

MENTORSHIP GUIDE



University at Albany School of Public Health Health Policy, Management & Behavior

MENTORING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A mentor is someone who imparts wisdom to and shares knowledge with a mentee or protégé. Mentoring has been identified as an important influence in personal, professional, and academic development for both mentors and mentees. Mentorship promotes career guidance, counseling, and research collaborations, information exchange, and social interactions. It is a solution to our nation's concern on how to address increased demand for a globally competitive and talented workforce. Although, an obvious solution, mentoring relationships are often less sought after; not because it is difficult to attain, rather, because it takes time to build.

However, with the proliferation of social media, mentoring relationships can be sustained now more than ever. Multiple points of communication make it possible for mentors and mentees to have their needs and expectations met in ways that did not exist just a decade ago.

5 KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL MENTORSHIP

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REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Before beginning your mentoring experience, it is best to assess your strengths, interests, experience, contacts, and desired areas of development. A good mentoring relationship is largely determined by the effort that both parties invest in the beginning stage, especially on part of the mentee as mentors are sharing their time and resources to help their mentee achieve some of their professional goals. Thus, individual drive to search for growth opportunities when combined with a thorough assessment of your own strengths and capabilities are critical components to shaping a successful mentoring relationship.

A few key ideas to keep in mind throughout the mentorship process:

- Your first mentoring relationship may not be the right fit; and
- May not solve all your personal, professional, or academic problems, and
- A quality relationship takes commitment and transparency

Most importantly, no mentoring relationship is the same. Everyone's journey is his or her own and it is important to regard it in that way!



*"Time is the wisest counselor of all."
- Pericles*

How to Deal with Conflicting Schedules

- ✓ When setting up a meeting, be sure to choose a mutually convenient location.
- ✓ Discuss the frequency of meetings and scheduling early in the mentor-mentee relationship.
- ✓ Discuss potential difficulties and conflicts in the beginning and agree upon strategies to address them.

GOOD MATCH

According to mentormatchme.com, the first step to securing an appropriate mentoring relationship is the identification of a challenge, which is step one of an eight-step model used to successfully match mentoring relationships. These steps are outlined below:

Step one: Clearly define your challenge(s).

Step two: Share your identified challenge with your mentor. Effective mentoring is more than sharing advice; it is helping to broaden perspectives and teach new skills.

Step three: Agreement on goals, roles, activities, measures, and boundaries through a written contract.

Step four: Keep the dialogue open and running.

Step five: Take action on new ideas and approaches

Step six: Use conflict as an opportunity to learn and jointly address concerns.

Step seven: Measure your progress.

Step eight: Close relationship with an effective closing conversation, which will allow you to understand if you met your challenge.

Defining the *type of investment* you are willing to make toward the growth of your mentoring relationship will also aid in this process. A helpful tool to assess the type of investment you are willing to make is the “Mentoring Investment” table below, developed by Arizona State University:

		Mentoring Investment		
Mentee Need	High	B	D	<p>A: The mentor’s resources and mentee’s needs are low, spontaneous or occasional. Very short-term interventions may be adequate and satisfying to both parties.</p> <p>B: The mentee’s need is high and the mentor’s resources, time, skills, etc. are low. Helping the mentee find a more appropriate mentor (or professional help) may be appropriate, perhaps through a referral to someone in your network.</p> <p>C: The mentor’s resources are substantial, but the mentee’s needs are low. Occasional help may be all that is needed, and the mentor may have time and talents available for helping others.</p> <p>D: The mentee’s need is high and the mentor’s resources are abundant. The potential exists for an intense and productive relationship.</p>
	Low	A	C	
		Mentor Resources		
		Low	High	



TOP MATCHING QUESTIONS

- 1) What do I need from a mentoring relationship?
- 2) What do I want from a mentoring relationship?
- 3) What roles and functions do I expect from my mentor/mentee?
- 4) What are some hypothetical questions that might expand my individual views?
- 5) What type of activities do I want to develop out of a mentoring relationship?
- 6) What do I expect to learn from a mentoring relationship?
- 7) When and how do I assess and reassure my understanding of a particular situation?
- 8) When was the last time I thoroughly analyzed my goals? Are my goals currently perceived and being achieved?
- 9) How focused on my goals have I been lately? What might I need to focus on? Why?

MUTUAL BENEFIT

Although mentoring relationships are typically viewed as relationships that yield unequal benefits for the mentor, both parties can benefit equally. Benefits for mentors and mentees include but are not limited to the following:

Mentees

- Become part of a network that has a greater understanding of your field of interest
- Learn management, analytical, technical and strategic leadership skills
- Be introduced to new opportunities, experiences, referrals, and resources
- Develop relationships with professionals and have an opportunity to learn from them
- Have access to many new colleagues who have a range of skills and knowledge

Mentors

- Have the satisfaction of coaching and encouraging new skills
- Have your values, skills, experiences and knowledge recognized
- Initiate an opportunity to do something different and develop your own interpersonal skills
- Develop a relationship with another professional that has expertise and networks in areas of similar interest

Mentors & Mentees

- Achieve personal fulfillment from investing in each other
- Build a positive reputation for yourself in your field as someone who is a reputable mentor/mentee
- Receive recommendations from your mentors and endorsements from your mentees
- Identify testimonials, case studies and referrals to enhance your professional profile
- Expand your network of contacts
- Improve your processes and performance
- Improve your leadership skills
- Learn from alternative approaches and different ways of thinking
- Benefit from a reciprocal relationship
- Develop new coaching skills

DEVELOPING THE RELATIONSHIP

Mentors and mentees have a responsibility to develop their relationship.

Both the mentor and mentee must make a concerted effort to articulate expectations and exchange ideas on approaches that will enable the growth of their relationship.



As previously discussed, communication of realistic expectations in regards to time commitment and frequency of meetings are the foundation for a functional mentoring relationship. It is necessary to follow this discussion with a conversation on collaborative opportunities, networking, and mentoring goals. Communication on such topics includes but is not limited to:



“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place”

- George Bernard Shaw

Mentees

- Creating a career plan or guide for success
- Advice to avoid common mistakes or pitfalls
- Bridging the gap of inexperience
- Referral to valuable academic, professional and personal resources
- Resume critiques
- Reading of writing samples

Mentors

- Areas of training
- Expertise and experiences
- Level of professional & community involvement
- Current employment opportunities
- Current responsibilities
- Potential collaborative projects

Good communication involves:

- Active involvement and commitment to the growth of the mentoring relationship
- Continuous outreach and follow-up to varying agreements and responsibilities (e.g. setting up meetings, developing agendas for the meetings, requesting advice, getting support, looking for opportunities to learn)
- Active listening and consideration of feedback
- Open and honest communication
- Preparation of goals for the relationship

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

Whether your mentoring relationship is thriving or simply coasting along, it makes sense to stop periodically and take a look at what is and is not working. Remember, planned mentoring relationships tend to produce more satisfaction for both parties when certain foundations are in place and when both the mentor and mentee take active roles.

Resources to enhance the relationship:

- Articles, tips, or newsletters
- Assessment instruments
- On-line courses
- Mentor/mentee bulletin board
- Email or blog
- Teleconferencing or videoconferencing
- LinkedIn, Facebook, Tumblr, or Twitter
- Conferences

A mentoring relationship left alone is not likely to flourish. Strategies to maintain the enthusiasm from the beginning of the mentoring relationship to its close will improve the probability of achieving greater outcomes.

Activities that can be beneficial to the relationship:

- Networking events
- Workshops on topics such as career planning, communication, and leadership
- Current projects or assignments
- Social events
- Presentations at your place of work or at school
- Workplace tours
- Shadowing
- Journaling or journal prompts
- Mid-point review activity
- Closing celebration, recognition ceremony or lunch

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”

- Benjamin Franklin

INSPIRED BY

1. Resources. MentorMatchMe. n.p., n.d. Web. 7 February 2013.
<<http://www.mentormatchme.com/mentoring/resources>>
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3. Cahill, L., Blanchard, S. Mentoring Handbook. *Graduate Women's Association Mentoring Series 2000-2001*. Arizona State University. 7 February 2013.

RESOURCES

1. 101 Careers in Public Health. By: Beth Seltzer
2. Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You Through the Secrets of Personality Type. By: Paul Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger
3. Milestones in Public Health: Accomplishments in Public Health over the Last 100 Years. By: Barbara DeBuono
4. Moments in Leadership: case Studies in Public Health Policy and Practice. By: Barbara DeBuono, Ana Rita Gonzalez & Sara Rosenbaum
5. Public Health: Career Choices That Make a Difference. By: Bernard J. Turnock
6. Get Hired! Winning Strategies to Ace the Interview. By: Paul C. Green
7. Landing the Job You Want: How to have the best interview of your life. By: William Byham
8. The Elements of Résumé Style. By: Scott Bennett
9. 301 Smart Answers to Tough Interview Questions. By: Vicky Oliver
10. Opportunities in Health Careers. By: Alex Kacen

Health Policy, Management, & Behavior Student Affairs Committee

The Student Affairs Committee is made up of faculty, staff and MPH students in the Department of Health Policy, Management and Behavior.

Our role is to serve as an advisory group to the Department Chair and faculty on student concerns as they relate to courses, instructors, advising, and mentoring just to name a few.

Our mission, with the aid of our student representatives, is to give the students a voice and a sense of community, as well as recommend actions that will enhance the student experience within the Department and at the School of Public Health.



Health Policy Management & Behavior Student Affairs Committee, 2012-13. From left: Beth Meah, Linda Gauvain-McNulty, Laura Santacrose, David Hoffman, Kalie Hess, Christine Bozlak

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