

Mentor-First Meeting Overview

The quality of the relationship between the Mentor and the Mentee is what holds the Mentoring partnership together. From the beginning, steps need to be taken to foster the understanding of roles and clarification of expectations. You will need to **engage** the mentee in the very first conversation, setting a positive tone and expectation for active participation for the entire relationship. **Connecting** with the mentee and thereby being able to connect future learning to the mentee and his or her life experiences will foster the sustainability of the learning. **Checking out the assumptions** of both partners will help you manage expectations as well as build a foundation for candid communication and trust.

Consider these strategies and approaches for navigating through the agenda of that first meeting, and as you prepare to complete the **Mentoring Agreement**.

Mentor's Strategies for an Effective Mentoring Conversation		
Agenda Items	Strategies for Conversation	Possible Mentor Approaches
Take time getting to know each other.	Review Mentee preferences in advance.	Establish rapport. Exchange information. Identify points of connection.
Talk about Mentoring	<i>Ask:</i> Have you ever been engaged in a Mentoring relationship? If so, what did you learn from that experience?	Talk about your own Mentoring experiences.
Determine the Mentee's goals	<i>Ask:</i> What do you want to learn from this experience? Give the Mentee an opportunity to articulate broad goals.	Determine if the Mentee is clear about his or her goals and objectives.
Determine the Mentee's relationship needs and expectations.	<i>Ask:</i> What do you want out of this relationship?	Be sure you are clear about what your Mentee wants from the Mentoring relationship.
Define the deliverables and a time table.	<i>Ask:</i> What would success look like for you? What is your timetable for achieving it?	Do you have an area of expertise that is relevant to the Mentee's learning goals?
Share your assumptions, needs, expectations and limitations with candor and confidentiality.	<i>Ask for feedback.</i> <i>Discuss:</i> Implications for the relationship.	What are you willing and capable of contributing to the relationship?
Discuss options and opportunities for learning.	<i>Ask:</i> How would you like to go about achieving your learning goals? <i>Discuss:</i> Learning and communication styles <i>Ask:</i> What is the most useful kind of assistance I can provide?	Discuss the implications of each other's styles and how that might affect the Mentoring relationship