
Mentorship Educational Module

Module Designs

July 29th 2016

The user will be introduced to the module before picking which “steam” they will be going down (Mentor or Mentee). At the bottom of every slide there is a bar counting the progress through the slides, and two buttons that bring the user to options for changing the colours of items in the module, or changing the font sizes. If the font size is increased to the point that not all the content can be displayed on a single screen, a scroll bar will be provided for the user to view the hidden content. No slide numbers have been listed in these mockups, as the order could change, and having the number listed here might cause confusion. No coloured versions of these slides are being provided, as the previous design document should cover that feature and how it will affect the content.

Mentorship

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Introduction

Welcome to the PSDNET Mentoring Education Module. Mentoring is a privilege because it provides an opportunity for learning and development. It is also a responsibility because it requires a commitment and invest of time. It involves a mutual relationship that can be transformative for the individuals involved, furthering their growth and development in a number of areas. Mentoring relationships bring together people with different backgrounds, positions and experiences who share a common interest and a desire to learn from and about each other.

Many who have been involved in mentoring will likely tell you that the process of developing an effective method of mentoring often takes time. Therefore, mentoring requires training, thoughtful preparation, and planning.

This exciting module is a starting point to developing an effective mentoring relationship.

The overall goal of the module is to increase the learner's own knowledge about mentoring and, for those interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, accelerate the process of moving towards achieving that goal.

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The user will be able to change the colour and size of any of the module's visual elements. If the background colour is modified, the images in the backgrounds will be hidden. The user can enter hex codes for the colours, or click on the colour block to bring up a colour selection tool.

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Introduction

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The user will be brought to this screen to choose which “stream” they will follow. This document will go through Mentee slides first, before going through Mentor slides.

Introduction



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Introducing Priya

“ Hey! I’m Priya. I’m a first year College student. I’m studying business and want to open my own business when I finish school. I have a learning disability. In elementary and high school, I felt OK about it, but things are different in College. My program is really competitive and I’m afraid that if my professors and other students find out that I need a note taker, they will think I’m lazy and not smart enough to be in the program. My parents pushed me to register with the Student Disability Services but I haven’t given the accommodation letter I received to any of my professors. ”

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Objectives

More specifically, after completing this module the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the concept of mentoring including its characteristics
2. Explain the value of mentoring
3. Identify the outcomes of an effective mentorship experience
4. Differentiate between mentoring and coaching
5. Define the concept of mentor and mentee
6. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee
7. Describe the skills sets required of an effective mentor and mentee
8. Cite examples of issues that contribute to unsuccessful and challenging mentorship relationships.

In this section of the module, we follow Priya, a College student, as she begins her journey to becoming a mentee and forming a relationship with her mentor, Jennifer.

If you are interested in learning more about Jennifer’s journey [Click Here](#).

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Mentoring

Priya's situation is not unusual – many students with disabilities face these same kinds of fears or concerns. One way of dealing with these issues - and helping to address them – is through mentoring.

Mentoring is a purposeful, caring, and voluntary relationship in which reflection and communication guide progress and action towards meeting goals.

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What is the Purpose of Mentoring?

Mentoring promotes personal growth in both the mentor and mentee. A mentoring relationship can be used to increase personal or professional confidence, as well as provide support during difficult or discouraging situations.

Mentoring can also be used for professional socialization. A mentoring relationship can help ease the transition from student to professional, one role to another, and to a new work environment.

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What is the Purpose of Mentoring?

There are several benefits to being in a mentoring relationship. A mentoring relationship can be affirming, increase an individual's self-confidence, and encourage them to reach their goals. It can also lead to personal satisfaction.

Specific to students, research has shown that those who are involved in mentoring relationships are better able to meet their personal goals and deal with career situations.

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The Mentoring Relationship

There are two main types of mentoring relationships: **informal** and **formal**.

Informal mentoring relationships are:

- More spontaneous
- Less Structured

Formal mentoring relationships:

- Involve a formal linking of two or more individuals (e.g., one to one, one to a group).
- Typically includes a written agreement outlining the roles of each person involved and goals of the relationship.
- Follow a process during predetermined period of time.

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The Mentoring Relationship

A mentoring relationship typically involves two individuals, a mentor and a mentee.

A **mentor** is a person who helps to guide an individual's growth and development. A mentor is NOT a professional counsellor, parent, or social worker, but someone who is confidant and provides support and guidance.

A mentor has more career experience and provides a listening ear, academic or career advice, guidance, and feedback. Mentors share knowledge and the perspective of their years of experience, nurturing the growth of the mentee as a future leader.

A **mentee** is a more junior individual who has a strong desire to learn, develop, and grow academically and professionally.

For example, Priya meets the criteria to be a mentee. She is a student and has a strong need to do well academically and grow to become a business professional.

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Role of the Mentor

In general, a mentor guides an individual to develop and grow; however, there are various types of mentors.

- **Traditional mentors** are usually older and experienced; they protect, advocate for, and nurture their mentees.
- Another type of mentor is a supportive boss who is a person in direct supervisory relationship with their mentee but functions more as a coach.
- **Organizational sponsors** are top-level managers who facilitate their mentees promotion within the organization.
- **Professional mentors** are paid career counsellors and advisors.
- **Patrons** are persons who use financial resources and status to launch their mentee's careers.
- **Invisible godparents** help mentees reach career goals without their knowing it.

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Role of an Effective Mentee

An effective mentoring relationship is not one- sided. It requires a mentee who is an active participant. To take part in the mentoring relationship, a mentee needs to be ready to be an equal contributor to the relationship. The important roles a mentee must take on at some point during the mentoring relationship include:

- **Driver of the relationship:** identify and communicate goals to mentor; identify topics and issues and seeking feedback and guidance from mentor.
- **Plan Developer:** develop a plan of action with mentor to address goals
- **Resource partner:** work with your mentor to seek resources for learning; identify people and information that might be helpful
- **Teacher:** Look for opportunities to give back to your mentor; share any information that you think might be valuable
- **Continuous learner:** Take full advantage of this opportunity to learn

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Role of an Effective Mentee

The role of a mentee requires the ability to:

- be self-motivated, and take responsibility for your own development
- communicate clearly, listen, and articulate clear expectations
- set goals/objectives of the mentorship such as self-assessment, development and planning
- share responsibility for making meetings with the mentor happen
- respect the mentor's time and feedback
- accept feedback and share in finding answers and solutions for improvement
- accept responsibility for the outcome of your actions
- track or measure the progress of learning within the mentoring relationship

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Priya Joins an e-Mentoring Program

“ I decided to join an e-mentoring program for women seeking careers in business. I figured I could benefit from knowing a woman who has made it in business world. It was pretty easy to join; all I had to do was create a profile and complete a few online training modules. I was given three choices of possible mentors and I choose Jennifer! I really like Jennifer and it's been awesome having someone to connect with about stuff I'm interested in. ”

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Introducing Jennifer, Priya's Mentor

“ I volunteered to be a mentor in the e-mentoring program for women seeking careers in business because I believe it's important for students to have someone outside their academic programs with whom they can speak about the profession. I try to identify situations and events which can help my mentees develop knowledge and have valuable experiences. ”

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Stages of the mentoring relationship

Successful mentoring relationships don't happen by accident. Formalized mentoring relationships, like Priya and Jennifer's, tend to move through a series of stages.

Stage 1: Preparing for the relationship- Includes self-reflection, identifying goals and preparing yourself to take on the commitment involved in being in a mentoring relationship

Stage 2: Searching/ Seeking out – Involves finding someone to support journey to achieving goals

Stage 3: Initiating – coming together to discuss goals, identify expectation and establishing ground rules.

Stage 4: Laying the foundation – Involves getting to know each other, building trust, continuing to clarify expectations and fine tuning goals.

Stage 5: Building and progressing – involves working to attain goals, empowering each other and building confidence and esteem; longest and most satisfying part of the process.

Stage 6: Relationship ends at the point when goals have been reached; involves affirming, evaluating and celebrating process and outcomes, as well as discussing what comes next.

Priya and Jennifer have completed stage one and two. They have moved into the initiating stage, which in their program includes developing a mentoring agreement.

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Keys to a Successful Mentoring Relationship

Moving through the stages of a mentoring relationship successfully requires the active participation of both the mentee and mentor. There are many things each individual can do to ensure the relationship is successful.

Here are the strategies that Priya has developed:

- I will identify the skills, knowledge, and goals that I want to achieve and communicate them to my mentor
- I will bring up new topics that are important to me at any point and give feedback to my mentor
- I will maintain a mentoring plan and work with my mentor to set up goals, developmental activities, and time frames
- I will work with my mentor to seek resources for learning; identify people and information that might be helpful
- I will look for opportunities to give back to my mentor; share any information that I think might be valuable
- I will take full advantage of the opportunity to learn from my mentor.

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Jennifer's Success Strategies

Because Jennifer believes mentoring is a two-way process in which both individuals have roles to play, she's written her own list of actions she plans to implement to help make her relationship with Priya a success.

I will:

- provide feedback and share ideas with Priya
- try my best to listen to Priya's concerns and draw on my own experiences to give her encouragement and advice.
- do my best to find and provide resources that will support Priya to meet the goals we set together.
- act as a support for Priya.
- challenge Priya to help her consider multiple points of view around issues.

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Communicating with Your Mentor

Communication is another key to a successful mentoring relationship. Although the mentor takes the lead to move through the stages of the relationship, the mentee is also responsible for maintaining good communication.

In Priya and Jennifer's case, if they do not communicate effectively, it can lead to a failed mentoring relationship. Priya should e-mail or send text messages regularly to Jennifer.

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Organization is also Key!

Setting up a schedule for meetings and staying organized are other ways a mentee and mentor can maintain good communication.

In Priya's case, she can consider using several strategies to enhance the organization of the meetings she and Jennifer set up:

- scheduling new appointments in collaboration with Jennifer after every meeting
- keeping a personal record of the action items of the meeting and her concerns

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Problems in the Mentoring Relationship

While mentoring is generally a fruitful and rewarding experience for both the mentee and mentor, problems can occasionally arise. Unsuccessful mentoring pairs have reported the following:

- communication infrequencies
- lack of preparation for mentoring sessions – lack of clear goals leads to wasted time
- Lack of follow-through on desired outcomes – this can occur from the mentee, mentor, or both sides.

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Strategies for Solving Problems

Successful mentoring pairs use simple strategies to get the most out of their relationship:

- Set clear goals for the relationship
- Negotiate and maintain boundaries
- Discuss expectations of and maintain confidentiality
- Communicate on a regular and frequent basis
- Communicate in a conversational style – being less formal makes communicating and sharing easier
- Be direct and ask questions
- Incorporate creativity and fun into relationship
- Set specific topics / goals for meetings
- Ask program staff for help with challenges
- Reflect and maintain awareness of own feelings and attitudes
- Be open and willing to work together to resolve problems and issues that may arise in the relationship

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Scenarios

Here are two scenario problems to test your problem-solving skills as a potential mentee. Read through each scenario and the options to resolve the problem. Keeping in mind the simple strategies identified in the previous slide, select the option you believe is the best approach to address the situations facing Priya and Jennifer.

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Scenario 1

Since they were matched, Jennifer and Priya have communicated primarily through the chat feature on the website of the e-mentoring program in which they are enrolled. They have also exchanged a few email messages. So far, things have been going well and Priya feels supported by Jennifer.

If you recall, Priya has been avoiding using the accommodations she has been approved to use in her courses. She is concerned that her professors and fellow classmates will think she's being given an upper hand and isn't as capable as others in the program. Instead, Priya has been getting permission from her professors to audio record their lectures.

This semester, one of Priya's professors has refused to allow her to record lectures. Priya is upset and conflicted about what she should do. Priya is wondering if she should file a complaint against her professor with the Ombudsperson's Office at her school.

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Scenario 1

Which of the following actions do you think Priya should take?

- A Priya should file a complaint against her professor with the Ombudsperson's Office >
- B Priya should ask one of her professors from the previous term for help >
- C Priya should book an appointment to meet with a disability counsellor at her school's Student Disability Services. >
- D Priya should request a meeting with her professor during office hours to inquire about why she cannot record her lectures. >

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Scenario 1

Which of the following actions do you think Priya should take?

Priya should file a complaint against her professor with the Ombudsperson's Office

It's premature for Priya to contact the Ombudsperson's Office because she doesn't have all the details and facts about the situation. For example, Priya does not know why her professor denied her request. There may be a policy that bans recordings in a classroom. Instead, Priya can meet with a disability counsellor at her school's Student Disability Services to get support and gain an understanding of the situation. A counsellor can help Priya develop self-advocacy skills and coordinate communication with her professor, if she is interested.

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Scenario 2

Priya and Jennifer are now in the Building and Progressing stage of their relationship. Things have been going well, but for the past four weeks Priya has not heard from her mentor, Jennifer. Priya is upset with Jennifer and doesn't know what she should do. The e-mentoring program requires that they meet every two weeks over a 16-week period. Priya is unsure if she should contact Jennifer. She understands that Jennifer may have other demands on her time; however, she also wonders if Jennifer's distancing behaviours are a sign that Jennifer is not interested in continuing to mentor her.

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Scenario 2

What action should Priya do in this situation?

A Priya should continue to wait for Jennifer to contact her.



B Priya should contact Jennifer immediately to set a meeting date and time.



C Priya should report Jennifer's ineffective communication to the appropriate contact person in the e-mentoring program.



D Priya should contact Jennifer and inform her that it would be best if she requested another mentor for the remainder of the e-mentoring program, as it appears that Jennifer is busy.



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Scenario 2

Which of the following actions do you think Priya should take?

Priya should continue to wait for Jennifer to contact her.



While giving Jennifer more time is a considerate gesture, waiting creates further distancing between Priya and Jennifer. Ineffective communication between a mentor and mentee can lead to a failed mentoring relationship. Ideally in a mentoring relationship, the mentor takes the lead to make sure the relationship continues to develop. However, for a mentoring relationship to be successful there must be two-way communication. It is in Priya's best interest to contact Jennifer and work with her to get their relationship and the mentoring process back on track.

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Conclusion

Mentoring can be a wonderful and life changing experience. The mutual relationship that develops between a mentor and mentee is associated with a number of positive outcomes for both individuals. But mentoring takes work and dedication!

We hope that after completing this module you have increased your knowledge and understanding of mentoring, its characteristics, the roles involved- particularly the role of the mentor - the skill sets required, and keys to developing a successful mentoring relationship. If you are preparing to be a mentee, we also hope that the process towards meeting your goal has been accelerated.

If you would like to learn more about the mentoring relationship from the perspective of a mentor, click here to follow Jennifer's journey to becoming a mentor! You can also visit the PSDNET website for more resources on mentoring.

To receive a Certificate of Participation click the link below, enter your name into the certificate and hit Print to download a pdf copy.

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This section is where the Mentor slide mockups begin.

Objectives

More specifically, after completing this module the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the concept of mentoring including its characteristics
2. Explain the value of mentoring
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5. Define the concept of mentor and mentee
6. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee
7. Describe the skills sets required of an effective mentor and mentee
8. Cite examples of issues that contribute to unsuccessful and challenging mentorship relationships.

In this section of the module, we follow the journey of Jennifer, a new mentor, as she forms a relationship with her mentee, Priya. If you are interested in learning more about Priya's journey as a mentee [Click Here](#).

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Introducing Jennifer

“ My name is Jennifer, and I’m a small business owner. I also teach part-time in a continuing education business program. What most people don’t know about me is that I have a learning disability. When I attended university, I hid this from everyone and never sought any accommodations. Back then, having a disability wasn’t as accepted as it is today. I felt ashamed and wished I had someone who I could lean on for support. My experience in university is one of the main reasons I now volunteer as a mentor in the e-mentoring program for women seeking careers in business. I believe it’s important for students to have someone outside their academic programs with whom they can speak about the profession. I see myself as a support for an individual but not in the same way as a counsellor or parent. I try to identify situations and events which can help my mentee develop knowledge and have valuable experiences. I’m particularly interested in mentoring students with a disability because I know what it’s like to be a student with a disability. ”

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Mentoring

Jennifer's situation as a student is still a reality for many students with disability attending college or university. As Jennifer has highlighted, one way of dealing with these struggles and finding help to address them is through mentoring.

Mentoring is a purposeful, caring, and voluntary relationship in which reflection and dialogue guide progress and action towards a conscious goal.

Mentoring promotes personal growth. A mentoring relationship can be used to increase personal or professional confidence, as well as, provide support during difficult or discouraging situations.

Mentoring can also be used for professional socialization. A mentoring relationship can help ease the transition from student to professional, one role to another and to a new work environment.

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Key Attributes of Mentoring

Three main characteristics of mentoring are consistently highlighted in the organizational behavior literature:

1. **Reciprocity:** mentoring requires a mutual relationship, involving a social exchange versus, a one way relationship.
2. **Developmental benefits:** both the mentee and mentor benefit from the learning partnership.
3. **Regular and consistent interaction:** the mentor and mentee relationship is longer term, regular and consistent compared to other relationships, such as coaching or advising.

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Benefits of Mentoring

There are several benefits to being in a mentoring relationship. A mentoring relationship can be affirming, increase an individual's confidence and self-esteem, lower their stress levels and encourage them to reach their goals. It can also lead to personal and professional satisfaction.

Specific to students, research has shown that those who are involved in mentoring relationships are better able to meet their personal goals and deal with career situations.

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The Mentoring Relationship

A mentoring relationship typically involves two individuals, a mentor and a mentee.

A **mentor** is a person who helps to guide an individual's growth and development. A mentor is NOT a professional counsellor, parent, or social worker, but someone who is confidant and provides support and guidance.

A mentor has more career experience and provides a listening ear, academic or career advice, guidance, and feedback. Mentors share knowledge and the perspective of their years of experience, nurturing the growth of the mentee as a future leader.

A **mentee** is a more junior individual who has a strong desire to learn, develop, and grow academically and professionally.

For example, Priya meets the criteria to be a mentee. She is a student and has a strong need to do well academically and grow to become a business professional.

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A **mentee** is a more junior individual who has a strong desire to learn, develop, and grow academically and professionally.

For example, Priya meets the criteria to be a mentee. She is a student and has a strong need to do well academically and grow to become a business professional.

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Role of the Mentor

In general, a mentor guides an individual to develop and grow; however, there are various types of mentors.

- **Traditional mentors** are usually older and experienced; they protect, advocate for, and nurture their mentees.
- Another type of mentor is a supportive boss who is a person in direct supervisory relationship with their mentee but functions more as a coach.
- **Organizational sponsors** are top-level managers who facilitate their mentees promotion within the organization.
- **Professional mentors** are paid career counsellors and advisors.
- **Patrons** are persons who use financial resources and status to launch their mentee's careers.
- **Invisible godparents** help mentees reach career goals without their knowing it.

In Jennifer's case, she is best described as a traditional mentor.

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Mentoring Versus Coaching

Mentoring has been referred to as the "transfer of wisdom"—with the mentee learning from an individual who has traveled the road before them. People tend to use the term mentoring and coaching to mean the same thing. While the terms have things in common, mentoring and coaching are not the same. Here are some key differences a mentor like Jennifer should be aware of:

- Coaching is concerned with helping an individual to improve, develop, and learn new knowledge and skills, usually in an environment that challenges the individual.
- The coaching relationship focuses on facilitating and developing specific personal qualities of an individual (the coachee), such as speaking more effectively, while in the mentoring relationship, the mentor uses their knowledge, wisdom, and experience to create an environment that supports a mentee to grow and develop in more than one aspect.
- Coaching is more instructional; the coach capitalizes on different skills and experiences to offer a new or diverse perspective. On the other hand, mentoring focuses on relationship building and involves providing a safe environment for the mentee to explore issues that affect their professional or personal success.

The mentor provides advice on career-related or personal topics, activities that help the mentee develop and opportunities for success.

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Differences between a mentor and a coach

Because mentoring and coaching are not the same, a mentor and a coach differ in a number of ways. These differences can be described in terms of the different aspects of a relationship.

- **Scope.** A mentor is focused on all aspects of a mentee's personal development, while a coach is usually focused on task-related aspects that are clearly defined and have a specific scope.
- **Role.** A mentor takes the role of the facilitator with no agenda or a semi-structured one. The mentor is committed to the development of the mentee through building emotional connections that respect boundaries. The coach takes the role of facilitator with a specific agenda, committed to the task or goal.
- **Focus.** Mentors are primarily focused on the transfer of key skills, whereas coaches are more concerned with empowering and motivating the individual to become proficient in specific skills.
- **Basis of support.** A mentor usually helps the mentee to develop self-responsibility and is concerned with helping the mentee take charge of his/her own growth. On the other hand, coaches tend to foster self-insight and focus on helping individuals grow through introspection and feedback from others.
- **Advice.** Mentors provide advice to broaden perspective and understanding, and often share information to which the mentee is seldom privy. Coaches offer advice to facilitate further development, and share confidential and personal feedback.

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

Being an effective mentor require certain qualities and skills. Here are seven key qualities that can help you to be an effective mentor.

1. Ability and willingness to communicate what you know

Being clear when communicating with your mentee is essential. This means that you share the lessons you've learned, or the strategies you're offering with an understanding that your mentee's decisions and their outcomes may be different from our own. It also means that you communicate the intricate details of what you have learned a way that makes sense and that your mentee can relate to and apply to their own experience.

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

2. Preparedness

Being a mentor means making an important, serious commitment to someone, so give your mentee the respect he or she deserves. Show your faith in your mentee's abilities and in the mentoring process by preparing for each session. Yes, it's important for your mentee to actively participate and even take the lead in these sessions. And you should ask your mentee what topics he or she wants to talk about beforehand, and be prepared to address them.

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

3. Approachability, availability, and the ability to listen

Your mentee must feel comfortable approaching you for advice or consultation; however, he or she must keep your availability and your schedule in mind. So, it's good policy or practice to establish a set day and time for regular sessions or meetings. Once these time parameters are established, you must keep your commitments wholeheartedly and be ready to listen with an open mind, and provide counsel and advice.

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

4. Honesty with diplomacy

Dispense with formalities and really help facilitate an open, even lively dialogue with your mentee. Be willing to debate and discuss issues in a tactful way. Say what you think your mentee needs to hear from you, not what you think he or she might want to hear. Provide useful, honest guidance while ensuring that your mentee is the one making decisions for themselves.

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

5. Inquisitiveness

Continual learning is essential be an effective mentor. Try to keep up with trends, topics, and developments that may impact you or your role, both now and in the future. And if your mentee asks you something you don't know the answer to, you and your mentee can work together to find the answer

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

6. Objectivity and fairness

Establishing clear boundaries and expectations is necessary for a successful mentoring relationship. A mentoring relationship differs from a friendship. Yes, you care about and would like your mentee to succeed, but that doesn't mean you are obligated to socialize with him or her, or engage in other ways such as through social websites like Facebook. Also, ensure that there is no hidden agenda or ulterior motive involved in this relationship. Remember, you can be an advocate for your mentee while still retaining your objectivity and fairness.

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Qualities of an Effective Mentor

7. Compassion and genuineness

However, maintaining your objectivity and being fairness doesn't mean you can't show your compassion. In fact, your mentoring relationship probably won't work if you don't show your interest and desire to provide one-on-one help and guidance. You must also be selfless about sharing what you know. Keeping your goal in mind - to remain worthy of someone's trust, model positive behavior and successful performance, and offer guidance and advice toward reaching a specific goal - should be the compass that guides all your actions as a mentor.

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Role of an Effective Mentee

An effective mentoring relationship is not one- sided. It requires a mentee who is an active participant. To take part in the mentoring relationship, a mentee needs to be ready to be an equal contributor to the relationship. The important roles a mentee must take on at some point during the mentoring relationship include:

- **Driver of the relationship:** identify and communicate goals to mentor; identify topics and issues and seeking feedback and guidance from mentor.
- **Plan Developer:** develop a plan of action with mentor to address goals
- **Resource partner:** work with your mentor to seek resources for learning; identify people and information that might be helpful
- **Teacher:** Look for opportunities to give back to your mentor; share any information that you think might be valuable
- **Continuous learner:** Take full advantage of this opportunity to learn

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Attributes of an Effective Mentee

A mentee that is effective is able to:

- be self-motivated, and take responsibility for his or her own development
- communicate clearly, listen, and articulate clear expectations
- set goals/objectives such as self-assessment, development and planning
- work with the mentor to develop an action plan to achieve goals
- complete the work necessary to achieve goals and celebrate
- share responsibility for making meetings with the mentor happen
- start and maintain contact with the mentor
- respect the mentor's time and feedback
- accept feedback and share in finding answers and solutions for improvement
- accept responsibility for the outcome of their actions
- track or measure the progress of learning within the mentoring relationship

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Meet Priya, Jennifer's First Mentee!

" I decided to join an e-mentoring program for women seeking careers in business. I figured I could benefit from knowing a woman who has made it in business world. It was pretty easy to join; all I had to do was create a profile and complete a few online training modules. I was given three choices of possible mentors and I choose Jennifer! I really like Jennifer and it's been awesome having someone to connect with about stuff I'm interested in. **"**

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Stages of the mentoring relationship

Successful mentoring relationships don't happen by accident. Formalized mentoring relationships, like Jennifer and Priya's, tend to move through a series of stages.

Stage 1: Preparing for the relationship- Includes self-reflection, identifying goals and preparing yourself to take on the commitment involved in being in a mentoring relationship

Stage 2: Searching/ Seeking out – Involves finding someone to support journey to achieving goals

Stage 3: Initiating – coming together to discuss goals, identify expectation and establishing ground rules.

Stage 4: Laying the foundation – Involves getting to know each other, building trust, continuing to clarify expectations and fine tuning goals.

Stage 5: Building and progressing – involves working to attain goals, empowering each other and building confidence and esteem; longest and most satisfying part of the process.

Stage 6: Relationship ends at the point when goals have been reached; involves affirming, evaluating and celebrating process and outcomes, as well as discussing what comes next

Jennifer and Priya have completed stage one and two. They have moved into the initiating stage, which in their program includes developing a mentoring agreement.

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Keys to a Successful Mentoring Relationship

Moving through the stages of a mentoring relationship successfully requires the active participation of both the mentor and mentee. There are many things each individual can do to ensure the relationship is successful. These strategies will depend on factors such as the focus of the mentoring relationship and the goals set by the mentee. Because Jennifer believes mentoring is a two-way process in which both individuals have roles to play, she's written a list of actions she plans to implement to help make her relationship with Priya a success. I will:

- provide feedback and share ideas with Priya
- try my best to listen to Priya's concerns and draw on my own experiences to give her encouragement and advice.
- do my best to find and provide resources that will support Priya to meet the goals we set together.
- act as a support for Priya.
- challenge Priya to help her consider multiple points of view around issues.

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Jennifer's Success Strategies

Jennifer has also encouraged Priya to make a list of the actions Priya plans to implement to support their mentoring relationship. Here are the strategies that Priya has come up with:

- I will identify the skills, knowledge, and goals that I want to achieve and communicate them to my mentor
- I will bring up new topics that are important to me at any point and give feedback to my mentor
- I will maintain a mentoring plan and work with my mentor to set up goals, developmental activities, and time frames
- I will work with my mentor to seek resources for learning; identify people and information that might be helpful
- I will look for opportunities to give back to my mentor; share any information that I think might be valuable
- I will take full advantage of the opportunity to learn from my mentor.

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Communicating with Your Mentee

Communication is another key to a successful mentoring relationship. Although the mentor is ultimately responsible for taking the lead to move the relationship through the stages of mentoring, the mentee also has a role to play in maintaining effective communication.

In Jennifer and Priya's case, if they do not communicate effectively, it can lead to a failed mentoring relationship. Jennifer must ensure that she is following the timelines and activities outlined by the mentoring program; as well as, set up and make regular and meaningful contact with Priya.

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Organization is also Key!

Setting up a schedule for meetings and staying organized is a key strategy a mentor and mentee can use to maintain good communication.

Jennifer can consider using several strategies to enhance the organization of the meetings she and Jennifer set up:

- scheduling new appointments in collaboration with Priya after every meeting
- being prepared adequately for each meeting (e.g., being able to identify with Priya a specific focus or objectives prior to each meeting; prepare a meeting agenda; write down key points she wants to make during the discussion)
- keeping a personal record of the discussion had and the action items of the meeting

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Problems in the Mentoring Relationship

While mentoring is generally a fruitful and rewarding experience for both the mentee and mentor, problems can occasionally arise. Unsuccessful mentoring pairs have reported the following:

- communication infrequencies
- a lack of preparation for mentoring sessions – lack of clear goals leads to wasted time.
- Lack of follow-through on desired outcomes – this can occur from the mentee, mentor, or both sides.

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Strategies for Solving Problems

Successful mentoring pairs use simple strategies to get the most out of their relationship:

- Mutually set clear goals for the relationship
- Negotiate and maintain boundaries
- Discuss expectations of and maintain confidentiality
- Communicate on a regular and frequent basis.
- Communicate in a conversational style – being less formal makes communicating and sharing easier
- Are direct and ask questions
- Incorporate creativity and fun into the relationship
- Set specific topics / goals for the meetings
- Ask program staff for help with challenges
- Reflect and maintain awareness of own feelings and attitudes
- Openness and willingness to work together to resolve problems and issues that may arise in the relationship

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Scenarios

Here are two scenario problems to test your problem solving skills as a potential mentee. Read through each scenario and the options to resolve the problem. Keeping in mind the simple strategies identified in the previous slide, select the option you believe is the best approach to address the situations facing Priya and Jennifer.

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Scenario 1

If you were Jennifer how would you respond?

A Suggest that Priya speak with a disability counsellor at her school's Student Disability Services.



B Support Priya's idea to file a complaint against her professor with the Ombudsperson's Office at her school.



C Suggest that Priya meet with her professor to talk about her disability and discuss why she needs the accommodation.



D Suggest that Priya get help from a previous professor who allowed her to record lectures.



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Scenario 1

Which of the following actions do you think Priya should take?

Support Priya's idea to file a complaint against her professor with the Ombudsperson's Office at her school.



This advice is the least likely to resolve Priya's situation. It's premature for Priya to contact the Ombudsperson's Office because she doesn't have all the details and facts about the situation. For example, Priya does not know why her professor denied her request. There may be a policy that bans recordings in a classroom. Instead, Priya can meet with a disability counsellor at her school's Student Disability Services to get support and gain an understanding of her situation. A counsellor can help Priya develop self-advocacy skills and coordinate communication with her professor, if she is interested.

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Conclusion

Mentoring can be a wonderful and life-changing experience for both, a mentee and mentor. The mutual relationship that develops between a mentor and mentee is associated with a number of positive outcomes for both individuals. But mentoring takes work and dedication!

We hope that after completing this module you have increased your knowledge and understanding of mentoring, its characteristics, the roles involved- particularly the role of the mentor- the skill sets required, and key to developing a successful mentoring relationship. If you are preparing to be a mentor, we also hope that the process towards meeting your goal has been accelerated.

If you would like to learn more about the mentoring relationship from the perspective of a mentee, click here to follow Priya's journey! You can also visit the PSDNET website for more resources on mentoring. To receive a certificate of participation click the link below, enter your name into the certificate and hit Print to download a pdf copy.

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