



**BSE GLOBAL
DIVERSITY +
INCLUSION**

MENTORING GUIDE

A GUIDE FOR MENTORS

CENTER FOR HEALTH LEADERSHIP & PRACTICE
A CENTER OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE



WHAT IS MENTORING?

In *The Odyssey* (written by Homer, a Greek poet), Odysseus (known as Ulysses in the Latin translation) was preparing to fight the Trojan War when he realized he would be leaving behind his only son and heir, Telemachus. Since the child was young and wars typically dragged on for years (the Trojan War lasted 10 years), Ulysses entrusted Telemachus' care and education to Mentor, his wise, trusted friend.

Today, mentoring is a process in which an experienced individual helps another person develop his or her goals and skills through a series of time-limited, confidential, one-on-one conversations and other learning activities. Mentors also draw benefits from the mentoring relationship. As a mentor, you will have the opportunity to share your wisdom and experiences, evolve your own thinking, develop a new relationship, and deepen your skills as a mentor.



How Do I Become a Mentor?

There are many kinds of mentoring relationships, ranging from informal to formal. An informal mentoring relationship usually occurs in a spontaneous format. (Think of times you have been helped by someone more experienced than you without explicitly asking to be mentored.) Informal mentoring may also occur within the context of other relationships such as a supervisory relationship or even peer relationships. A formal mentoring relationship is characterized by its intentionality – the partners in the relationship ask for or offer the mentoring, establish goals for the relationship and make agreements about its nature. There are also mentoring programs that facilitate formal mentoring relationships. A “facilitated” mentoring relationship has been defined as “...a structure and series of processes designed to create effective mentoring relationships; guide the desired behavior change for those involved; and evaluate the results for the protégés, the mentors and the organization.”¹ These mentoring relationships occur within a structured and defined framework and involve a third party. Often these programs have a specific goal such as helping participants develop their careers.



IF YOU HAVE BEEN APPROACHED TO BE A MENTOR, OR WOULD LIKE TO OFFER TO BE SOMEONE'S MENTOR, REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS PRIOR TO COMMITTING TO THE RELATIONSHIP:

- What experiences and learning can I bring to the mentoring relationship?
- What are my own expectations for the relationship?
 - Are there any obstacles that could impede the relationship's development?



KEY MENTORING SKILLS

The mentoring literature shows that mentors and protégés tend to employ certain mentoring skills. Research also indicates that these skills can be developed, and that particular skills or competencies seem to result in the most successful mentoring relationships. Linda Phillips-Jones, Ph.D., mentoring expert and author of *The New Mentors & Protégés: How to Succeed with the New Mentoring Partnerships*, and numerous guides and tools for mentors and protégés (see Appendix III), studied hundreds of mentor-protégé relationships and developed a set of critical mentoring skills and competencies. The key mentoring skills discussed here are adapted from her work.

You will likely recognize the skills outlined here and may have experience employing them successfully in other relationships. As you progress through the mentoring relationship, try to employ these skills whenever possible.

KEY MENTORING SKILLS

LISTENING ACTIVELY

Listening actively is the most basic skill you will use throughout your relationship. Active listening not only establishes rapport but creates a positive, accepting environment that permits open communication. By listening actively, you will ascertain your protégé's interests and needs.

BUILDING TRUST

Trust is built over time. You will increase trust by keeping your conversations and other communications with your protégé confidential, honoring your scheduled meetings and calls, consistently showing interest and support, and by being honest with your protégé.

DETERMINING GOALS AND BUILDING CAPACITY

As a role model, you should have your own career and personal goals and share these, when appropriate, with your protégé. It is also likely that he or she will ask you how you set and achieved your own goals. In addition, you can help your protégé identify and achieve his or her career and personal goals.

ENCOURAGING AND INSPIRING

Comment favorably on his or her accomplishments;
Communicate your belief in his or her capacity to grow personally and professionally and reach his or her goals; and Respond to his or her frustrations and challenges with words of support, understanding, encouragement and praise. (Just knowing that someone else has been there can be tremendously helpful.)

STAGES OF FORMAL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Like most relationships, mentoring relationships progress through stages. Your formal mentoring relationship will likely reflect four developmental stages with each stage forming an inherent part of the next:

01 Building the Relationship

02 Exchanging Information and Setting Goals

03 Working Towards Goals/Deepening the Engagement

04 Ending the Formal Mentoring Relationship and Planning for the Future



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MENTORING BEST PRACTICES

- Think of yourself as a “learning facilitator” rather than the person with all the answers. Help your protégé find people and other resources that go beyond your experience and wisdom on a topic.
- Emphasize questions over advice giving. Use probes that help your protégé think more broadly and deeply. If he or she talks only about facts, ask about feelings. If he or she focuses on feelings, ask him or her to review the facts. If he or she seems stuck in an immediate crisis, help him or her see the big picture.
- When requested, share your own experiences, lessons learned, and advice. Emphasize how your experiences could be different from his or her experiences and are merely examples. Limit your urge to solve the problem for him or her.
- Resist the temptation to control the relationship and steer its outcomes; your protégé is responsible for his or her own growth.
- Help your protégé see alternative interpretations and approaches.
- Build your protégé’s confidence through supportive feedback.
- Encourage, inspire, and challenge your protégé to achieve his or her goals.
- Help your protégé reflect on successful strategies he or she has used in the past that could apply to new challenges.
- Be spontaneous now and then. Beyond your planned conversations, call or e-mail “out of the blue” just to leave an encouraging word or piece of new information.
- Reflect on your mentoring practice. Request feedback.
- Enjoy the privilege of mentoring. Know that your efforts will likely have a significant impact on your protégé’s development as well as your own.



THANK YOU!

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