UVIC

**MENTORSHIP**

Resource Guide

**2020 / 2021**

### WELCOME!

While the UVic Employee Mentorship Program is on hiatus for the 2020/2021 season, this resource guide may assist you in seeking out your own mentoring relationship or experience.

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# PURPOSE

The primary purpose of employee mentorship is to promote professional and personal development by establishing a close relationship between two people. This facilitates informal guidance, coaching, knowledge-sharing and enhanced understanding of the work environment.

## Possible Benefits

Individuals have various reasons for seeking a mentoring relationship. Anticipated benefits of participating in mentorship are:

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|  |  |  |
| MENTEE | MENTOR | UVIC |
| * Expand personal and professional network on campus * Gain an increased understanding and awareness about potential career paths * Experience a sounding board for ideas or issues * Receive positive and constructive feedback on personal and professional development issues in a confidential setting * Acquire new perspective on ways to increase development and growth. * Increase confidence * Improve job satisfaction and engagement in work | * Expand personal and professional network on campus * Develop coaching and listening skills * Invest in the development of future leaders * Transfer expertise to others * Gain insights into other areas of UVic, how they work and how they approach issues * Improve job satisfaction and engagement in work * Develop pride in own skill set and attributes | * Promotes a welcoming environment * Supports career and succession planning * Fosters a positive impact on retention and recruitment * Engages equity groups, concepts and goals * Increases communication across the organization using non-hierarchical pathways * Develops talent * Improves job satisfaction for mentors and mentees |

## Finding a mentor

There is no one right way to seek out a mentor, but most successful attempts can be broken down into a few basic steps.

1. **Clarify your intention** for seeking a mentoring relationship. The clearer you are on why you want a mentor and how you plan to engage with them, the easier it will be to identify and recruit support.
2. **Identify potential mentors** by using your existing relationships and networks. Use your research skills to understand the context prospective mentors work in and to get a bit of background (similar to preparing for a job). This may involve sharing with your supervisor that you are seeking mentorship, observing those whose leadership style or career is one to which you aspire, looking up information in the department directory or on LinkedIn, or asking people you know who they might know in the areas / field /position you’re interested in learning more about.
3. **Make the approach** and request mentorship. Be bold! This is likely to feel intimidating and awkward for the mentee, but be encouraged that most prospective mentors are very flattered to be asked. It may be helpful to send a brief email or meeting invitation before cold-calling. It’s also possible someone in your network will be willing to make the introduction for you. Regardless of how you connect, be clear about what you are asking from them as a mentor as well as what you are willing to do to make the process as easy as possible.
4. **Follow through with a plan**. This resource guide gives you many things to consider in planning out your first meeting with a mentor.

### NOTES:

* For more tips and scripts, try googling “how to find a professional mentor” or reviewing the following.
  + [Forbes 4 Tips for Finding a Career Mentor](https://www.forbes.com/sites/kateharrison/2018/01/03/4-tips-for-finding-a-career-mentor/#62e03acf52cf)
  + [NPR How to Find a Mentor and Make it Work](https://www.npr.org/2019/10/25/773158390/how-to-find-a-mentor-and-make-it-work)
* While HR will not be engaging in a formal matching process in 2020/2021 we are available to offer advice on how to approach someone you have in mind. Email [hrprojectsmanager@uvic.ca](mailto:hrprojectsmanager@uvic.ca) for support.
* It may be helpful to set a particular development or learning goal that you wish for a mentor to support you in. For more on goal-setting, visit HR’s Performance and Development website [www.uvic.ca/PDC](http://www.uvic.ca/PDC)
* One-off meetings or informational interviews can be extremely valuable and may be a great alternative to asking for ongoing mentoring, especially when time commitment is a barrier.
* For other, non-mentoring, professional development opportunities try registering for an HR Employee Learning Calendar course: [www.uvic.ca/hrcalendar](http://www.uvic.ca/hrcalendar)

# ROLES & EXPECTATIONS

The following guidelines can be of assistance in bringing clarity to the mentoring relationship and are based on the assumption that the mentee will take the initiative in the mentoring partnership. Of course pairs will develop their own relationships and understandings based on individual needs, but regardless of how the responsibilities break down, it is important to review and come to agreement on how the relationship will be managed, and what expectations each partner has of the experience.

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| MENTEE | BOTH | MENTOR |
| * Lead the process * Manage the relationship * Be clear about objectives * Take advantage of opportunities provided by the Mentor * Accept responsibility for own development * Seek information * Be open to feedback * Keep supervisor updated | * Keep commitments * Be prepared * Be curious * Address issues as they arise | * Be a role model * Listen actively * Be a sounding board * Provide coaching and guidance * Assist with skill development * Understand the mentee’s objectives * Create a safe learning environment * Encourage and inspire |

## Role of the mentee

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| Manage the relationship | | This may include, but is not limited to, booking meeting times and arranging locations. It also involves working to build a rapport with your mentor by being engaged and active in each interaction. | | | |
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| Be clear about objectives | | Ensure that your mentor knows what you wish to achieve as a result of your partnership with them. Do you want advice about a particular career path or a particular skill set that your mentor demonstrates? Your objectives may evolve throughout the program, so make sure that your mentor is aware at all times of what it is you are hoping to achieve. | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| Take advantage of opportunites | | If your mentor offers an opportunity for you, take them up on it if at all possible. It is through new experiences and challenges that we learn and grow. | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| accept responsibility | | While your mentor is there to provide you with advice and feedback, you are still responsible for your own professional and personal development. Commit yourself to action. Make your mentor proud. | | | |
|  | | | | |
| Seek information | | Come prepared with questions for your mentor, consider what they have to tell you, and probe for deeper understanding. Do research where appropriate, so that your time with your mentor is focused and efficient. | | |
|  | | | | |
| be open to feedback | | Your mentor is there to challenge and inspire you and may be able to provide you with a different point of view than you normally get in an employment relationship. Consider what they have to say with an open mind. | | |
|  | | | | | |
| keep your supervisor updated | | | | Make sure your supervisor is aware of when you are participating in a Mentoring activity so that there are no misunderstandings. Tell your supervisor about your progress and learning if you feel comfortable sharing with them. Write about your experience in your performance development plan and get their commitment to help you continue to grow as a professional. | |

## Role of the mentor

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| act as a role model | Demonstrate the behaviours that have made you successful while you interact with your mentee. That way, they can see the behaviours in action and have direct experience in how it feels to be on the receiving end of such positive behaviour. Be open to sharing with them your lessons learned as well. | |
|  | | |
| listen actively | Allow your mentee to lead the process. Ensure you give them ample time and space to ask their questions and convey their desired outcomes. Ask probing questions where appropriate and summarize what you’ve heard to demonstrate your understanding. | |
|  | | |
| be a sounding board | There will be times when your mentee may not have a question or may want to come to a conclusion on their own after bouncing an idea/concern off you. You can always ask them if they would like your feedback. | |
|  | | |
| provide coaching & guidance | Hopefully you and your mentee will have a conversation about why you were their desired mentor, whether it was your personal characteristics and/or the work you do. Share freely with them your best advice and offer them the options you see that would fit their particular situation. | |
|  | | |
| assist with skill development | | Go further than just suggestions where appropriate. If there is an opportunity and it makes sense to have your mentee practice a skill during your sessions or in some other forum, go for it. Another option is for you to invite your mentee to observe you in real-time as you demonstrate the skills they are looking to develop. |
|  | | |
| Understand the mentee’s objectives | | Ask a lot of questions of your mentee to ensure you understand what they hope to achieve in their interactions with you. If your mentee is uncertain, work with them to gain that clarity. Check in with them often on this topic to see if their objectives have changed/evolved and adjust accordingly. |

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| create a safe learning environment | Your mentee might be a little intimidated or may not know the protocols you are accustomed to in meetings. Create an atmosphere where your mentee feels comfortable interacting with you. This may include: introducing them to the people in your office so they see familiar faces when they come to meet with you, ensuring you are meeting in a place that will be free of interruptions, and following the *Basic Principles* (outlined later in this document) in your interactions. |
|  | |
| encourage and inspire | You are a mentor because you are a successful and admired individual. Do what you can to encourage and inspire your mentee to reach the same level of personal achievement you have. Help them to believe in themselves. |

## Role of both parties

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| Keep commitments & be prepared | Set aside time for your partner, discuss any challenges you may have in terms of availability early on, and make sure you are clear what you hope to achieve out of each meeting so that you can prepare accordingly. If something comes up and you can’t do any of above, make sure you communicate that to your partner in as timely a fashion as possible. |
|  | |
| ask questions | Be curious. Ask who, what, when, where, why… never stop seeking greater understanding. |
|  | |
| Address issues in a timely manner | If you have a small conflict or moment of misunderstanding, try to work it out before it becomes a larger issue. Seek advice from Human Resources or other sources if you feel it would be helpful. |
|  | |

# CULTIVATING THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

## Mentoring Partnership Agreements

It is worthwhile for both mentees and mentors to discuss and specify how they will manage the following:

### Time & Duration:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **For how long do we expect this mentoring relationship to continue (4 months? 6 months? A Year?) OR when will we re-evaluate it?** | |
|  | |
| **How regularly will we meet? (1/week, 1/month, other time frame?) and for how long?** | |
|  | |
| ***If you know your vacation schedule and/or peak work times for the year, you may want to include them in your planning*** | |
| **Mentee’s vacation/peak work times** | **Mentor’s vacation/peak work times** |
|  |  |

### Procedure for Sessions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How are we meeting?** | | | |
|  | **Virtually** | On what platform? Who sets it up? |  |
|  | **Telephone** | Who calls who? At what number? |  |
|  | **In-Person** | Where are we meeting? |  |
|  | **Email** | Typical response time? At what email? |  |
|  | **Other** | Be as specific as possible |  |

### Changes & Additions:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **If changes need to be made, how much notice do we require from each other?** | | | |
|  | | | |
| **How should we notify each other of changes?** | | | |
|  | **Telephone** |  | **In-Person** |
|  | **Email** |  | **Other** |
| **If a session is cancelled, will we try to make it up? If yes, who is responsible for initiating the rescheduling?** | | | |
|  | | | |
| **If something comes up between sessions that either of us would like to discuss with the other, how should we initiate contact? Are we open to ad-hoc sessions, as required/requested?** | | | |
|  | | | |

### Confidentiality & Nature of the Relationship:

Partners should consider and discuss how they will manage the confidentiality of their sessions as well as the nature of their relationship. It may be helpful for pairs to review and commit to the following or a similar statements at the beginning of the program:

### confidentiality

*During the mentoring relationship, we may share information about past/current challenges at work, career aspirations, and other information of a confidential nature. We commit to each other that we will not, either directly or indirectly, share such information outside of the context of our mentoring partnership. If it is deemed of benefit to share information, it will only be done with consent. If either of us shares information that the other is not comfortable receiving, we will address it with the other immediately and respectfully. We will also notify each other of any potential conflicts of interest immediately and avoid intentionally putting ourselves in any such situations.*

### nature of the relationship

*We recognize that the mentoring relationship is not intended to replace existing supervisory or management processes. We enter into the relationship with the understanding that we are responsible for making our own decisions and creating our own results. We do not hold each other liable for any actions or results for adverse situations created as a direct result of our interactions.*

### Additional commitments (Optional)

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## Basic Principles

It is important to try to make the most out of your interactions with your partner. Here are Six ***Basic Principles****©* to remember to be effective in your connections with others:

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| --- | --- |
| 1. | ***Focus on the situation, issue, or behavior, not on the person*** |
|  | |
| 2. | ***Maintain the self-confidence and self-esteem of others*** |
|  | |
| 3. | ***Maintain constructive relationships*** |
|  | |
| 4. | ***Take initiative to make things better*** |
|  | |
| 5. | ***Lead by example*** |
|  | |
| 6. | ***Think beyond the moment*** |

## Ground Rules

In addition, it is also important to figure out what ground rules you would like to use as the foundation for your interactions. We suggest the following for your consideration:

* **Be prompt and regular in attendance.**
* **Enter into discussions enthusiastically.**
* **Give freely of your experience.**
* **Allow and encourage participation.**
* **Ask questions when you don’t understand.**
* **Appreciate others’ point of view.**
* **Provide constructive feedback and receive it willingly.**
* **Confine your discussions to the current topic.**
* **Practice learned skills on the job, as appropriate.**
* **Maintain confidences.**
* **Have fun!**

## Communication, Personality, and Learning Styles

Mentorship partners are also encouraged to explore and share with each other what they know about their own **values, and their learning, leadership, personality, and communication styles and preferences**. This can be done informally or by engaging with various formal tools and processes, some of which are outline below:

* **HR’s Learning & development web page** <https://www.uvic.ca/hr/learning-development/index.php>
* **Lumina Spark or other Personality Assessment** (e.g. DISC, Insights, MBTI, True Colours, etc.) <https://www.luminalearning.com/luminaproducts/spark/>
* **Personal Values Assessment** <https://www.valuescentre.com/our-products/products-individuals/personal-values-assessment-pva>

# MENTEE/MENTOR PREPARATION

## Tips from Previous Mentors

* **Devise a tentative meeting schedule early.** Once you have agreed on a meeting structure, schedule meetings through to the conclusion of your agreed relationship duration. This ensures that participation is prioritized in your already busy schedule.
* **Make a discussion about confidentiality considerations a priority.** Be up front at the beginning in terms of confidentiality and what areas of your role might be off-limits in terms of candid discussion. Determine what questions or issues you simply are unable to discuss because of confidentiality or sensitivity around the contents.
* **Make sure the discussion has a focus.** While the mentee is expected to lead the relationship, the value the mentor can bring is to ensure that there is a focus in each conversation. If either of you seems to be struggling with this, make the next conversation one where you both can revisit the desired focus and help reach clarity.
* **Ask the mentee for feedback.** Ensure that the mentor always concludes a mentoring session by checking in with the mentee to ensure discussions are meeting their objectives and if any adjustments are needed, do so right away. Be open, honest, and prepared for critical feedback. The style and approach may need to be adjusted mid-way through the program.
* **Be prepared to learn.** See the mentee/mentor as a source of information for your own learning and development as well. Be curious about what role their departments play on campus, their cultures, and how they approach the work. See what you can learn and apply in your own role or department.
* **Be open to sharing and suggestions.** Throughout the course of your relationship, your mentee/mentor or fellow program participants may suggest a topic or activity that you hadn’t thought of. Be open to changing your plans as your relationship evolves and you discover new things. Similarly, sharing your experiences in the group sessions may inspire other pairs as well.
* **Be creative.** Think of ways you both can connect in different ways. If appropriate, try to find concrete ways for your mentee to participate in your work life (e.g. having them attend meetings, participate in projects, assist on committees, etc.) Doing things together can help spark more topics for discussion
* **Have fun.** You’ll both be more engaged and get more out of the experience if it is enjoyable!

## Reflection/Preparation Questions

The following is a list of questions mentees and mentors may find useful in preparing for discussions:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Where am I now in terms of my career?** | | |
|  | | |
| **What were the key steps I took to get there?** | | |
|  | | |
| **What am I most proud of in terms of my achievements?** | | |
|  | | |
| **If I had anything to do over again in terms of my career, what would it be?** | | |
|  | | |
| **What do I want to know about my Mentor/Mentee that I don’t already know?** | | |
|  | | |
| **What potential barriers do I see that could potentially have an impact on this mentoring partnership (i.e. my time/availability, the nature of my work, confidentiality considerations, etc.)? How might I address those?** | | |
| **Potential barrier(s)** | | **Solution** |
|  | |  |
| **Consider the following activities that you may explore:** | | |
|  | Job shadowing where the mentee observes the mentor interacting in their normal environment (e.g. leading meetings, doing budgets, teaching courses, writing contracts, etc.). This may take some thought to do in a virtual context but is still possible. | |
|  | Informational interviews where the mentee asks the mentor questions about their background, job, and how they approach certain situations | |
|  | Meet at different locations on campus such as your favourite spot or resource ([Finnerty gardens](https://www.uvic.ca/finnerty/index.php), or [Mystic Vale](http://crdcommunitygreenmap.ca/location/mystic-vale)) | |
|  | Introducing the mentee to other people the mentor works closely with to learn from them as well (this works well when the mentee is seeking guidance on a particular career) | |
| **How will I know if this mentoring relationship has been successful? What, specifically, do I hope to achieve over our agreed upon time-frame as a result of my interactions with my mentee/mentor?** | | |
|  | | |