



## **Mentee Roles and Responsibilities**

To be involved in a mentoring relationship is a privilege for both participants, and as a result it is important to be gracious and thoughtful towards each other. When unclear about what to do or how to act, please seek guidance from the mentoring resources, or better yet, ask you mentor/mentee. The gesture of asking conveys respect for what the two of you are working to accomplish.

Some basic premises of what makes the ideal mentee are:

1. Eagerness to learn, admission
2. Ability and willingness to work as a team player
3. Patience
4. Be a risk taker
5. Have a positive attitude

### **MENTEE ROLES**

Mentoring is a partnership between two individuals, the mentor and the mentee. In considering the roles of the mentor, he or she must wear many hats throughout the process. A mentee must also perform several roles.

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. As a student, the mentee needs to practice and demonstrate what has been learned.

A mentee is the "gauge" to measure how interactive the connection between the mentor and mentee will be. This means that the mentee determines the capacity of the mentoring connection. The mentee decides upon the amount of help and guidance he/she needs. As well, the mentee should take the initiative to ask for help or advice and to tackle more challenging assignments.

## **Recommendations/ Guidelines for Mentees**

1. Allow your mentor to take the lead in the relationship, at least initially. Listen and respect the opportunities, limitations and format of the relationship he or she is able to provide for you. Always act with courtesy and respect towards your mentor.
2. Use active listening skills during discussions with your mentor. Be careful not to interrupt, unless you need to clarify a point and you see no other opportunity or pause. Take notes when appropriate, ask good questions and have a purpose for your questions.
3. Prepare the goals and objectives you have for your career. Be prepared to ask for specific guidance and advice on your goals, plans and strategic ideas. The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for your mentor to help you.
4. Take the initiative to ask for feedback. Feedback, although difficult to hear at times, is critical to your personal and professional growth and development. Demonstrate that you are open to hear new ideas and suggestions to bring out your best and overcome any blind spots. Get feedback on specific issues, for example, how you come across to others. Ask for specific details to ensure you understand specific behaviors.

Tell your mentor how you prefer to get feedback (for example, direct, with humor, softened). Don't get defensive. Thank your mentor for taking the risk to be honest with you. Remember, if your mentor was not invested in you, he/she would probably not take this risk. Honest feedback gives you an opportunity to improve yourself and help you to move towards fulfilling your potential.

5. Always be considerate and respect your mentor's time as you do your own. Be thorough, but succinct in your explanations, experiences and comments. Watch for clues that you may be going on too long. It is polite to ask directly if you are talking too long.
6. Return phone calls promptly and be on time with commitments or meetings. If your mentor offers a specific time frame of availability, respect his/her wishes by following through. Only extend the time of your contact if your mentor initiates or insists to extend or complete a task or discussion.
7. Seriously consider all advice or suggestions you receive. Arguing why the mentor's advice would not work, can be construed as rude and close-minded.
8. Demonstrate that you have followed advice or commitments for action at every opportunity, even if you have modified your plan. Pointing out that you used your mentor's help and sharing outcomes is important.

9. Express your appreciation for every form of assistance you get. Provide positive feedback, thanks as well as positive comments to him/her in front of others.

10. Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to others. If you disagree with your mentor's values, behaviors, or attitudes, discuss it with him/her directly. Respect your mentor's confidence and trust.

11. Assume the mentoring connection will be strictly professional. This does not mean you cannot be yourself, or you cannot be friendly. Let your mentor take the lead in establishing a more friendship based connection. Do not intrude into your mentor's personal life or expect to be close friends. If you have a cross-gender connection, any romantic involvement is inappropriate. Ensure your mentoring connection does not give the appearance of favoritism or inappropriate/romantic.

12. Prepare yourself to move beyond your mentoring connection, once it has served its purpose. Be sure to end on a positive note.

13. Keep the door open to return to your mentor for assistance or advice at a future time.

14. Follow up with your mentor after termination to keep in touch, to share your progress and to continue to express your gratitude.

### ***Websites of Support***

- [www.mentors.ca](http://www.mentors.ca)
- [www.mentornet.net](http://www.mentornet.net)
- <http://research.sun.com/SEED/>
- <http://www.cpsd.apsd.ubc.ca/trimentoring/>