



OGCA Mentoring Program

Tips for Mentors

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is the sharing of **knowledge, insight, perspective or wisdom.**

A mentor can help a mentee by

- Providing information about their area of expertise, their career experiences or the industry in which they work
- Offering advice or connect them to useful people or information sources relevant to the mentee's issues
- Sharing their own insights, stories, lessons and experiences
- Offering another perspective to a situation
- Encouraging mentees to explore different ways and approaches
- Validating the thinking and ideas mentees consider; helping to build their confidence
- Listening to the challenges and difficulties experienced by mentees and coaching them through options for solving them

Guiding Principles / Code of Practice

- **Confidentiality** – mentoring is a confidential activity, so both parties have a duty of care toward each other and with regard to sharing information about other people.
- **Honesty** – be open and honest about the relationship itself. It is a good idea to assess how things are going and talk about what would make the sessions better for you both.
- **Respect** – respect each other's time and respective role; respect that you both may have different approaches, opinions and value.

Responsibility of the Mentor

- Be accessible and make time for the mentee
- Actively listen to the mentee, acting as a sounding board, and challenging them when appropriate
- Motivate and support your mentee to achieve their goals
- Act as a role model, sharing your experiences and ideas
- Promote responsible decision making
- Give and receive constructive and honest feedback
- Recognise when it is time to relinquish the mentoring role

Responsibility of the Mentee

- To be responsible for the mentoring relationship; organising discussions and remaining responsible for any decisions and actions
- To tell the Mentor what you need from them. For example... feedback, new ideas, insights from their experience, expanding networks, skill development, raising your profile, career planning
- To share information about yourself – what motivates them, how they learn best, habits, strengths, development opportunities
- To drive your own development and seek feedback from the mentor
- To listen, clarify, reflect back and when called for, challenge
- To be open to and appreciate different perspectives



What do 'Good Mentors' do?

Understand what their Mentee is looking for from this relationship

Don't assume, ask

Share their experiences and insights

Share stories, good and bad

Provide guidance and advice

Rather than the answers

Do more than telling

Help mentees to make sense of things and apply the learning

Practical Tips for Mentors

DO's of Mentoring

- Select a suitable place for mentoring conversations to happen.
- Take the time to understand what your mentee wants and needs from this relationship.
- Actively listen to their needs, goals and aspirations and help them to identify areas for growth
- Be open and honest about what you think you can and can't help them with in your role as mentor. Be yourself – you are not expected to know everything!
- Share your insights and experiences, telling stories or providing examples of both successful and unsuccessful situations.
- Make an effort to create a 'safe place' for the mentee to explore issues and ideas.
- Start each session by discussing objectives for each the session and what can achieved in the time you have together.
- Explore opportunities to challenge your mentee constructively.
- Set goals for yourself about what you want to achieve as a mentor.
- Be open to receiving feedback from the mentee about yourself.

DON'Ts of Mentoring

- Share confidential or inappropriate information with your mentee. Use your judgement.
- Make assumptions about what they need from this relationship. Ask them and listen.
- Always provide them with the solutions to their problems, or tell them how to do things. Even if you do know (or think you do!), see if you can activate the mentee's thinking. Mentees can draw meaning from your stories to find their own solutions.
- Be judgemental or negative. Support the mentee through their disappointments and challenging times.
- Take action on their behalf (unless this is the only option). It is better to help the mentee find their own way. It is important that the mentee maintains responsibility for the mentoring relationship.
- Always focus on the positive stories. People learn from hearing about other people's mistakes too.
- Share too much information with others about the mentee. Be mindful of maintaining confidentiality and trust with the mentee.

Preparing for a Mentoring Relationship

Before starting your first mentoring session, spend a few minutes thinking about yourself. Consider the following prompter questions:

- What is your background?
- What sort of situations have you been exposed to in your working life?
- What do you consider to be some of your biggest strengths?
- What are some of the things you are most proud of?



- Where have been some of your biggest challenges?
- What have been some of your disappointments?
- How did you deal with these more challenging times?
- What are some of your key learnings from your career so far?
- What do you think are some of the chapter headings to your 'World according to ...' book – some of your key tips and traps?

What to do in your first mentoring session

- Set aside at least an hour of uninterrupted time
- Focus on getting to know each other – focus on building rapport and trust in the relationship. It might help to keep the conversation fairly light in the early part of the meeting, sharing information about your background and things you like to do outside work
- Begin a discussion about what the mentee is looking for out of the mentoring relationship. This may evolve over time, but it is important that the mentee maintains ownership for their development
- Explore the mentee's thoughts and share your own, about how you think the relationship might work
- Discuss the mechanics of the mentoring relationship – how often to meet, when and where, and for how long
- Share some stories that are relevant to the topics that come up during the conversation
- At the end of the discussion, have the mentee summarise any insights or actions, and agree the timing for the next meeting
- Suggest the mentee make the calendar booking, and draft an agenda for the next conversation

A Practical Mentoring Framework

Goal	The goal of the discussion needs to be clear. Clarify the areas for discussion and the objectives for the session. The goal in a mentoring conversation should ideally be that of the mentee
Reality	It helps the mentee to describe what is happening and the impact right now <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actively listen to help develop the person's understanding of the issue • ask questions to facilitate awareness and discovery and to build confidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarify the issue / situation ○ Determine current impact ○ Determine future implications
Options	Your role is to encourage exploration of a large range of options and to help the coachee to find a way forward. A mentee may be looking for more guidance from you as a mentor. Offer advice but still coach the mentee through an exploration of solutions



Wrap Up

Help the mentee to determine a way forward, including identifying possible obstacles to be overcome. Help them to work out what support they need.