



MENTOR
MATCH

Mentor Match Guide



2020

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In addition to the above, we have included some practical resources that you can use and apply throughout the mentoring relationship including tips on effective questioning during mentoring conversations.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is the offering of advice, information or guidance by a person with useful experience, skills or expertise for another individual's personal and professional development. In other words, the Mentor has the skills, knowledge and experience the Mentee needs.

Mentoring is

- an ongoing relationship that can last for a period of time. In this instance it is a 6 month period.
- flexible and at times even informal. We recommend meetings between the Mentor and Mentee should occur a minimum of 4 times throughout the program and work towards achieving the 2-3 goals that the Mentee has outlined in their Action Plan. They should be centered around developing the Mentee professionally, for the purpose of growing their career.

There are three key things that characterise different types of mentoring relationships:

Timeframe

Mentoring can be either a short term relationship of a few weeks or a long term relationship of a few years - it depends on the goal of the individual. Mentor Match will run for a 6 month period.

Level of formality

The Mentor and Mentee shape the nature of the relationship together. Mentor Match is more structured. A minimum of four 45-60 minute sessions should be scheduled during the 6 month program.

Goal

There are a variety of goals that a Mentee could have. The Mentor that is required to help the Mentee achieve that goal is not necessarily someone more senior.

For example, if you wanted to learn more about a career path in a certain engineering field, a Mentor who specialises in that field at an organisation may be more suitable and available (and be prepared to invest more time) than the CEO or head engineer.

Likewise if you wanted to understand more about what clients may want, being mentored by someone who spends all day with their clients would be more beneficial than speaking with a senior leader.

The Difference between Mentoring and Coaching

‘Coaching’ and ‘mentoring’ are sometimes interchanged but there are important distinctions between these two types of development relationships.

	MENTORING	COACHING
Goal	Potential. To support and guide the professional growth of the Mentee.	Performance. To improve performance and enhance skills.
Focus	Wide angle lens. Takes a broader view of the person and their career.	Zoom lens/close up. Focused on specific development areas and issues.
Who drives the relationships?	The mentored person is in charge of his or her learning and drives the relationship.	The focus is on achieving specific goals and the coach may direct the learning and instruction to achieve this.
Volunteerism	Both Mentor and Mentee participate as volunteers.	While the coachee’s agreement to accept coaching is essential, it’s not necessarily voluntary.
Length of relationship	Ongoing and can last a long period of time.	Set duration and usually shorter term.
Nature of relationship	More informal. Meetings can take place as and when the Mentee needs advice, guidance and support.	Generally more structured and meetings are scheduled on a regular basis.
Characteristics of mentor/coach	Often a more experienced/qualified person. This person can pass on knowledge, experience and ‘open doors’ to otherwise out of reach opportunities.	Coaching is generally not performed on the basis that the coach needs to have direct experience of their coachee’s formal occupational role, unless the coaching is specific or skills-focused.

How Can Mentoring be used?

There are a number of ways in which mentoring can be utilised depending on the learning and development goals of the Mentee. The focus of the relationship may be on the career or professional development, enhancing leadership skills or providing general support or a sounding board to the Mentee.

1. Career Development

Mentoring can assist to develop the Mentee's career by:

- identifying specific areas for career development, for example exposure to operations or roles that interact directly with customers
- planning and structuring career development opportunities, such as involvement in cross-business projects or arranging a 'job shadow' experience
- helping the Mentee to develop their understanding of an organisation's strategic direction and business objectives
- providing advice on job applications and training and development

2. Professional Development

Mentoring can assist the Mentee to develop professionally by:

- identifying areas where the Mentee can develop their professional capability, such as business acumen or influencing stakeholders
- providing targeted feedback to the Mentee in technical/skill areas
- introducing the Mentee to professional networks and relevant contacts

3. Leadership Development

Mentoring can assist to develop the Mentee's leadership capability and practice by:

- identifying areas where the Mentee can develop positive leadership behaviours, for example communicating vision and purpose or developing others
- planning and structuring leadership development opportunities, such as leading a project team or working party
- providing objective feedback regarding the Mentee's leadership style
- providing examples and sharing experiences of effective leadership approaches

4. General Support

Mentoring can assist the Mentee to reach their learning and development goals by:

- providing the Mentee with a sounding board for their ideas
- giving professional and career advice
- offering encouragement and ongoing support
- sharing valuable insight into an organisation's culture

Stages of the Mentoring Relationship

Each mentoring experience is unique, based on the goals and aspirations of the individuals involved and how they decide to set up their relationship.

Generally speaking, mentoring relationships go through different phases and evolve over time.

The mentoring program will run for a period of 6 months. During this time the Mentee will be responsible for setting up a minimum of four x 45-60 minute meetings.

The following stages of a mentoring relationship tend to emerge:

- 1. Building rapport** Who am I?
- 2. Goal setting** What do I want to achieve? What are my goals
- 3. Progression** How will I achieve my goals?
- 4. Redefine or complete** Am I on track to reach my goal? Have I achieved it?
- 5. Moving on** What happens now?

The stages are outlined in greater detail on the following pages.

Building Rapport

This phase involves the initial contact and matching process as well as the Mentor and Mentee getting to know one another and building rapport. The focus of this phase is building empathy, finding common interests and recognising and valuing differences.

The ability to establish rapport depends on:

- the degree of mutual respect
- broad agreement on the purpose of the relationship
- alignment of expectations about roles and behaviours i.e. both expect the Mentee to be proactive in managing the relationship

The first meeting

The first catchup is an excellent opportunity to start building rapport and establish the foundations of the mentoring relationship. Below is a guide to the role of the Mentee and Mentor during the first conversation together.

	MENTOR'S ROLE	MENTEE'S ROLE
Come prepared	Learn whatever you can about the mentee before your initial meeting	Learn whatever you can about the mentor before your initial meeting
Introduction	Share some background information, work experience, personal interests and expectations	Share some background information, work experience, personal interests and expectations
Talk about the big picture	Recount your own mentoring experiences and explain what worked and what didn't	Listen and ask questions
Discuss the mentee's needs	Ask questions and listen	Explain where you are and where you would like to be and how mentoring may help
Clarify goals, expectations	Explain what you can and what you can't do	"This is what I hope to achieve through this mentoring relationship..."
Seek agreement	"I will do..."	"I agree to do..."

	MENTOR'S ROLE	MENTEE'S ROLE
Agree on meeting times	Check my calendar for suitable times	I will take responsibility for finding dates and times that fit into your schedule
Insist on confidentiality	"Nothing we discuss will go outside this room unless we both agree otherwise". I will not provide input into a performance review nor coach on performance issues	"Nothing we discuss will go outside this room unless we both agree otherwise".
Agree to be candid	"If this relationship isn't producing the results you expect, or if you disagree with my advice, say so. Neither of us has time to waste."	" I will tell you if this relationship isn't working for me. I won't waste your time."
Confirm roadmap to move forward	What times and locations work best? (at the office, over lunch/coffee, off-site, Skype, phone, Zoom, email, face-to-face") frequency, duration (when, how often)	Location? Times, frequency and duration of meetings? Initial content - frequency, duration (when, how often). What would I like to focus on in the first few meetings?

Goal Setting

Here is an opportunity for both the Mentor and the Mentee to give structure to the mentoring relationship.

The Mentee can use the Mentee Action Plan to formulate the developmental goals they want to achieve in the 6 months. It might be advisable to focus on fewer goals rather than be too ambitious with too many.

What 2-3 goals would make this mentoring opportunity really successful? Prior preparation and planning would be advisable.

Here the Mentor has a big responsibility and opportunity to help and guide the Mentee to come up with some SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals that are also inspiring and useful. This process may take some time, energy and role-modelling to get right; and would certainly be worth the investment.

Progression

This is the core period and will form the basis of the 6 month program. As the relationship evolves, Mentors and Mentees usually become more comfortable with one another and this allows them to focus on working together to achieve the goals they have agreed upon. The Mentee takes more and more of the lead in managing both the relationship and the process.

The relationship develops and both the Mentor and Mentee begin to challenge each other's perceptions, explore issues deeply and experience mutual learning. Significant learning gains in terms of skills and knowledge are often made by both members of the partnership during this phase, leading to satisfaction, increased confidence and feelings of empowerment.

The following tips for Mentees and Mentors suggest ways to maximise the benefits of mentoring during this phase.

Tips for Mentees: how to get the most out of having a mentor

A good way to get the most out of a mentoring relationship is to use it as a safe place to experiment with different behaviours and approaches to business challenges. People often attempt to deal with change (such as a new role managing people for the first time) by perfecting the skills and behaviours that made them successful in the past (such as in a technical or specialist position), even though new skills and behaviours will determine future success.

Instead of expanding their range of talents, they become better at what they already do quite well. With the support of a Mentor, Mentees can work out the new skills and behaviours that they will need moving forward and try them out. The following three-step process may help:

- 1. Observe different styles of behaviour** - will this work for me? Do I want to behave like that person?
- 2. Experiment with new behaviours** - try out different styles
- 3. Evaluate the results of these experiments** - what works for me and what doesn't - and in which circumstances?

Additional tips for Mentees on getting the most out of their mentoring experience include:

- Respect your Mentor's time, confidentiality and advice
- Give back to the relationship as much as you get out of it
- Share your Individual Development Plan (IDP) with your Mentor, highlighting ways in which you believe mentoring will assist you to achieve your development goals and objectives
- Organise 4 meetings (e.g. 1 every 6 weeks for the duration of the program)
- Take time at the end of each meeting to develop agenda items for the following meeting and prepare discussion points for follow up meetings
- Commit to planned actions and complete tasks/exercises/activities asked of you by your Mentor
- Be creative - mentoring can occur in person but may also include other media such as telephone conversations, skype calls and email correspondence.

Tips for Mentors: how to mentor well

The following are some guidelines and suggestions for mentors in approaching the mentoring relationship constructively during the Progression phase.

Walk the talk: Mentees look to Mentors as role models of successful behaviour. They learn as much, if not more from observing their Mentors than from what Mentors tell them. Remember that what you do will make a greater impression than what you say. Furthermore, any perceived inconsistency between your actions and your advice will send mixed signals to your Mentee, creating confusion and potentially leading to a lack of respect.

Give actionable advice and feedback: career development is a practical business. It has no other purpose than to produce good results. Consequently, your advice and feedback should point to things that are within the capabilities and control of your Mentee.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Not actionable: "Take it from me, some day you'll be able to lead that project team. You have good leadership skills".

Actionable: "The first step is to become a member of an important project team. Even if your initial role is small, what you learn will help you assume a leadership role in the future".

Resist the temptation to solve the Mentee's problems: a Mentor's job is to help other people help themselves. Mentees won't learn to help themselves if you come to the rescue every time they encounter problems.

Criticise the behaviour, not the person: when a Mentee is going offtrack, you have an obligation to bring the fact to his or her attention - not in a directional way as in "stop doing that" but in an observational way:

"I noticed that you haven't volunteered for Project X: you might be missing an opportunity. Would you like to talk about it?"

As in coaching, it is best to separate inappropriate behaviour from the Mentee's persona or personal characteristics. Doing so will prevent that person from feeling personally attacked and will make discussion easier and more objective.

Challenge the Mentee to develop a plan for success: never forget that a Mentee is responsible for his/her success. As a Mentor you are merely there to lend support and advice, and to open doors from time to time. Ask "where would you like to be in five years' time? How do you plan to get from here to there?" Then sit down with the other person and use your knowledge and experience to help them improve their plan.

Create a foundation of support: Your support alone may be insufficient - you may not know all the answers or control access to all of the learning opportunities.

Your Mentee needs support from many people. Part of your job as a wise and resourceful guide is to establish a broad foundation of support for the Mentee within their organisation and with key external stakeholders.

Don't allow the Mentee to become dependent on you: the best Mentors put themselves out of the mentoring business by helping their Mentees to fend for themselves. Insist that your Mentee take responsibility for developing and following their IDP. Your role is to review the plan and suggest improvements.

Try not to simply give the answers but instead try asking questions; "What do you think would happen if you tried...?", "What alternative strategies have you considered?", "How do you think person X would react if you did that?" Resist solving the Mentee's problems for them. Instead, ask your Mentee to discuss their problems with you to help them find their own solution.

Get off to a good start: a good start is where you get to know each other, establish rapport, understand each other's expectations and identify a set of mutually agreed goals. Agreement on goals and responsibilities is particularly important. If these are defined and if you have agreement the mentoring relationship will be off to a good start.

Know when to say goodbye: it is likely that you and your Mentee are on different learning trajectories that for a time come together. You facilitate the Mentee's learning to the extent that you can, and then you help your Mentee to move on to other learning experiences.

Agree the period of time for the mentoring relationship upfront and check in at regular points in the relationship to determine whether this timeframe is meeting the needs of the Mentee. Once the formal relationship comes to an end you can remain a trusted advisor, and may serve as a sounding board when your former Mentee wants a second opinion.

Some final tips on mentoring to the best of your ability include:

- Make yourself available to your Mentee - invest the time and effort required
- Where you can, orchestrate developmental experiences for your Mentee - steer them onto important projects, teams and into challenging jobs
- Understand how your Mentee learns best, for example, through discussion or direct experience
- Be candid in your dealings with your Mentee.

Redefine or Complete

At the beginning of a mentoring relationship, agree on the 4 meetings so that you can review progress at each of these checkpoints.

These checkpoints are where the Mentor and Mentee may start to redefine the relationship and work through how they would like to continue. While this is portrayed in a linear manner in this guide to illustrate the stages of mentoring, checkpoints to review progress can occur in a more cyclical fashion throughout the relationship to determine whether it is meeting the needs of both the Mentor and Mentee. Based on the review discussions, decisions can be made in relation to continue progressing towards goals, redefining or completing the relationship.

Questions to consider and discuss during this phase include:

- What success have we achieved so far?
- What are the specific actions and behaviours that need to be undertaken to reach our goals?
- Whose involvement and/or support will be needed?
- Are our goals still achievable or do we need to review them?
- Are the actions we have discussed still relevant?

What if it doesn't work?

Mentoring like any relationship has its ups and downs. It is part of the process of relationship development that issues, tests and challenges arise and it's the responsibility of both the Mentor and Mentee to work through these challenges together. Sometimes people find that they are not compatible with their mentoring partner, that needs are not being met, or for any number of reasons the mentoring is not working.

At the beginning, it is helpful to recognise that if either partner, for any reason, wants to end the mentoring relationship they are free to do so without finding fault, blame or recrimination.

If it is decided to end the relationship it is important to debrief what worked well and what could be done differently, as this highlights ways in which the time spent together contributed to a valuable learning experience.

Please also notify the Engineers Australia Mentor Match Coordinator.

Moving on

At this point the mentoring relationship has matured and many if not **all** of the goals agreed to at the outset of the partnership have been achieved. This phase can be marked by a sense of accomplishment and perhaps some sadness as the relationship naturally draws to a close.

This is a stage of reflection and thinking about how to move forward, for example, perhaps both parties will contact each other on an ad-hoc basis as a sounding board and a source of networking contacts.

It can be beneficial to debrief the relationship before moving on, by discussing key achievements and learnings as well as considering what could be done differently. This phase may also mark the point in which a new direction is set, as new or different goals are mutually agreed to as the next focus of the relationship.

The following frequently asked questions can be useful to keep in mind in relation to the moving on phase.

Q: What if the relationship has evolved into a friendship?

A: Friendship can evolve as a result of the mentoring relationship and this is often how informal networks develop. The most important thing is that the new relationship is renegotiated at the end of a formal mentoring relationship or program.

Q: Can I continue to assist a mentee with networking opportunities?

A: At the completion of a formal mentoring relationship or program, Mentors often continue to inform past Mentees of beneficial networking opportunities.

Strategies for Success

We have identified and described the different phases a mentoring relationship can progress through including building rapport, setting direction, progression, redefining or completing and moving on. Here we summarise strategies for success discussed throughout this guide in order to provide a snapshot of an effective mentoring relationship and a quick reference guide.

Strategies for success

For the Mentor and Mentee

- Agree on the dates and locations of the mentoring meetings. We recommend a minimum of 4 meetings, each between 45-60 minutes in length
- Set clear guidelines on what will and will not be discussed
- Set boundaries and agree on the appropriate and acceptable level of contact between sessions
- Establish 2-3 goals to work on during the 6 month program
- Regularly review progress towards the agreed goals
- Maintain confidentiality and respect trust at all times
- Follow up on any actions and commitments made as agreed and in a timely manner
- Be prepared for each meeting to maximise your time together
- Have clarity around your role as a Mentor/Mentee and on the mentoring process
- Establish mentoring as a 6 month relationship and anticipate that it will change and evolve over that time
- Ensure mentoring does not take the place of a coaching or counselling relationship
- Promote a relationship that is facilitative rather than directive, so that the Mentor does not dominate, direct or control the Mentee's decisions
- Stick to what you have confirmed. Try to avoid rescheduling set meetings as much as possible.

For the Mentee

- Be open with your Mentor and prepared to discuss issues freely
- Respect your Mentor and maintain a professional relationship
- Be willing to put your learning into practice on the job
- Invest time dedicated to your own learning and development and be responsible for it
- Accept and provide feedback
- Set 2-3 goals that you would ideally like to achieve by the end of the 6 month program.

For the Mentor

- Identify opportunities to help the Mentee learn and develop
- Regularly discuss the Mentee's career plan and developmental goals
- Challenge the Mentee to be their best and support them to succeed
- Share your wisdom and insights into different organisational cultures
- Ask open-ended questions
- Commit to the mentoring meetings as agreed with the Mentee
- Act as a role model
- Be willing to provide positive and constructive feedback as and when required
- Resist taking responsibility for the Mentee's career progression and do not provide unlimited resources or guarantee advancement in any way.

Where to Next? Action Plan

Studies show that roughly 3% of the population document goals and achieve their plan, and these people are often the most successful.

To get the most out of this mentoring partnership it is strongly recommended both the Mentor and Mentee document their own Action Plans. Please keep in mind that you may need to step out of your comfort zone and try a new approach to make this mentoring partnership effective. What works best, such as keeping your goals/plans in your head may not be the effective methodology to getting results.

The following SMART questions can help clarify and set the direction of the mentoring relationship. The Mentor and Mentee should refer back to the information provided on the profiling questionnaires to assist identifying the specific goals they want to pursue as part of the mentoring partnership.

SMART Goals

Goals set for the Mentee need to be challenging and also achievable. It is part of the Mentor's role to help evaluate the goals and provide feedback on the extent to which they meet the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and Time-framed) principles outlined below. Here are a number of questions that the Mentee may like to consider when reviewing their goals.

S pecific	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can the goal be stated in one sentence? (e.g. to join a project team by x date)• Is the goal clear and unambiguous?• Is the goal meaningful?
M easurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will the Mentee know when the goal has been achieved?• What will be different? (tangible results)• What will the Mentee see, hear or feel?• What effect will this have on the Mentee's career?
A ctionable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the goal achievable within the timeframe set?• Does the Mentee have the knowledge and skills to achieve the goal?• What additional resources are needed to help the mentee achieve the goal and are these available?• How much does the Mentee want to achieve the goal?
R ealistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How, specifically, will the goal be achieved?• What strategies and actions need to be put in place?• What are the obstacles that may get in the way?• What additional resources are needed and are these available?• Is the goal realistic based on what you, the Mentor, understands of the Mentee's organisation?
T imeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the timeframe set achievable?• What timeline should the Mentee put in place to achieve the goal?• Is this realistic considering other priorities and demands of work and personal life?

We have included a template that can be adapted for both the Mentee and Mentor to set an Action Plan. If this template doesn't suit, please feel free to use a format that best works for you.

Suggestions on Mentor / Mentee Meetings

Frequency & Length	As a part of the 6 month Mentor Match 4 meetings are recommended. Ideally one every 6 weeks. Each meeting should last 45 to 60 minutes. Much less and there won't be sufficient depth/detail covered. Much more and people either can resent the time taken out of the day. It's also a good length of time for one's concentration.
Location	Two main factors - privacy from view and privacy from sound. Mentee's trust in the confidentiality of the entire process is crucial. Often the Mentor's own office is not suitable, usually because certainty of NO INTERRUPTIONS cannot be assured.
Confidentiality	Cornerstone to ensuring mentoring is a genuine success. Care needs to be exercised in this area with any written recording/note-taking.
Records / Minutes	Most Mentor/Mentee meetings will only need brief notes. Highlights (of the meeting) are really all that's necessary. The Mentee's Action Plan should form the basis of each meeting.
Don't cancel	Yes, it is appreciated that Mentors and Mentees are often 'operationally focused' and that occasionally the meeting will need to be rescheduled. BUT only do so in exceptional circumstances. The simple reason is the message you're giving - that your meeting is not so important after all.
Your approach	Aim for a positive, optimistic and welcoming approach, regardless of what sort of day/week you're experiencing.
Show willingness to learn from mistakes - theirs and yours	Very powerful if the Mentor has the courage to acknowledge his/her own foibles and mistakes. Whilst obviously spending most time in the meetings on the Mentee's successes, the wise Mentor also recognises previous mistakes and the lessons learnt from these.

Introductory Session

All mentoring sessions need to be planned. Following are some suggestions for your first meeting..

Setting the scene	Ask about the issues that the Mentee would like to discuss. Set the overall plan for this session, its timing and the areas that you would like to cover. Create a short agenda.
Deciding on Questions	Ask some professional development related questions like: What 2-3 goals have you identified as a part of your action plan?
Discuss the Expectations of Relationship	What do you understand of this relationship? What are the expectations that we each have? What are we prepared to talk about?
Commitments	As Mentor, how will you commit to facilitating this relationship? As Mentee, how will you commit to leading the relationship?
Time Management	What time can we devote to developing this relationship? When is the best time for both of us? How can we meet these needs? What constraints does the Mentor/Mentee have?
Place	How and where will we meet?
Confidentiality	How will confidentiality be defined and managed?
Discussing unusual issues	Envy and gossip? If the relationship is not developing well, agree to be candid and set the agreement that the mentoring relationship should be discontinued.

The following questions on the next page can be useful to ask during the first meeting in order to build rapport and get to know one another better.

Introductory Questions

Getting to know one another:

- 1. Work history**
 - a. What roles have you undertaken previously?
 - b. What have you enjoyed most and least in your career?
- 2. Current Career Position**
 - c. What is your current role?
 - d. What are the major challenges?
 - e. What parts of this role do you find most satisfying?
 - f. Who are your key stakeholders?
- 3. What are your future aspirations?**
 - g. Career goals
 - h. Life goals
- 4. What do you think your key development areas are?**
 - i. Technical / skill development
 - j. Professional development
 - k. Leadership development
- 5. What do you think your key strengths are?**
- 6. Outside of work, what are you passionate about?**

Clarifying expectations:

The following questions can be useful to ask during the first meeting in order to clarify expectations.

- 1. Mentoring Meetings**
 - a. When can we schedule our 4 meetings?
 - b. Where will we meet and for how long?
 - c. Will the Mentee send the agenda and action plan prior to the meetings?
 - d. How formal or informal would we like the meeting to be?
 - e. When will we define the learning goals and desired outcomes?
 - f. How will we know our meetings are successful?
- 2. What are the limits to the scope of discussion? (what's off limits?)**
- 3. What are our expectations of:**
 - g. Each other?
 - h. Our mentoring relationship?
- 4. What confidentiality applies to our discussions?**
- 5. When and how shall we check that this relationship is working for us both?**
- 6. What could possibly go wrong and how do we deal with that?**

Contact Details

If you have any queries or concerns using Mentor Match, we're here to help.

We want you to gain as much value as possible from the program so please contact us if you need assistance.

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