



Why become a mentee?

There are lots of great reasons to be a mentee. Here are some guidelines and things to consider to help you decide if it the right thing for you at the moment.

Mentoring is where a mentor helps a mentee in their personal and professional development by encouraging them, sharing ideas and experience. The mentor has experience and knowledge that the mentee wants to learn from. A mentor does not tell people what to do or delegate work to their mentee. Mentors do not have to have all the answers.

Mentoring is a professional confidential partnership where, as the mentee, you have time to focus on your personal and professional development or your future and career goals. You may have a specific project you are working on or about to start and you would like some support and guidance.



Mentoring is for you if you want to grow, learn and be your best. You may want to overcome challenges or you may want to be challenged to develop personally and professionally in your career.

You set the agenda of the mentoring meetings. You decide what you want to talk about. You choose the topic or question or goal you want to work on with your mentor.

On the other hand, as the mentee, you are responsible for arranging the meetings, travelling to meet your mentor and doing actions and any homework in between meetings that you agreed with your mentor.

There are many benefits of being a mentee – they include:

- Career and personal development
- Having a confidential sounding board
- Having a safe space to talk about the areas you want to develop
- An opportunity to use your creativity and problem solving skills
- Developing communication skills (e.g. listening, asking questions)
- Increasing your network
- Developing your self-awareness
- It is good for the CV
- Learning from the ideas and experiences and perspective of someone who could be from a different generation, background or have different interests, life experiences or expectations, stage of career, sector etc
- Getting challenge and feedback from someone who is not your line manager

A great mentee

- Has a desire to grow and develop
- Is clear about what specifically they want to work on with the mentor
- Prepares for the meetings by thinking about questions, topics and goals to discuss
- Shares strengths as well as areas for development and growth
- Thinks for themselves
- Agrees to do homework and actions that will help move them towards their goals
- Prioritises the meetings and turns up on time
- Uses the meetings to plan for the future, overcome challenges or move forwards
- Seeks feedback and challenge as well as support and encouragement
- Follows up on any contacts given to them by the mentor
- Understands that they have to be proactive to get their next job – the mentor cannot gift them a job.

Mentoring programmes

Mentoring programmes can vary in a number of ways – it is important to be clear about the following so you can decide whether or not to be a mentee now:

- The overall purpose of the mentoring programme
- How much guidance and support are given to the mentor and mentee – a briefing session or document or some formal training
- Who the mentees are and how the matching is done
- The duration, which can range from a few weeks to a few years
- The number of hours required over what specified period of time or if this is a decision made by the mentor and mentee
- What paperwork is required e.g. to record activity, outcomes and evaluation.

Mentors are often concerned about the amount of time mentoring will need. Try as much as possible to be creative and flexible with the time so that it suits both you and the mentor and your workloads.

Mentoring meetings

Face-to-face mentoring meetings should take place in a suitable environment – an office or coffee shop, somewhere where both parties feel comfortable. Meetings can take also place on the phone, video calls which cut down on travel time and expenses.

It is usually the mentee who is expected to drive the partnership by organising and preparing for the meetings and doing the homework.

During the meetings, the mentor will help the mentee to generate and share ideas as well as sharing their ideas and experiences. The mentor will then work with the mentee to identify one or two actions to commit to do which will help achieve their goals and be the best they can be.

Step forward if you feel mentoring is the right thing for you right now!

