

What is the mentorship program about?

Mentoring gives individuals the ability to ask for advice and counsel, share concerns and milestones, and more importantly seek direction. Mentoring requires building trust between two individuals and is a two-way street: it should be both advantageous for the mentees as well as form part of the mentor's development process.

Mentors will facilitate the thinking process. They won't tell the mentee what to do. The mentoring relationship is expected to be based on trust, confidentiality, mutual respect, and sensitivity.

For a mentorship program to thrive, mentees need to be willing and open to learning. They also need to be prepared to try new things or adjust their current way of doing things. The mentor is expected to offer their expertise or advice, but if the mentee isn't willing to learn, the opportunity is wasted.

Role of the Mentor:

Help the mentee develop both their interpersonal and professional skills needed for success in their career of choice. The mentors will provide:

- Information about his or her own career path.
- Guidance, motivation, emotional support, and role modeling.
- Advice on good development opportunities and career paths.
- Assistance with internship / job search (e.g., CV and motivational letters, interview tips, connection with other professionals, etc.).

The mentors will also be responsible to examine both the academic achievement and the professional promise of the mentee.

A good mentor is willing to share knowledge and tips on work content, act as a role model who leads by example, is a source of networking for mentees, is reachable and accessible, is genuinely interested in mentee's goals, is fully aware of mentee's career trajectory, a sounding board who provides candid feedback, willing to confront mentee's negative behaviors, open to feedback from mentee around effectiveness of mentoring, willing to recognize individual differences between self-style and mentee's style.

Role of the Mentee:

The mentee is the student who needs to absorb the mentor's knowledge and have the ambition and desire to know what to do with this knowledge, the mentee's role is to understand his or her own needs to start the mentoring program and, with the help of the mentor, aim to answer key questions:

- What are my needs?
- What are the ground rules for collaboration going forward?
- What outcome do I want to achieve in the form of short term and long-term milestones?

The mentee should be willing to learn, easy to get along with, receptive to feedback and act upon it. The mentee should be prepared to provide diverse perspective and feedback to the mentor, assist in strengthening his interpersonal skills (e.g., listening, communicating, coaching, etc.) and share knowledge (on technical matters such as graduate's ambitions and concerns).

A good mentee is open to constant learning from mentor not afraid to ask questions—even the most basic, proactive to contact mentor, prepared to talk about his/her career by having reflected about trajectory and plan, clear to mentors about professional expectations, open to feedback and willing to try new behaviors, willing to provide honest feedback about effectiveness of mentoring relationship, not afraid about changing mentors if necessary

Role of the Coordinator:

Beyond the mentoring work that will be done, the coordinator's role will be to:

- Gather feedback and share it with both participants.
- Provide help to the mentees when additional support is needed.
- Provide support to mentors by pitching-in when they are under work/ time pressure.

Key components of the program:

- One-to-one relationship: The mentee will be assigned to one mentor allowing the mentee to spend more focused/ quality time with the assigned mentor to enabling maximum development.
- Duration of the assignment: The assignment will last for a duration of 3 months
- Development planning: The mentor will work with the mentee to craft a development plan to guide the mentee throughout the program; the plan will include: 1) Formalizing expectations, 2) Identifying outcomes, 3) Establishing a plan of action and ground rules for collaboration.
- Providing feedback: Mentees and mentors will be asked to provide feedback to the coordinator every month, this will help to create a constructive follow-up of the program.
- Final program evaluation: The coordinator will conduct a final evaluation of the program at the end of the mentoring cycle and decide the best course of action.

Key tips and characteristics to ensure a successful mentorship relationship:**Successful tips:**

- Prepare before the joining the meeting in order to use your time more efficiently.
- Always set the time and date for the next meeting and establish the mode and frequency of the communication meetings.
- Deliver on your promise to demonstrate your commitment to the relationship.
- Discuss any problems/ concerns immediately.
- Apply learnings from the program.

Essential characteristics:

- Trust: Believe that both parties are committed and will contribute their fullest.
- Commitment: Remain credible and honor your time commitments but be flexible and understand the additional work demands of each participant.
- Respect: Be considerate and thoughtful of one's differences (e.g., background, skill level, perspective, culture, etc.) throughout the relationship.

Clarification:

It is essential to clarify that mentoring program is not about the mentee securing a referral, internship or job, it is about establishing a career plan, short- and long-term goals and most importantly benefitting from the advice, knowledge and field expertise of the mentor.