IT LDP 2009 Mentor Success Workshop

The program supports mentees' continuous growth and development, the transfer of knowledge, and the building of capability in our mentees and mentors.

Workshop Objectives

- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Mentoring agreement
- How to make well-defined goals
- Success criteria and measurement
- Accountability assurances
- Protocols for addressing stumbling blocks
- Scope of feedback and assistance

The mentor/mentee relationship is designed to meet the personal and professional development needs of the mentee. A productive mentor/mentee relationship offers a comfortable, criticism-free environment. Conversely, both the mentor and mentee must realize that some expectations will be unmet and mistakes will happen. In addition, the mentee must take some risks and show initiative. The mentor's role is to help and support, not rescue or complete tasks for the mentee.
Mentoring inherently involves personal change and growth.

Why mentoring?
- Improves retention of leadership and managerial skills
- Helps groom the next generation of leaders
- Enhances career development
- Promotes diversity
- Transfer of knowledge in a safe learning environment
- To help improve a mentee's self-esteem and confidence
- To recognize the leadership potential in all mentees
- To provide opportunities to develop positive relationships
- To allow mentees to look beyond their present and envision a promising future

Definition of Mentoring

A developmental, caring, sharing, and helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how, and effort in enhancing another person's growth, knowledge, and skills, and responds to critical needs in the life of that person in ways that prepare the individual for greater productivity or achievement in the future. (http://www.orau.gov/tdd/trainingadmin/Mentoring.pdf)

Although most of the learning is focused in the direction of the mentees, mentors also learn. Mentors discover the ability they have to impact others' lives.

Characteristics of a Good Mentor

- Approachable and welcoming
- Shares information and experiences openly
- Good communication skills - Speaks less, listens more
- Provides accurate and appropriate feedback
- Technical expertise
- Motivating, encouraging, positive and empowering
- Allocates appropriate time to mentoring
- Sensitive to the needs of the mentee
- Reliable, trustworthy and maintains confidentiality

Characteristics of a Good Mentee

- Drives the process and take responsibility for solving problems, personal growth and development
- Motivated and willing to develop a good relationship
- Listens and accepts guidance and feedback
- Sets realistic and appropriate goals
- Reliable, trustworthy and maintains confidentiality
- Looks to be challenged
- Flexible and open to new ideas
- Shows initiative and enthusiasm but has reasonable expectations
- Recognizes, acknowledges and appreciates mentor

Beginning the Conversation

Take time getting to know each other and share your assumptions, needs, expectations and limitations candidly.

Get a clear understanding and agreement of the following elements.

1. The Relationship
- What should I know about you that would enhance our relationship?
- What can I do to increase the comfort level between us?

2. Expectations
- What is the most important thing you would like to get from this partnership?
- What goals or expectations do you have?
- What help or support do you want to receive as the mentee?
- What help or support are you willing to provide as the mentor?

3. Logistics
- How often will we talk/meet?
- When are the best times for us to talk?
- What are realistic time frames for returning calls outside of our standard meeting time?
- What is the best way for us to communicate (e-mail, voice mail, direct calls, face-to-face visits)?
- How will we alter this agreement if it becomes necessary?
- What is an appropriate response if I don't get a timely communication?

Productive Meetings

- Set the stage
  - Agree on an agenda
  - Prepare by bringing notebook and course materials
  - Turn off interruptions
  - Don't check email or iphone
- Keep your appointments
  - Agree on a good time for both
  - NEVER reschedule more than once
  - Consider meal time as well
- Hold each other accountable
  - Do the work – log in your journal
  - Spend the time
  - Appreciate this opportunity
- Discuss measurement
  - What is good versus good-enough
  - Reporting on output
  - How often to follow up
  - Push one another to achieve more

What are other ways to get the most out of your meetings?

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Mentor's Roles and Responsibilities

An important part of the workshop is for the mentor and mentee to understand the expectations that come with the role. Below are some guidelines for the mentoring relationship.

- Provide opportunities for your mentee to explore career and life choices
- Assist your mentee in cultivating skills for living and working with people of diverse backgrounds and opinions
- Promote the self-esteem and confidence of your mentee
- Empower your mentee as a leader, professional, and engaged citizen
- Maintain focus on skill development
- Be available to your mentee
- Initiate contact with your mentee to develop the relationship
- Listen with an open mind
- Provide emotional support when needed
- Communicate regularly, even if just to say "hi"
- Share information on your own successes and failures, if appropriate
- Give and receive feedback, as needed
- Create a spirit of mutual learning, trust, and respect
- Lead by example
- Foster strategies to address obstacles that women and/or minorities have faced and are facing

Provide Guidance and Support

- Offer solutions or just lend an ear when asked.
- Help them to work out the answer, rather than just telling them
- Encourage them to take responsibility for achieving their goals
- Encourage innovation or other paradigms
- Offer additional perspective as needed or warranted
- Share your knowledge
    - "what worked for me"
    - "what have you tried"
    - "what would happen if"
- Don't assume that others KNOW how to address an issue
- Represent the company in a professional manner

Mentoring Points of Discussion

One question that often comes up regarding the mentor/mentee relationships, is "what do I talk about," particularly if the mentor is new to a formal mentoring program.

Here are a few suggestions.
- Recent modules
  - What have you learned?
  - What have you applied?
- Leadership goals
- Areas of strength and improvement
- Organization and time management strategies
- Company knowledge
- What are some useful work strategies?
- What should I do if I need additional training in my field?
- What are some of the career opportunities I want to pursue?
- Are there certain classes that should be taken to develop my strengths?
- Are there any leadership opportunities within the department?
- What are the advantages to advancing academically and getting a degree?
- What does the company look for in the position I desire? What are some important tricks for "acing" the interview?
- How do I talk about my strengths?
- How do I talk about my weaknesses?
- Is there a good way to highlight my knowledge and skills without looking like I'm showing off?

Dos and Don'ts of Mentoring

Effective mentors:
- Have an open mind; don't discount, dismiss, or minimize
- Provide constructive criticism; don't patronize or make light of a perceived obstacle or place undue guilt on the mentee
- Provide support, but don't become a "crutch" for the mentee
- Maintain personal and professional boundaries, but don't be distant or unapproachable
- Feel comfortable saying, "I don't know"

Effective Feedback

When giving effective feedback, several factors must be considered.

- Encourage openness
- Praise good work
- State your feedback in a manner that conveys respect and support
- Keep comments related to the task not the person
- Focus on specific behaviours
- Ensure comments are clear and understood

Characteristics

Effective feedback doesn't just happen. It is carefully given so the message is clear and the purpose is understood.

1. Defined by a clear purpose
2. Specific and descriptive
3. Relevant
4. Actionable
5. Timely
6. Balanced

Delivery

The following steps are not meant to be a procedure for providing feedback, but rather should be looked upon as a process that may help you deliver effective feedback.

1. Set the proper climate.	Provide ample time without interruption.
2. Consider carefully what you want to communicate.	What message do you want to give?
3. Set the context for the feedback.	Why is this important to the person?
4. Give the feedback to the person.	Check the tone of your feedback. How would you respond if someone gave you this feedback?
5. Give the person opportunity to respond and listen.	Be open to new information.
6. Work together to determine the next steps.	What should the person do with the feedback?
7. Express your support.	Offer assistance and set time to follow up.

Receiving Feedback

- Listen objectively with-out interrupting
- Take feedback as advice, not as a personal attack
- Summarise feedback to ensure you have understood

- Take a problem solving approach
- Discuss suggestions for improvement
- Thank the person giving the feedback
- Practice to improve
- Review again to check that things have improved

Goal Setting

As part of your mentoring relationship, you will want to set specific goals for performance improvement, achievement and/or learning. While a mentor will be able to help identify and refine goals, the participant is ultimately responsible for setting appropriate goals.

One way to test goals is to ask whether they are SMART.

Specific?	Try to break large, general goals into smaller, more specific ones.
Measurable?	Is there a way to track improvement? What are the most appropriate but simplest measures?
Attainable?	Can it be done? Are you aiming for something that is unachievable?
Realistic?	Are your goals realistic given your time, resources, priority and motivation?
Time-bound?	When will you complete the goal? Set intermediate but repeating goals for things you want to become a habit.

Consider these questions when setting goals and clarify learning needs.

- What do you hope to achieve within the next 3-5 years?
- What are your current skill and experience bases?
- What resources, people or otherwise, do you have access to that could help you in this development area (e.g., for frequent feedback or encouragement)?
- If you were to break this area down into skills and knowledge, what would be some of the most important aspects of what you want to learn?
- What concrete activities will you be able to do as a result of achieving your goals?

Group Discussion: Situations for Mentors....

1. Your mentee confides in you about some personal problems. At first you are flattered and offer some suggestions, but then the personal problems seem to become the only focus of your conversations. How do you steer the mentee into other academic and professional development areas of conversation?

2. Your mentee spends too much time gossiping about others. What might be a strategy for guiding this mentee?

3. Your mentee is not returning your calls or replying to your e-mails. What should you do?

4. Your mentee is struggling professionally and is considering changing jobs or companies. How would you handle this?

Additional Potential Scenarios:

5.

6.

7.

8.

Be prepared to complete this agreement during your first meeting.

			Date:

IT LDP Mentoring Agreement

Mentor Name	Phone	Site	Best Contact Days/Times
Mentee Name	Phone	Site	Best Contact Days/Times

Mentor

I will contribute to the success of the program by:

1.

2.

3.

The goals I hope to achieve from being a mentor are:

1.

2.

3.

Mentee

I will contribute to the success of the program by:

1.

2.

3.

The goals I hope to achieve from being a mentee are:

1.

2.

3.

I am committed to open and honest communication in my mentoring relationship. I will discuss and attempt to resolve any conflicts with my mentor/mentee as they arise. I will ensure that any issues discussed are held in confidence. I will contact the program director with any questions, concerns, or suggestions that may arise.

Mentor	Mentee
Signature:	Signature:
Name (printed):	Name (printed):