



University of Missouri
Trulaske College of Business



The definition of mentoring is broad, and the relationship can be as structured as you desire. The mentor and student have total responsibility for structuring the relationship. You may choose how and when to communicate with works best for your relationship.

Mentoring is a Relationship

Mentoring is simply a relationship between two individuals that focuses on advancing their professional and personal development. It's about sharing information and learning with others. A mentoring relationship is unique to the individuals involved and must be based on mutual trust and respect. The Alumni Mentor Program is designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge between those with experience (mentors) and those who are developing their careers (students).

Benefits

A Mentoring Relationship

- Transferring and sharing experience and knowledge
- Identifying and shaping future leaders
- Providing role models
- Increased sense of belonging
- Increasing diversity and overall creativity
- Improving utilization of student's unique talent and potential
- Strengthening capabilities
- Mentoring is an important skill for future leaders

To Students

- An expanded personal network
- A sounding board for testing ideas and plans
- Positive and constructive feedback on professional and personal development
- Increased self-awareness and self-discipline
- Gain knowledge and perspective of an organization and culture

“The mentor program has been extremely valuable in providing me clear perspectives on the challenges of being a business student today, as well as providing the opportunity to share insights into my experiences in management and the human resources profession.”

Melody Marcks

Boone County National Bank

Mentor

The mentor shall be a knowledgeable employee who will focus on the student's career goals and development. In this capacity, the mentor may act in several of the following roles:

Communicator

- Encourages two way communication
- Listens, e.g. has good interpersonal skills
- Acts as a sounding board
- Maintains confidentiality
- Establishes an environment for open interaction, e.g. the sharing of information and knowledge
- Schedules uninterrupted time

Coach

- Clarifies
- Recommends
- Reinforces
- Serves as a role model to demonstrate professional behaviors
- Provides non-judgmental, sincere and straightforward feedback

Advisor

- Recommends appropriate strategies
- Reviews development plan
- Recommends appropriate career direction strategies
- Provides support, challenge and vision to the student to optimize leadership and career development:
 - Support refers to those acts through which the mentor validates the student's present experience and provides understanding.
 - Challenge refers to those acts that provide a stretch experience for the mentor, e.g. by introducing contradictory ideas, questioning assumptions or asking open-ended questions.
 - Vision refers to helping students see transition through experience and gain a wider perspective of the organization.

Student

The role of the student is to be a proactive participant with good listening skills. The key to success for the students is to commit time and effort toward developing their future career, e.g. by taking advantage of opportunities. In addition, the student shall be able to give and receive feedback and be open to advice and coaching. Finally, the student shall be willing to create time to meet with his/her mentor.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Determine interests, skills and goals
- Ask for help or guidance; seek out the information and assistance needed for career development
- Proactively manage your development
- Take responsibility for commitments, e.g. by following through on recommended actions
- Perceive change as an opportunity
- Maintain the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship
- Understand the competencies and skills valued for a successful business career



Brian Stauffer chats with his mentor Barbara Keiffer during an AMP orientation session.

Initial Meeting and Relationship Structure

It's a good idea to have an informational interview early in the relationship. This gives both the mentor and student the opportunity to determine how to establish the mentoring relationship to be valuable for both parties.

Informational interviews are a great way to obtain insight in areas that interest you and to develop contacts that may be useful in the future.

Once there is a mutual agreement between the mentor and student to commit to a mentoring relationship, here are some items to discuss:

- Determine and agree on meeting logistics, per the mentoring relationship commitment
- **The length of the relationship:** Generally, the relationship should last at least an academic year. After the year commitment, the student and mentor have the option to continue the current relationship, begin a new relationship, or exit the mentoring relationship.
- **Frequency of meetings:** Should be mutually agreed upon by the mentor/student based on need
- **Location and time of meetings:** Select a place and time to hold meetings that will minimize interruptions (note this can be by phone and/or email).
- **Termination Process:** If the relationship is not conducive to goals, then the relationship may be terminated by either mentor or student at any time.

Clarify mentor and student expectations of the mentoring relationship, e.g. including expectations of each other and of the final outcome of the mentoring process:

Specifically, as the meetings begin, the mentor and student should agree on what is expected of one another. Mentoring requires time commitment and resources from everyone involved. Agreeing on expectations for both the mentor and student will help the participants recognize what they must contribute to the relationship.

Meeting Questions

- What are some things I could tell my mentor about myself that would help us get to know each other? What about relevant to this person?
- What are some questions I could ask my mentor to get to know them better without prying?
- What does each of you want out of the mentoring relationship? What are your goals?

Out To Coffee - Lunch Break - Company Visit

Resume Critique

Business Dress

Career Fair Navigation Advice

Interviewing Skills

Professional Dinner Etiquette

Networking Skills

Career Exploration

Study Abroad

Possible Discussion

Questions

1. How did you decide to work in this field? For this company?
2. What is a typical workday like? A typical week? Year?
3. Do you work under a lot of pressure? Is it expected?
4. How many hours per week do you usually work? Is it common to take work home?
5. Do you travel a lot?
6. Will you be expected to relocate?
7. Are there other responsibilities (such as civic or social obligations) that come with the territory?
8. What is the best training or education to acquire?
9. What was your background?
10. What skills do you typically use? Is there an opportunity to develop more skills or take on additional responsibilities?
11. Do you have an area of specialization? What?
12. How do you decide in which area to specialize? What are the other areas?
13. Is the field growing? What are the various types of employers?

Possible Discussion Questions

- 14. How secure is employment?**
- 15. What are the most difficult problems/decisions/challenges you must face?**
- 16. Do your skills and experience translate well into self-employment opportunities?**
- 17. Do you find that certain personality traits make it easier to do this work well? Which traits?**
- 18. What is it like to work here?**
- 19. What is the hiring process? Is that process standard procedure within the industry?**
- 20. What is the best way to find a job?**
- 21. If you could do it all over again, what would you do differently?**
- 22. Are there professional trade journals I should read? Which ones?**
- 23. Do you belong to any professional associations? Can nonmembers attend meetings?**
- 24. Would you mind reviewing my resume and making comments or suggestions?**
- 25. Can you recommend other people I might talk to?**



ALUMNI MENTOR PROGRAM

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