



Mentee briefing

It is great that you are considering starting or growing your career in the screen industries by entering a mentoring partnership. Mentoring is a professional partnership and a powerful way to support people who want to focus on their development or start to make important decisions about their future. Your mentor will be a role model of success, inspiring you to work hard and develop by providing access to support, advice, information and opportunities.

This brief guide outlines mentoring and how you can give and get the best from the partnership.

What is a mentee?

A mentee is someone who wants to focus on their personal and professional development. A mentee has goals and objectives they want to achieve and wants to overcome challenges. As a mentee you can expect support, encouragement, challenge, feedback and ideas from your mentor.

Mentoring can:

- Help boost your confidence and increase your self-awareness
- Give you clarity and an opportunity to focus on your challenges, goals and career objectives
- Provide a confidential, safe space to come up with ideas, to reflect, develop and grow
- Give you the opportunity to learn from the mentor and their experience

To get the best from the mentoring partnership you will need to:

- Use your planning and organising skills
- Understand your strengths and development needs – and be willing to share both with your mentor
- Be clear about what you want to achieve
- Be ready to receive feedback, be challenged and to use your creativity to generate ideas
- Learn from your mentor's experience
- Commit to actions and review progress with you mentor

What a mentor does

A mentor shares skills, knowledge and insights with you to help you develop personally and professionally in your career. They will encourage, support you to achieve your goals and help you to think for yourself. It is not about the mentor having all the answers and telling you what to do.

Great mentors:

- Provide an outside and non-judgemental perspective
- Actively listen to the things that are creating barriers or worrying for you
- Share their own experiences, giving unbiased advice, support, feedback and challenge
- Act as a confidential sounding board for ideas
- Facilitate decision making by helping you to come up with your own ideas and actions
- Provide contacts and introduce you to networks to further your personal and career development

Mentoring programmes

Mentoring programmes can vary in a number of ways – it is important and helpful to know:

- How much guidance is given to the mentor and mentee – a briefing session or document or some formal training
- The duration of the programme which can range from a few weeks to a few years
- How formal the partnership is e.g. number of hours over a specified period of time or if this is left to the mentor and mentee to decide; paperwork to record activity/outcomes/evaluation
- The overall purpose of the programme
- How the programme is managed and how the matching of mentors and mentees is achieved

Mentoring meetings

Where?: Face to face mentoring meetings should take place in a suitable environment – an office or coffee shop, somewhere where both parties feel comfortable - never in someone's home.

Meetings can take also place on the phone, via Skype, Whatsapp, Zoom or FaceTime.

Setting the agenda: It is usually the mentee who is expected to drive the partnership by organising the meetings and preparing for each meeting so that there is a question or a goal to focus on.

First steps: At the first meeting you will spend some time building rapport, getting to know each other and talking about how you will work together. This should include sharing contact details; talking about and agreeing confidentiality and boundaries; discussing what mentoring is and is not; duration, frequency of meetings and length of partnership; the mentee's achievements, challenges and career and personal development goals.

Your goals: Mentoring meetings focus on what YOU want to achieve, develop, or change. The mentor will help you identify a specific goal or objective to achieve or a challenge you wish to overcome. This gives each meeting a clear focus – it is YOUR agenda. Then the mentor will help you to explore the situation and what you could do to achieve you goal. Your mentor will share some of their ideas and experience as well. Finally from the list of ideas you have both come up with your mentor will help you to commit to one or two actions which will help you make some steps towards achieving your goal.

Your progress: At the beginning of each meeting you can review the actions agreed at the previous meeting and the progress made.

Review how it is going

It is good practice to regularly review the partnership itself. Talk through any challenges and agree how to move forwards. You could use the following questions to ask each other:

- What is working well that you or I do or bring to the partnership?
- What could you or I do differently, keep doing, do more of or less of to improve the partnership?

Don't let the partnership just fizzle out. If you have tried to make it work and are still facing challenges – discuss this and if necessary agree together to end the partnership early.

Ending the partnership

The partnership may end when you have achieved your goals, overcome your challenges, or when the number of hours/meetings/duration of the programme has been reached. At the final meeting spend some time discussing the overall outcomes and the progress made; celebrating success and to identify what you what you **both** learned. You may decide to continue to stay in touch in a less formal way.