match; it's also helpful to think about what you might learn from serving as a mentor to someone.

The brief guide on the back is intended as a place to start, with a template to help open the discussion around logistics and goals. It can also help gauge the interest of both parties and help you come to a mutual understanding on key topics.

Resources

Student Conflict Resolution Center

www.sos.umn.edu
612.626.0689, 254 Appleby Hall
Contact: Jan Morse

Boynton Mental Health

www.boynton.umn.edu
612.624.1444, 410 Church St SE
Contact: Matt Hanson

Graduate School

www.grad.umn.edu
612.625.2815, 321 Johnston Hall
Contact: Karen Starry



Brief Guide for Mentoring

Topic	Joint Responsibility	Mentor's responsibility	Mentee's responsibility
Establish the learning partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and agree on scope and nature of relationship • Work out 'ground rules' for interactions • Develop a written agreement, include schedule of meeting dates • Plan for contingencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess capacity to mentor • Determine how to structure meetings • Identify role and goals • Consider term of relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop timeline of major events, accomplishments, challenges • Assess capacity to be a mentee • Identify purpose and goals of mentoring relationship
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify primary means of contact • Teach and learn in every interaction • Search for the true and useful • Include opportunities for reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set and adjust as necessary for effectiveness • Include regular check-ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out and consider opinions different from your own • Be curious • Analyze and attach meaning to data and interactions
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for reflection, getting and giving feedback • Consider frequency, means • Revise as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask mentee how they like to get feedback • Work to find optimal means and frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify feedback preferences, e.g. how much, when, form • Share feedback about mentoring experience
Overcoming Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to dealing with problems as they arise • Consider consulting with your organization's ombudsman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in with mentee at each meeting to monitor and assess • Clarify a follow up plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share problems and concerns openly • Ask for help when you need it
Concluding the relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a tentative date to conclude • Check in with your partner 2 months prior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow time in the last couple of meetings to wrap up, consider next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share insights, and highlights • Cover lessons learned / challenges