

MENTORING HANDBOOK TEMPLATE

Presented by



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Introduction

When you agreed to participate in a Mentoring Relationship, you agreed to take on a commitment to this mentoring relationship to ensure the partnership is a productive one.

This handbook will provide you with beneficial tools and resources for a solid, mutually beneficial mentoring partnership.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is...	Mentoring is not...
• An equal partnership • A two-way learning experience • Focused on developmental goals • Focused on the growth of the individual • Based upon trust, honesty, and commitment • Learning to value differences	• Replacement for supervisor feedback • Job specific training • Performance evaluation • Tied to advancement of position or pay • A one-time meeting

Responsibilities in a Mentoring Relationship

Mentor's Responsibilities

- Commit to the mentoring process and hold the Mentee accountable for their commitment.
- Ensure the relationship is set up the right way: Take time to know and understand the Mentee, take responsibility for having clearly defined expectations
- Keep commitments: use regularly scheduled check-ins.
- Respect confidences: both you and your Mentee should agree on what confidentiality means to you.
- Challenge the Mentee: address the Mentee's strengths, weaknesses, expectations and goals, look for areas where the Mentee needs the most help.
- Identify opportunities for development outside mentoring conversations: provide access to resources you used to gain your experience.
- Share experiences: provide examples of personal success and failure that the Mentee can learn from.
- Notify if the partnership is not meeting expectations: contact POWER immediately for assistance.

Mentee's Responsibilities

- Commit to the mentoring process and hold the Mentor accountable for their commitment.
- Ensure the relationship is set up the right way: take time to know and understand the Mentor.
- Provide the Mentor with your goals, expectations, strengths, weaknesses, and experiences.
- Keep commitments: use regularly scheduled check-ins.
- Respect confidences: both you and your Mentor should agree on what confidentiality means to you.
- Open up and ask questions: no matter the question or circumstance, chances are your Mentor has had a similar experience or can provide advice.
- Agree with the Mentee as to the method and frequency of feedback. Limit feedback to overall progress, issues agreed to, and areas of development.
- Act on the relationship. Ask for advice. Use it when given. Ask for feedback from your Mentor. Take advantage of this great opportunity.
- Notify if the partnership is not meeting expectations: contact POWER immediately for assistance.

Phase 1

Get Acquainted

Tools and Resources

Traits of a Good Mentor/Mentee

Mentor

- Staff feels comfortable expressing opinions to them
- Committed to personal growth – including their own
- Listens, asks questions, and models growth
- Actively listens and follows up
- Admits own shortcomings
- Discusses issues objectively
- Provides honest and constructive feedback
- Expects feedback on their advice
- Intellectually curious
- Values diverse opinions and perspectives
- Participates emotionally and intellectually in the relationship
- Gives you the time and attention required
- Honest and trustworthy

Mentee

- Wants to participate in the mentoring program
- Assumes responsibility for own growth and development
- Initiates and defines objectives for each meeting
- Identifies topics for discussion
- Drives the mentoring relationship
- Willing to invest the time required to make the process work
- Values diverse opinions and perspectives
- A good listener
- Goal-oriented
- Actively seeks challenges
- Receptive to feedback and guidance

7 Things You Can Do

To Foster a Healthy Relationship

1. Listen to what one another has to say

- Listen for central ideas, summarize main points, identify the core of the message
- Try not to react to trigger words- those words that set off negative reactions or otherwise prevent you from hearing the main message
- Stay focused on the message, don't let your mind wander

2. Ask productive questions

- Take advantage of learning opportunities
- Ask probing questions- who, what, when where, how and why
- Ask open ended questions

3. Allow yourself to trust one another

- Be willing to open up and express your ideas and feelings, even if it's outside your comfort zone.
- Give genuine support to receive genuine support.

4. Overcome the “awe” factor

- Everyone is a person. There is no such thing as a person who is “better” or “more important” than another. This idea fosters self doubt; don't be afraid to ask questions and make mistakes.

5. Resolve contention - Use “I” statements

- Non-blaming description of the behavior that is giving you a problem (*ex. In order to attend our weekly meetings, I drive to work rather than take the bus.*)
- A statement of the tangible and concrete effects on you (*ex. Which means I have to pay to park near my office and then again to re-park after I return from our meeting.*)
- A statement of your feelings about what happened (*ex. Whenever possible, I'd rather we reschedule meetings a day in advance, so I could plan to take the bus rather than drive on days we are not meeting.*)

6. How to capture the “nuggets” from each conversation

- Ask yourself “What did I learn today? How can I apply it?”
- Summarize what you learned and how you will attempt to apply them to your relationship
- Listen carefully for feedback
- Request elaboration about the things that seem important to you

7. Reinforce what you've learned

- Review in your mind what you've learned
- Record things in a journal, if you keep one
- Talk with others about what you've learned

Additional Mentor Activities

Below is a list of suggested activities that may be considered by the Mentor as a way of promoting the partnership:

- As a kickoff, invite Mentee to coffee, breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Discuss areas of mutual interest, roles and experiences. Discuss the mentoring partnership, share ideas and expectations.
- Use the most recent Individual Development Plan as a starting point for the discussion on goals for this mentoring partnership.
- Invite Mentee to sit in on some of the meetings you attend: staff meetings, management sessions, training events, strategy and problem-solving meetings. After the meetings discuss observations about people, politics, procedures, styles, what worked and what didn't work.
- Introduce the Mentee to a variety of people who can help them resolve customer questions or project challenges. Help the Mentee network with others across Our Company and externally to help with their development and career.
- Let the Mentee observe you in action: conducting meetings, planning strategies, and making customer calls. Invite the Mentee to offer ideas.
- Offer to listen to and provide feedback for an upcoming presentation the Mentee will be making.
- Lead the Mentee through discussions of various business scenarios. Discuss "what if" situations; role play different strategies.
- Voice praise to the Mentee when deserved. Look for opportunities to showcase the Mentee's accomplishments. Provide visibility for Mentee.
- Seek Mentee/Mentor's opinion on various problems, ideas, proposals, and business solutions.
- Spend time discussing "real time" problems and challenges.
- Do a lot of storytelling of your experiences, including successes and missed opportunities.
- Discuss/advise on navigating subtle workplace political issues and unwritten rules for success.

Phase 2

Development Planning

Tools and Resources

Mentoring Agreement

As part of Our Company's commitment to employee development and career growth, and in alignment with our strategic plan, we are voluntarily entering a mentoring relationship. This relationship is intended to benefit the Mentee, the Mentor, and Our Company as a whole.

Key elements of this mentoring relationship include:

1. Confidential communication between the mentee and mentor.
2. A relationship lifespan of 12 months, with a minimum expectation of meeting for 30 minutes each quarter.
3. Regularly scheduled meetings. We have agreed to meet on (day of the month, i.e. first Monday) _____
_____ at (time) _____.
4. The roles of the Mentee, Mentor, and Mentee's Supervisor are clearly understood by all three parties.
5. If for any reason either party wants to end the mentoring relationship, it is agreed to be a no-fault conclusion.

The key development goals are outlined below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Mentee

Date

Mentor

Date

10 Questions

For Development Feedback

A mentor is there to provide the mentee with feedback and guidance on the areas you have expressed a need to develop and/or learn more about. Below are 10 questions that can be used by the mentee to initiate feedback.

1. What is one thing you would advise me to do the same/do differently when it comes to XYZ?
2. What is the biggest lesson you have learned from doing or dealing with XYZ?
3. As I do XYZ, what are the most common mistakes I should watch out for?
4. In order to learn the most about XYZ, what do you suggest I do first?
5. What is one thing about XYZ, in your experience, that often gets overlooked? Why is it important?
6. What is the best example of XYZ you have ever seen? What made it good? What was the worst example?
7. If you had to choose one resource I could investigate to learn about XYZ, what would it be?
8. As I practice XYZ, what should I be paying the most attention to?
9. What is the most important thing I should remember when I am doing or dealing with XYZ?
10. As I do XYZ or deal with XYZ, what piece of the big picture might be missing for me?

Giving Developmental Feedback

Giving negative feedback is always a difficult, even during a career development discussion. Keep in mind this is not a performance discussion, so criteria that is used to evaluate specific performance objectives may not be relevant.

During a coaching discussion, employees may express frustration, concern, or unrealistic expectations about potential opportunities or future roles within the organization. It is counterproductive to give inflated and unrealistic praise or suggestions to employees who have not demonstrated the necessary skills to achieve the career paths they desire.

The feedback given to employees at this time is extremely important because it often determines some long-range decisions and focus in an employee's career. It is essential to be honest, direct and candid with employees regarding their perceived developmental needs or barriers to reaching their goals.

Some specific suggestions for providing this feedback include:

- First, discuss the employee's strengths and assets that have been beneficial to their careers to date.
- When discussing developmental needs, be sure to give descriptive behavioral examples of situations or weak skill areas that you see as a barrier to achieving their goals.
- Whenever possible, describe past situations in which you observed the weaknesses that you describe.
- Offer specific techniques and suggestions about ways to increase abilities in these areas.
- Identify ways you can be a resource to assist in the development of these skills, including duties within their area that could offer them further experience in the targeted areas.

Phase 3

Managing the Relationship

Tools and Resources

Tips for Mentees

Accepting Feedback and Advice Non-defensively

1. Be proactive and **seek feedback** from your mentors
Hearing criticism can sometimes be uncomfortable. "My mentor gave me objective feedback and constructive criticism," says Joe Kilkenny, Deputy Associate Director at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories. ".....I have a better view of myself. As a result, I learned the value of feedback and give constructive feedback to the people who work for me."
2. Openly discuss the topic of feedback **early** in your mentoring partnership.
Encourage your mentor to give you feedback. Tell your mentor you value their perspective and want to hear an honest assessment of your performance. Mention to your mentor the form in which you would like to receive feedback. For example, you may want to hear direct, honest feedback or you might ask your mentor to be honest with criticism, but also be sensitive to your feelings. Say you also want to hear what you're doing well, in addition to areas you can develop.
3. Be **specific** when asking for feedback.
Instead of asking, "How am I doing?" ask your mentor how effective your most recent presentation was or how you performed in a particular work situation. This approach will encourage your mentor to be more specific and helpful in their feedback.
4. Ask for **suggestions** on how you could improve.
Invite your mentor to suggest specific changes in what you say or do.
5. Receive feedback **non-defensively**.
Don't take the comments personally, be open and receptive to the feedback your mentor gives you. Focus on your behavior as a person and not on you as an individual.
6. **Seriously consider** all advice and suggestions.
Accept advice and suggestions with an open mind and be willing to try new things. Try new ideas as soon as you can and share the results with your mentor.

In summary, encourage your mentor to give you specific feedback and don't take criticisms personally. Be open to advice and try out your mentor's suggestions. Make sure you report the results to your mentor. You'll find that honest feedback and advice will only help as you continue to develop.

Tips for Mentors

The Art of Giving Advice

One of your goals as a mentor is to have your mentees develop independent thinking skills. This requires a balance of coaching your mentees to discover their own insights and giving advice when you think it's most needed. Below are five tips that will help you be an effective mentor.

- 1. Don't jump at the chance to give your advice too early in the conversation.**
Listen carefully and thoroughly understand the issues first. Diagnose the problem before you consider a solution.
- 2. Don't fall into the trap of being the "answer person" who has the golden piece of advice.**
Let your mentees do some preliminary thinking on their own. Ask questions such as, "What factors are important here?"
- 3. Try sharing your experiences.**
It may be more appropriate to share what's worked well for you rather than telling your mentees what to do. Most of us learn more from personal stories. Then the mentees will determine what will work for them.
- 4. Give advice when your mentees ask for and need it.**
One of the most frustrating responses to the question, "*What do you think I should do?*" is "*What do you think you should do?*" It may feel manipulative to mentees. You appear to have an opinion but are withholding it.
- 5. Provide direction and give advice when your mentees are stuck.**
Go ahead and give specific advice if it's appropriate. Then ask, "*How do you think my advice would apply to your situation?*" The goal is for mentees to make the outcome on their own. Your advice is meant only to get your mentees "unstuck."

The next time you have the opportunity to give advice to a mentee, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I thoroughly understand the issue?
- Has my mentee done preliminary thinking on the issue?
- Is my mentee stuck?
- Did my mentee ask for my advice?

If the answer is "yes" to all four questions, then give your advice. Handled well, advice can be your most appropriate response.

Evaluation Checklist

Use this tool periodically to assess your mentoring relationship.

Self-Evaluation

- ☐ I am committed to the relationship
- ☐ I assume responsibility for my own growth and development
- ☐ I am willing to invest the time required to achieve the mentoring goals I have identified
- ☐ I am an active listener
- ☐ I am receptive to feedback
- ☐ I offer open and honest guidance, feedback, and support when asked

Meeting Evaluation

- ☐ We accomplished the objective of the meeting
- ☐ The meeting helped the mentee advance towards meeting the mentoring goals identified in the beginning of the relationship
- ☐ We both confirmed and committed to follow up items
- ☐ We have discussed if there are ways to improve the meetings

Note: It may be useful to take notes of your meetings or keep a journal to assess the progress of your relationship.

Relationship Evaluation

- ☐ We have discussed ways to improve the relationship
- ☐ We have discussed where the mentee is in achieving the mentoring goals established in the beginning of the relationship
- ☐ After re-evaluating what the mentee has learned from or about the mentor, we have determined if new goals should be set
- ☐ I feel comfortable contacting/being contacted outside of scheduled meetings
- ☐ We provide feedback to one another regarding how the relationship is going