



Guide for Mentors

Here is a short guide for mentors to help you and your mentee have a successful relationship during the course of your mentoring period.

When High School students seek a mentor, they need more than just someone to answer their questions over e-mail. They need a listening ear and an empathetic voice—someone who has gone through the same journey.

1. You have been through the College Admissions process yourself—share some of your insights. What worked for you? What could you have done better? How did you market yourself in the best way possible?
2. Apart from practical, actionable advice, High School students need emotional support during this journey. Often, they just need someone credible like yourself to tell them, “You can do it!”
3. Make sure you try to put yourself in your mentee’s shoes and see the world from their perspective. Rather than lecturing them, listen to their fears, desires, and concerns. This will help you build a mutual relationship and allow your mentee to see you as more than just a teacher.
4. Work with your mentees in scheduling mutually agreeable meeting times. We know you are busy, but your mentees are counting on you for advice and guidance. Please do your best to find a time that works for you both. Please kindly publish your availability schedule for a typical week on your profile. Without that, we have learned that setting up a meeting time with your mentees either takes too long or just does not happen. Also when proposing meeting times, please be very precise and try to offer a few meeting times to maximize the chances of at least one of them working well for your mentee. For example, please propose a few meeting times like this:

“Hi XXX,

Could we have the Skype meeting on any of the day/times mentioned below?

1. Saturday, May 7, 11:30am PST.
2. Sunday, May 8, 12 noon PST
3. Wednesday May 11, 1:30pm PST

Thanks,

YYY

“

Please do NOT propose something like “Sunday any time after 10am.” We have learned that proposing vague meeting times results in mentoring sessions not happening at all because meeting dates/times do not get fixed and eventually the mentoring period ends. That is an opportunity lost for you to help someone...and an opportunity lost for you to make some money! We are working on adding a calendar feature to make it easier for you to select your availability during the week, but for now, please manually enter it on your profile.

Please respond to messages from your mentee promptly so that the meeting scheduling process is smooth.

PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR MEETING DAY/TIME WITH YOUR MENTEE A DAY PRIOR TO THE MEETING BY MESSAGING YOUR MENTEE THROUGH SKOOLMENTOR.COM.

5. Do not force your mentee to do anything he or she is uncomfortable with. After listening to his or her needs and concerns, try to tailor your advice accordingly to help your mentee succeed.

6. Often, mentees may not feel comfortable enough to ask specific questions or tell you much about themselves. Sometimes, they may not even be sure about what they want to do in life. Go ahead and ask some questions yourself to break the ice and get the conversation started (see Page 3 of this guide for some examples!). Share your own High School and college experiences, emphasizing your admissions journey and transition to college. You could ask your mentee for their list of specific questions (if they have any) or a general idea of what they want to talk about prior to your meeting.
7. Please note that, often, your High School student mentees may have a parent or both parents by their side during the mentoring meetings. The parents may be quite involved in the conversation, asking questions on their child's behalf. Parents just want the best for their child and want to support him/her in the college admissions journey. Please allow them to be part of the mentoring sessions if they wish to be included. They will truly appreciate your help!
8. Your mentee will soon begin seeing you as a friend and someone to talk to whenever he or she has a worry. You will also feel great knowing you helped someone through quite a challenging period in his or her life.

Sample Questions for Mentors

Here are some sample questions you could ask your mentees to help get the conversation started:

1. What are your hobbies/what do you like to do for fun?
2. What is your favorite subject in school?
3. What do you think are your greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?
4. What kind of environment do you see yourself going to college in: a big city, a quiet area, the West Coast, the East Coast? Could you see yourself working in that same area after college?
5. What would be your dream job?
6. What are you looking for in a mentor (me)? How can I help you get to where you want to be?

Taken from Harvard Business Review:

(<https://hbr.org/2009/03/five-questions-every-mentor-mu.html>)

1. What is it that you really want to be and do?
2. What are you doing really well that is helping you get there?
3. What are you not doing well that is preventing you from getting there?
4. What will you do differently tomorrow to meet those challenges?
5. How can I help/where do you need the most help?