

## Mentor Discussion Template # 0

# Mentor/Mentee Discussion Templates & Activities

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The purpose of this section is to provide Mentors and Mentees with a structured approach in working together. Use the templates to facilitate discussion, write notes, record reflections, and to list additional questions or topics that may emerge from your discussion. Keep in mind that these templates and activities are provided to you as optional guidelines/resources.

As important questions or other topics of interest emerge from your conversation, utilize the additional pages to organize your own conversation. Working with your Mentors and Mentees should be an enlightening and enjoyable experience for both of you.

This is a professional relationship and one where team members and mentor will have expectations of one another. In addition, consider the following list of dos and don'ts as you engage in your mentoring relationship:

### Helpful reminders:

- Be respectful.
- Seek to learn from your mentoring experience.
- Look for ways to add value to your mentor/mentee. Remember a birthday; write a thank you note, send an encouraging text, etc...
- Keep commitments.
- Help your mentor/mentee know specific ways you are growing from your mentoring experience
- Be mindful of time commitments-Be sensitive to the time the mentor shares with you and do your best to accommodate their schedule. (The mentor is volunteering their time to support your leadership development).
- Be on time.
- Respect your boundaries. Don't ask questions that are too personal unless permission is given
- Keep confidential information confidential.

# Mentor Discussion Template # 1

## *Introductory Meeting*

During your first discussion, consider the following questions with your mentee/mentor:

1. Where did you grow up? What kind of family are you from?

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2. What significant experiences did you have that shaped their life?

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3. What is your educational background?

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4. How did you discover your professional/educational experiences?

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5. What significant events shaped the life of your life?

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6. What are you passionate about?

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7. What would you most like to be known for in life?

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8. What else have you learned about your mentee(s)/mentor that is interesting to you?

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Before completing your meeting:

- Establish next meeting (date, time & place)
- Choose topic of discussion

## Mentor Discussion Template # 2

### *Understanding Strengths & Weaknesses*

Discuss the following questions and topics with your mentee(s)/mentor. These questions should prompt your team to review and discuss the content of 360 feedback assessments which will provide insights into the nature of long-term personal and professional development.

#### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Identify with your mentor the strategies they have use to identify personal strengths and weaknesses. Do they use a formal process (like a 360 Evaluation) or through an informal process (i.e. comments from a supervisor or a peer)?

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2. Use your 360 report and discuss their top three strengths and weaknesses with your mentor. In the space below write down your personal strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths:

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Weaknesses:

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3. Review with your mentor the strategies that they use or have used to organize a personal development program. What has worked best for them?

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4. What commitments are you willing to make regarding your leadership development? Be clear about the next steps for your development.

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## Mentor Discussion Template # 3

### *Defining Leadership*

Leadership is often a difficult topic to define. Because of its abstract nature, it is first important that we develop shared understanding of leadership before proceeding exploring together.

#### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. According to your mentor, how do you define leadership?

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2. What makes an exceptional leader?

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3. In what ways does your mentor consider him or herself a good leader?

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4. In what ways do you consider yourself a good leader?

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5. In what ways could your mentor improve their leadership skills and abilities?

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## Mentor Discussion Template # 4

### *Showcasing Exceptional Leadership*

There are innumerable leaders in the world and in our lives. However, some of these leaders stand out among the rest as exceptional.

During your mentor discussion, discuss each person's favorite leader and why they chose that person. While you may keep in mind somebody famous or noteworthy in history, feel free to consider individuals in your life that you most respect.

#### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Who is your mentor's most influential leader and why?

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When discussing these leaders, try to identify the following:

1. What qualities or attributes are described?

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2. What characteristics are described?

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3. What beliefs, habits, or attitudes are described?

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Before completing your meeting:

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# Mentor Discussion Template #5

## *Mission and Vision*

During your mentor discussion, work with your mentor to identify and define a personal mission or vision. This should include a general discussion around what each member, including the mentor, sees as his or her life mission.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. What is a “mission”? What is a “vision”? How are they alike? How are they different?

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2. Ask your mentor to describe in detail what their current mission(s) are. How can they articulate the vision related to these mission(s) (as there can be many missions) a person can have?

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3. Ask your mentor to describe their process for generating their mission(s) and vision?

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4. How does your mentor keep their mission(s) and vision alive and inspiring?

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5. What strategies can your mentor give you regarding the development of your own mission(s) and vision?

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# Mentor Discussion Template #6

## *Goals and Goal Setting*

During your “Mentor Discussion Template #6” you discussed the development of missions and vision building. The next step is to talk about goals and goal-setting.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Discuss with your mentor the purpose and impact of goal setting.

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2. How does your mentor set goals? Any specific resources/tools used?

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3. What strategies does your mentor use to develop and/or refine their goals?

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4. What are your current goals. Start with long-term goals, and then begin discussing about short-term goals.

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5. Ask your mentor how they remain accountable when setting and committing to goals?

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# Mentor Discussion Template #7

## *Building Rapport*

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Describe the process of building rapport.

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2. How is building rapport important?

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3. Have your mentor describe a time where they successfully built rapport:

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4. What did your mentor do to facilitate this rapport?

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5. Explain your own experiences regarding the building of rapport. Make sure to write down what you have learned from these experiences.

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Before completing your meeting:

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# Mentor Discussion Template #8

## *The Value of Interpersonal Skills*

Interpersonal Skills are critical for every leader. During this session, work with your mentor to describe various types of interpersonal skills that have been most helpful to them within their professional and personal lives.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Work with your mentor to describe different types of interpersonal skills. What are they?

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2. What interpersonal skills has your mentor seen as the most important in their professional and personal life? Some examples might be related to: communication in general, dealing with conflict, understanding diverse perspectives, networking, team-building, written communication strategies, etc...

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3. What are the interpersonal skills that you have seen be the most important in your life.

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4. Have the mentor describe how they have developed their interpersonal skills. The team should then discuss new strategies for them to develop their own interpersonal skills. Describe the various options that the team comes up with during your session together.

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Before completing your meeting:

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# Mentor Discussion Template #9

## *Initiative*

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Define what “taking initiative” means. What impact does taking the initiative make?

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2. Have your mentor describe a time where they went beyond expectations to lead or take the initiative.

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3. How did your mentor go about taking this initiative? Were there any road blocks?

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4. From everyone’s perspective, describe the pros and cons of taking initiative.

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5. Finally have each member of the team, including the mentor, articulate how taking initiative can be valuable and what specific ways they take initiative.

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# Mentor Discussion Template #10

## *Exploring Conflict*

As a leader, you can expect that you will approach conflict on a regular basis. Many people do not know how to handle conflict well. Learning to be an effective leader means developing the interpersonal skills to not only deal with conflict, but to use conflict to help advance a relationship.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Describe a time where you had to deal with conflict.

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2. What strategies did your mentor use to diffuse the conflict?

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3. What strategies worked? Didn't work?

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4. What positive things came from this situation? How did your mentor turn this experience into a learning experience?

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5. From your perspective what lessons can you learn from your mentor's experience that would help you deal with conflict more effectively in the future?

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# Mentor Discussion Template #11

## *The Power of Attitude*

People respond to you based upon your personality, energy, and by your attitude or emotional climate.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Ask your mentor why they think it is important (or not) for a leader to have a positive attitude. What do they say about this?

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2. What experiences have you had that explore the power of attitude. During these stories, notice what kind of impact those individuals have that have a positive attitude vs. negative attitude. What was the impact?

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3. What a positive attitude is and what constitutes a positive/productive attitude:

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4. What are ways to foster positivity?

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Before completing your meeting:

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## Mentor Discussion Template #12

### *Inspiring Self and Others*

Leaders often inspire. There are many strategies and styles that leaders use to inspire and influence. During this discussion, talk to your mentor and your group about the strategies and styles they have used to motivate others—even themselves to perform at higher levels.

#### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. What is motivation? What does your mentor and your team think is the origin motivation?

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2. Your mentor has probably had the opportunity to experience various strategies and styles of inspiration with employees, colleagues, friends, and family. Discuss the kinds of approaches they use. What is their personal style?

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3. Discuss with your mentor how they stay inspired.

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4. From this discussion, what are some of the most important ideas or thoughts that will help you as you consider strategies to stay inspired and engaged in various aspects of your life.

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Before completing your meeting:

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# Mentor Discussion Template #13

## *Dealing with Challenges*

Contrary to popular opinion, leaders and successful people have experienced more challenges than the average person. Little do people know, this is one of the great secrets of success (experiencing and learning from both success and challenges).

With this understanding in place, you and you team have a tremendous opportunity to discuss with your mentor how s/he deals with failure and/or set-backs.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Ask your mentor to consider one or two of their most challenging professional or personal challenges. What was the circumstance or circumstances that they discussed with you?

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2. Explore the meaning and use of the term "failure". Are there other words you like to use instead?

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3. During this situation or situations how did your mentor first react to the situation?

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4. After recognizing the problem or issues, how did your mentor overcome the obstacle? More importantly, what critical strategies/resources did they utilize to deal with the situation?

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5. What are the most important lessons you learned from this discussion today?

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Before completing your meeting:

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## Mentor Discussion Template #14

### *Leading and Influencing Others*

All successful leaders have experience with leading and influencing others. How people influence others often varies. During this session, discuss with your mentor their “best” and “worst” leadership moments.

#### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Have your mentor describe one of his or her best leadership moments during his/her career. What were the circumstances behind this experience?

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2. In general, what types of things did you notice that your mentor did to successfully influence others? Discuss with your mentor “how” and “where” they learned to lead in this way.

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3. In contrast to a successful leadership or influencing experience, have your mentor describe a time where they felt they failed to lead and/or influence well. What were the circumstances behind this experience? Does your group have their own stories to tell regarding their own leadership failures?

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4. From your discussion today, write down several key points that help you clarify what “successful” vs. “unsuccessful” leaders do to influence others.

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Before completing your meeting:

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- Choose topic of discussion



# Mentor Discussion Template #15

## *Values and Leadership*

The foundation of exceptional leadership is a value structure. Organizations articulate their corporate values. This is the same for individual leaders.

During your session today, seek to identify the origin of your mentor's value system and how these values affect their leadership style and effectiveness.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Begin this discussion to asking your mentor about their core values. What are these values?

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2. Find out from your mentor how these values affect their leadership style or effectiveness.

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3. What are your core values? What values strike you as most interesting? Useful?

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4. Why are values so important to leadership?

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5. What are the most important lessons that you can take from this discussion? What are you going to do differently because of your conversation today?

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Before completing your meeting:

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# Mentor Discussion Template #16

## *Ethical Dilemmas*

Leaders inevitably deal with issues related to ethics. During these defining moments some leaders take a path that leads to destruction while others make these their defining moments—making them even stronger than before.

In today's session, discuss with your mentor their experiences dealing with an ethical dilemma.

### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Ask your mentor to describe an ethical dilemma that they have experienced. If nothing comes to mind, have them identify an ethical dilemma that they have witnessed that is worthy of discussion. What was the circumstance?

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2. Ask your mentor to describe what they did to deal with the circumstance. What lessons were learned from these decisions and/or actions?

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3. Ask your mentor to identify what core lessons they have learned in these types of situations and how they would counsel you to deal with them in the future.

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4. What were the most important principles that came from today's session?

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## Mentor Discussion Template #17

### *Staying ahead of the "Bell Curve"*

Leaders are always advancing themselves. They are dedicated to self-development, excellence, and personal growth.

During this session, find out what your mentor does to stay ahead of the curve. How do they go about staying competitive and what do they suggest for you to become a successful leader?

#### **EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Ask your mentor what they do to stay competitive in their organization.

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2. What does your mentor see as a trend over the next 10+ years that they think you should pay attention to?

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3. In your mentor's mind, what are some of the most important strategies an up-and-coming leader should use to stay ahead and remain world-class?

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4. What actions steps are committed to taking after this session is over?

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## Mentor/Mentee Activities

In addition to structured discussions, you, your team, and your mentor may choose to focus on particular activities that will assist you in your personal and professional development.

Below is a list of activities that you may choose from. Feel free to add any other activity that you and your team decide would be useful.

### Activities to consider:

- Resume Review
  - Bring a copy of your current resume. Work with your mentor and your team to provide suggestions on improvement.
- Mock Interview
  - Ask your mentor to provide you with a mock job interview. Each member should take turns doing this so plan enough time so each can take a turn or plan on separate meetings with your mentor. These may also take place over the phone.
- Shadowing Day
  - Spend a day with your mentor. Attend meetings and other activities to better understand a day in the life of your mentor.
- Attend a Trade Show
  - If possible, consider going to a trade show with your mentor. Get a chance to see a variety of industry specific organizations and/or the general process for networking.
- Attend a Professional Organization
  - If your mentor belongs to a professional organization such as Rotary, Young Presidents Organization, or another other prestigious organization, see if it is possible to attend one of these and meet the various types of leaders that attend.
- Hobby or Leisure Activity
  - It may sound a bit odd, but you may consider a leisure activity that your mentor enjoys. This may be a trip to the golf course, tennis courts, or any other environment that gets them talking.