

Tips for Mentors to Maximize Mentorship

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1. Clarify what your mentee hopes to get from the mentoring relationship.

Is the mentee looking for a role model or supporter? A teacher or coach? A counselor or advisor? A sponsor or benefactor?



One of the biggest problems in faculty-to-faculty mentoring is providing inaccurate information, particularly around requirements for reappointment and promotion. If your mentee is looking for career-track guidance, do your homework.

2. Ask your mentee for their goals.

Mentee goals should include short term (1-3 years), and longer term (3-5 year) goals, be specific, aligned with career-track expectations, set on a timeline, reflect a realistic trajectory, and include metrics for success.

3. Maximize meetings.

Let your mentee know how much time you will need in advance of a meeting to review materials. (The frequency with which you meet with your mentee will be variable depending on the nature and goals of the mentoring relationship. Research mentors may be meeting monthly. Career mentors might meet with their mentee 1-2 times per year.) Take notes during meetings, and always end a meeting with direction for your mentee: What should they read? What additional training should they seek? Who should they meet with?



Arrange introductions for your mentee.

4. Provide your mentee with opportunities in research, teaching, and invited talks that are consistent with their career goals.

Sharing these opportunities that you are too busy for can be a tremendous opportunity for a junior faculty member. For example, hand-off invited talks, committee work, or journal reviews that you are not able to do.



Delegating is for providing opportunities, not off-loading unwanted work.

5. Be supportive.

This means active listening, being empathic, providing positive reinforcement and encouragement. Being supportive means serving as an advocate. Self-disclosure (sharing your own challenges, mistakes, struggles) can normalize challenging experiences and be a great way to support your mentee. Don't forget to address work-life if that is a part of the mentoring expectations.



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