

Information Ahead of Your First Meeting

The Mentoring Relationship

The mentor and mentee should negotiate the operational details of the mentoring relationship in the first few meetings. Issues for consideration include:

- » When, where, how often, and how long will the mentor and mentee meet?
- » How formal/informal and how flexible would the mentor and mentee like the relationship to be?
- » What are the mentee's objectives for the mentoring relationship?
- » What are the expectations and roles of the mentor and mentee?
- » What kind of issues, tasks or projects would the mentee like to work on with the mentor?
- » What types of activities would the mentee find valuable, in addition to meeting and talking with the mentor?
- » What kind and how much contact will the mentor and mentee have in between meetings, e.g. by email or phone?
- » How will the mentor and mentee keep the relationship going if either party is away or if meetings have to be cancelled or rescheduled?
- » What are the confidentiality requirements?

The mentor is responsible for:

- » Maintaining confidentiality
- » Listening objectively, and acting as a sounding board, to the mentee's ideas, dreams, plans and problems;
- » Asking questions that will encourage the mentee to explore issues from a variety of perspectives;
- » Challenging the mentee's traditional ways of thinking and acting to try strategies that are outside his/her "comfort zone";
- » Facilitating the mentee's learning and development and "raising the bar" in relation to his/her potential;
- » Providing information, guidance, support, encouragement and constructive feedback;
- » Facilitating problem-solving, decision-making and strategic planning processes in relation to work or career matters;
- » Providing guidance on developing professional competence and on gaining recognition for this within recognised chartered programs

The mentee is responsible for:

- » Maintaining confidentiality;
- » Defining his/her learning needs;
- » Setting learning objectives, and planning and implementing strategies to achieve those objectives;
- » Reflecting on the learning process and outcomes;
- » Making decisions and taking appropriate action;
- » Maintaining appropriate documentation to ensure progress towards chartered status where appropriate.

Mentoring Conversation Starters

- » Tell me your story
- » What would make this partnership an excellent experience for you? What might make it a waste of time?
- » What part of your job is the most challenging?
- » How do you stay motivated?
- » How do you handle stress?
- » What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses
- » What do you want to get better at?
- » Are you open to feedback from me? How would you like it? What should I avoid doing?
- » Describe how you best like to learn.
- » Tell me some key experiences in your life.
- » Biggest stuff up early on in your career.
- » What makes you laugh?
- » What lessons have you learned from your successes and failures?
- » What do you do for your own growth and development?
- » What unique skills and competencies do you possess?