

## What it means to be a Mentor

### Definition

#### What a Mentor is:

- Someone who believes in us (even when we don't)
- Someone who doesn't compete with us but takes pride in seeing us strive
- Someone who pays particular attention to our development and progress

*"A Mentor is the person that has a sense of where you can go when you don't have the map yet" – Esther Perel*

#### What a Mentor is not:

- The expert on all topics (nobody can know it all, but a Mentor can guide and point to the right sources of knowledge)
- The teacher (there can be some knowledge-sharing from them, but that's not the sole focus)
- The one responsible for their Mentee's learning (the Mentor is here to guide and facilitate the growth process, but the drive to learn and the work must be their responsibility)

### Best Practices

#### 1. Managing Expectations

##### *For yourself:*

- Embrace the productivity hit. Remember: the time you're investing in mentoring might slow down your day-to-day right now, but you're multiplying yourself on the long-term!

##### *For them:*

- Set expectations from the beginning on your relationship Mentor-Mentee, what you expect in levels of autonomy and proactivity, your touchpoints
- Tell them it's ok to not understand everything at first
- Set clear the order of magnitude when they should start understanding things (days vs weeks vs months)

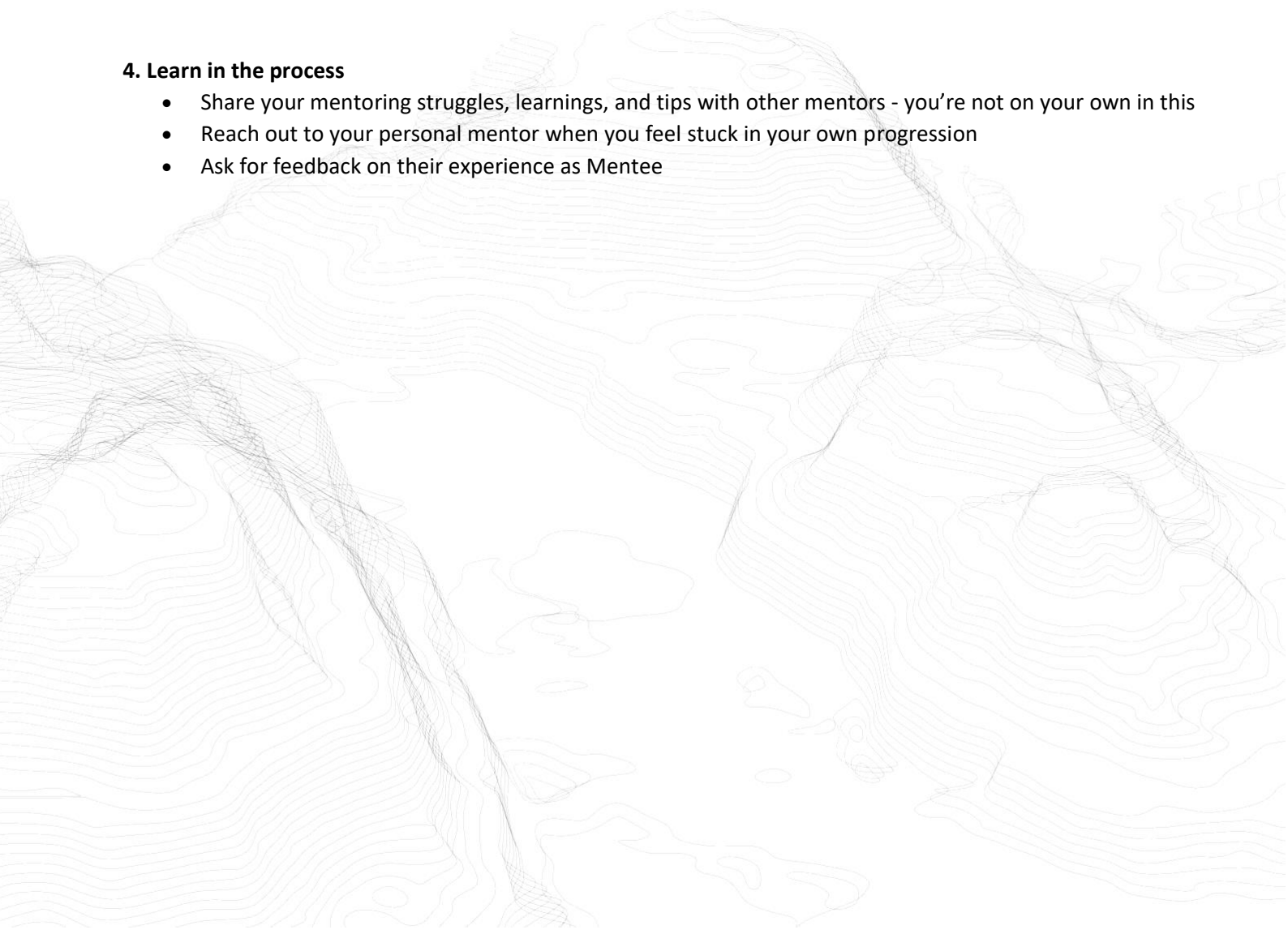
## **2. Empower**

- Create ownership from early-on, guide and point, but don't spoon feed them
- Trust them with tasks and allow them to fail (as long as they learn from it)
- Don't fix their issues or implement their work items, but point them to documentation / explain to them how to, and let them discover
- Ask them to comment / contribute on company guidelines
- Progressively push them outside of their comfort zone, encourage them to take on new challenges they'll learn from
- Pay attention to what they're great at and build on these strengths

## **3. Support**

- Have regular 1-1s to check-in on progress, blockers and motivation levels
- You're not their teacher: you don't have all the answers, but you should be able to point to whoever does. Help when you can, and bring in someone else when you can't
- Make sure they get a "feel" of your vision for their development and celebrate milestones together
- Mentoring someone creates a long-lasting link, make sure it's the good kind for the sake of the both of you

## **4. Learn in the process**

- Share your mentoring struggles, learnings, and tips with other mentors - you're not on your own in this
  - Reach out to your personal mentor when you feel stuck in your own progression
  - Ask for feedback on their experience as Mentee
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- A faint, light grey topographic map of a mountainous region, likely the Swiss Alps, serves as a background for the lower half of the page. The map features intricate contour lines and a network of thin lines representing roads or trails.