



Mentorship Guide

As you start along your WJA mentorship journey remember: **mentorship is a gift**. The more committed you are to the process, the more you will benefit.

- Women who are mentored by others feel supported and more satisfied in their careers.
- Being a mentee is a powerful opportunity to grow and learn.
- Mentorship is different than coaching or consulting. It's about asking powerful questions, sharing experiences, and transferring skill sets – helping to unlock a mentee's potential.
- The mentoring relationship is not meant to make you comfortable with where you are: it should challenge you both professionally and personally. This can't happen unless you're willing to take risks.
- Mentorship is as much a responsibility of the mentee as it is the mentor.

TO THE MENTEE

Your mentor's time is valuable. Use the workbook tools available for this program and practice the following suggestions:

- Be prepared. Think about what you hope to gain at the end of your mentorship experience. Articulate your expectations, write them down, and share them with your mentor.
- Ready thoughtful questions and document them before each meeting with your mentor.
- Discuss real challenges that you are facing.
- Value suggestions for development, as well as feedback and direction.
- You are tasked with establishing the agenda for the conversation.
- Take initiative and own the process!
- Embrace your uniqueness and resist the temptation to clone your mentor.

1. Look for a mentor whose career path has some alignment with your goals.

- Spend the time to determine your goals before you initiate conversations with a mentor.

2. Mentorship is a two-way street.

- Spend the time upfront to build a relationship with your mentor and understand your desired outcome from the collaboration.

3. Be open and honest.

- Your mentor will be better able to help you if you are open and honest about what you want professionally. Talk about what you want for the future.
- Define your goals. What do you feel you need to learn?
- In collaboration with your mentor, determine the skill sets, knowledge, and abilities you need to acquire in order to achieve your goals.

4. Respect your mentor's time.

- Are there any days that you know that you will not be available or very busy? Identify these upfront and let the other person know.
- Think about what you want to know.
- Plan topics and frame questions for your discussion.



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5. **Be teachable.** Be open and willing to listen and learn new things.
 - Listen to your mentor's recommendations and take his/her feedback constructively.
 - Remember the mentor is here to help you, even if listening may be difficult at times.
 - Take action to implement the mentor's feedback and report back on the results.
 - Solicit honest feedback and learn to welcome it: this will help you grow!

6. **Be specific with your questions. Use the workbook and PLAN.**
 - Take the time to plan out what you would like to ask your mentor.
 - Craft open-ended questions to promote discussion and provoke thoughts.
 - Ask "have I missed a step (process) that will get me closer to my goals?"
 - Ask "Are there other resources that I need to move forward?"

7. **Seek clarity.**
 - Ask clarifying questions if you are not sure of any feedback from your mentor.
 - Repeat back what you think you heard to seek clarity and understand the mentor's response.

8. **Build trust by listening to your mentor.**
 - Do what you say you will do.
 - Report back to your mentor on actions that you have taken.

9. **Be forward thinking.**
 - Talk to your mentor about your current state, but focus your energy on building the future.
 - When defining your goals, make them time-bound and meaningful. Commit to a time: a week, month, and year. Make a plan to follow with benchmark dates to follow up on progress.

10. **Look for your blind spots.**
 - You cannot always see what you do well. Often we also do not see our blind spots.
 - What does your mentor see about you that you may not see?
 - Ask your mentor what blind spots he/she may see related to your current goals or what you are trying to achieve.

11. **Don't forget to have fun!**
 - While this is serious work in hand, remember to enjoy the experience.
 - Hopefully you will look back on this opportunity as a turning point in your personal and business development.
 - Be adventurous and do not take things so seriously as to lose your way.



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TO THE MENTOR

Laying the ground work and addressing gender equality.

It is likely that your mentee has never worked with a mentor before so it's helpful for you to break the ice. In particular, mentees should feel comfortable bringing up and mentors should be open to having discussions related to gender equality in the workplace.

In considering equality, women in particular should be aware of the language they use to describe their accomplishments. For example, it's a good idea to avoid language that downplays the work they've done like "merely," "only," and "simply" or phrases like, "anybody could have done that."

- Pay attention and recognize your own personal triggers and how they can impact important work-related conversations and relationships. Look at our default reactions and work to turn those that may be negative into something positive and productive.
- Keep a record. Keeping a journal of successful (and less successful) interactions is one way to recognize reactions and habits you may have. Use it to build on what works and change what doesn't.
- Mentoring matters. Mentoring can have an impact on gender equality at all stages of a woman's career, whether they are just starting out or more senior level.
- Since most companies do not offer formal mentoring programs and many who work in the jewelry trade are self-employed, WJA's program offers a unique opportunity for women in the jewelry industry to find and connect with mentors.
- Mentoring success. The more women are mentored, the more success they will have, which leads to more talented women staying in the industry (and becoming mentors themselves).

1. *Once you have agreed to be a mentor-*

- Establish ground rules.
- Hold the mentee accountable as the process owner.
- Seek to understand your mentee's progress.
- Coach according to actions taken (or not): be honest!
- Be an advocate: you have been there!

2. *Start your relationship by-*

- Establishing a time to work together.
- Be clear about expectations and your time together.
- Ask your mentee for regular updates.
- Take notes, as needed, during your conversations.
- If your time is not being used wisely, communicate expectations to your mentee.
- Direct actionable feedback is necessary and a gift to your mentee.
- Suggest new skills that she can learn.
- Offer resources that she can read or watch to learn more.
- Think through what path may help your mentee obtain her goals.
- Can you recommend someone to your mentee or a network?



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3. **Build trust and keep confidences.**
 - Provide your mentee with honest, actionable feedback that she can act on.
 - Understand what the mentee's goals are and agree upon the timeframe.
 - Always value the input and experience that you have to share.
4. **Support passing the mentorship experience along.** If you are enjoying being a mentor, encourage your mentee to give back by being a mentor to someone else: a peer, a subordinate, or a family member. Share with others so that what you both learned gets passed along.
5. **Seek to understand who your mentee is and what motivates her.** Encourage her to share her hopes, fears, ideas and goals openly, even if you are both from very different backgrounds or have different styles.
 - Do share your life experiences and situations, as well as what personal goals have worked for you when you were developing your career path.
6. **Support your mentee by providing space for thinking.** Listen without judgement and allow silence to enter the conversation and provoke thinking from your mentee.
 - Wait and listen for ideas and thoughts that may come from an awkward conversation.
7. **Practice mentoring anyone.** Mentoring serves many purposes and most don't require deep thinking. Mentoring may be short-term, specific to a situation, focused on a particular area of development, or mentoring may turn out to be a life-long conversation.
 - You and your mentee do not have to have everything in common to have a productive exchange.
8. **Set boundaries.** Your role is to support your mentee's development through regular conversations. Set time boundaries and establish communication channels: "you can email me" or "I prefer regularly scheduled sessions only."
 - Would a follow-up email after a session recapping the agreed upon actions from either of you help keep commitments?
9. **Establish the expectations of support, not miracles.** The mentee can expect a certain level of support and advice from you, but they cannot expect you to solve their problems for them.
 - Be clear about outcomes and expectations from your conversations.
 - The most valuable quality a mentor can offer is perspective.
 - You can put situations in perspective, offer feedback, serve as a sounding board, and identify resources that may be helpful to the mentee.



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10. *Help your mentee to foster curiosity.* Ask her about past experiences, what worked and what did not.

- Suspend judgement and just explore.
- Share stories of major point of growth and change along the way- what allowed you to reach the next level, to attain goals similar to the ones that you are exploring together?

11. *Don't forget to acknowledge the good.* Since most of the time with your mentee will likely be spent assessing what has not worked for her, be sure to also give positive feedback.

- Do not forget to acknowledge what has worked and gone well with your mentee.
- Remember to look at, and focus on your mentee's strengths: leverage these when problem solving and help her discover how to use those that she already has.
- Help build confidence and encourage your mentee to do more of what has been successful for her.



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MENTORING GUIDELINES: STARTING THE SESSIONS

Establish expectations for the sessions

- **Conversations:** Content/substance is confidential.
 - Check in at the end of session to clarify what is and is not confidential.
- **Structure:** Frequency, timing, distractions.
 - Frequency: number of sessions per month.
 - Note-taking: mentee is responsible for taking notes and distributing.
 - Scheduling of session to be flexible (at the discretion of the participants).
 - Exchanging of notes, commenting/editing to clarify is welcome.
 - No phone calls, emails, texts, etc. during session so focus is maintained.
- **Timing:** Agree upon the length for the overall mentoring process.
 - Sessions last 1/2 hour.
 - Start when agreed and finish on time.
 - Book the next session at the end of the current session.
 - If a session is scheduled, honor and protect that time.
 - Cancel sessions only for emergencies.
- **Homework:** Follow up as agreed.
 - Establish contact guidelines for time in between sessions.
 - Take time during the session and at the end to clarify.

References:

www.management-mentors.com/corporate-mentoring-programs-resources

www.apa.org/pi/disability/resources/mentoring/tips-mentees.aspx

<https://leanin.org/>

www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/smarter-living/why-mentoring-matters-how-to-get-started.html