



A mentors guide to mentoring

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is centered on continuous improvement and is all about you building a relationship with someone who wishes to acquire your skills and knowledge to continually develop and build on where they are and where they want to be or to help their personal development.

A mentor is someone with an experienced view who offers support to an individual with less experience (the mentee). The mentoring relationship supports their development and growth in their career.

It involves a series of meetings to discuss goals, supporting an action plan for the mentee's future and reviewing their progress. Although the mentee will be driving the relationship and creating a detailed action plan, it is your job to offer support and help them put in place a suitable development plan. Mentoring also gives you the opportunity to develop your management and leadership skills.

Why is mentoring important?

Studies have shown that mentoring is a significant factor in improving morale and retention. Mentoring has been proven to be extremely effective and have a positive impact on both the mentor and mentee - it's simply a case of making the most of the opportunity.

Mentoring can benefit you as an individual - as it provides a fresh insight into your personal goals which can in turn help you improve the way you work.

Mentor Meetings

Once a date is agreed. Ensure your first meeting is all about your mentees developmental plan and what is they want to achieve.

Approach	Action	Questions
Get to know your mentee on a personal level	<p>Establish a relationship by setting up an initial meeting.</p> <p>Discuss the preferred communication style.</p> <p>Get to know your mentee in general e.g. their hobbies, likes, dislikes.</p>	<p>Ask questions to get to know your mentee and to find out what they're passionate about.</p>
Understand your mentee on a professional level	<p>Find out what your mentee enjoys about their role and what they struggle with.</p> <p>Explore your mentee's goals and aspirations.</p>	<p>Where do you want to be a year from now?</p> <p>What do you want from your career?</p> <p>How do you intend on making this happen?</p>
Make the most of their strengths and develop their weaknesses	<p>Encourage the mentee to create a Personal Development Plan, and arrange to meet them as regularly as required.</p> <p>Agree the support you can offer as a mentor.</p>	<p>How do you think you can highlight your strengths?</p> <p>How often do you think we should meet?</p>
Chart your mentee's progress	<p>Review your last meeting so you're ready to discuss the progress that has been made.</p>	<p>What progress have you made since we last met?</p> <p>Are you coming across any road blocks in your progress?</p>

Tips for Mentor

- Listen more often than you speak.
- Be prepared to share your authentic self with the mentee.
- Be consistent with contact with your mentee.
- Be as objective as possible.
- Affirm your mentee's achievements.
- Challenge the mentee to look at opportunities as well as problems.
- Share know-how and offer advice only when the mentee asks for it.
- Assist the mentee in identifying realistic career goals and plan with them how to achieve these.
- Make sure you have enough time to commit to the relationship.

What skills are needed to be a mentor?

The biggest skill needed is a willingness to share your knowledge to the mentee participant.

How much time will being a mentor take?

The amount of time is variable based on an agreement between the mentor and the mentee. It is hoped that the mentoring relationship will extend beyond the interactions during the face-to-face meetings, but the meetings are used to kick-start the relationship.

What happens after a mentor and mentoring participant are matched?

Once a match has been made, the mentor should initiate contact with the mentee. After that, the interactions are up to them. Useful interactions will vary based on the needs of the mentee and the skills of the mentor. In the event that a mentor or mentee is unresponsive, or the pair decide that the match is not constructive, the WUN team can be contacted to request a new pairing.

What if my mentoring participant has a question that I cannot answer?

When someone volunteers to be a mentor, it is expected that mentors will not know all the answers, but should be in a good position to point the mentoring participant in the right direction. This includes assisting in searching out the answer to the question.

What if I no longer have the time to be a mentor, or do not wish to continue in the program?

It would be ideal for you to contact your mentee and explain the situation. Please also inform the WUN team (contact@womensutilitiesnetwork.com) so we can arrange a new mentor for the mentee.

How long will I mentor for? How many hours a week are involved?

The time commitment is 10-12 hours over 12 months. This works out as approximately 1 meeting every 6-8 weeks. You and your mentee can decide on a schedule that suits your goals for the partnership and your availability. The mentorship will last one year giving mentors the opportunity to mentor other women in the future.

How do you match mentors with a mentee?

Matches between mentors and mentees are made based on both participants skillsets. The mentee selects their match based on Mentors profiles that will be produced and approved by the mentor when the questionnaire is completed. If a mentee chooses you as a mentor you will be notified and you will decide if the match is appropriate.

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