



THE
NATIONAL
LOTTERY®



Guide for Mentors

Welcome

Welcome to the ScreenSkills Mentoring Programme. Thank you for volunteering to help someone start or progress their career in the screen industries. Mentoring can be a powerful way to support people who want to focus on their career development and make decisions about their next step.

This guide gives you information about mentoring and your responsibilities to make sure you give and get the best from the partnership. Please refer to additional resources on the ScreenSkills website, including the e-Learning module for mentors: [Mentoring \(for mentors\) - ScreenSkills](#)

What is a mentor?

As a mentor you will have industry experience, and the time to give to your mentee over a number of sessions. You will be someone who wants to share your experiences and offer advice to your mentee in focused conversations about their career development and career opportunities.

Mentoring can:

- Develop your leadership skills and your ability to have development conversations e.g. with your own team
- Provide you with the opportunity to 'give back'
- Increase your network
- Help to re-charge your batteries
- Offers a chance for you to learn from the experiences of your mentee
- Help you see things from the perspective of your mentee
- Give you time to reflect on your own learning and achievements

Mentoring is ...

A personal and professional development partnership in which someone shares their experience and knowledge with someone who wants to grow and progress: it's a two-way confidential partnership of learning, dialogue, development and challenge

Mentoring is a one-to-one partnership between a mentor and a mentee. As a mentor you will share your knowledge and experience with your mentee to help them develop personally and professionally in their career. You will help your mentee to identify actions and to take steps towards achieving their mentoring goals. Mentors encourage, support and help their mentees to think for themselves. You are not expected to solve the problems, have all the answers or to achieve the goals for the mentee.

Mentoring is two-way partnership that will give you both the opportunity to benefit by: increasing your networks; seeing things from someone else's perspective; developing your communication and feedback skills; learning from each other's creativity, life- and work-experiences.

What great mentors do

Mentoring is a learning and development (L&D) activity not just a one-off nice chat. Mentoring is a L&D activity, but it does not replace: training courses; webinars; coaching; work placements; trainee schemes. Sometimes mentoring may be an additional activity added to support a training course, a placement etc. As a mentor there are things you can do to make sure that what happens between you and your mentee is 'mentoring' rather than a one-off nice chat or a one-to-one training course for example, you will need to:

- Share your industry knowledge and experience
- Provide an outside perspective for your mentee and their career objectives
- Help your mentee identify clear mentoring goals
- Encourage your mentee to think for themselves and generate their own ideas
- Facilitate the meetings which focus on your mentee's goals and which have an outcome
- Actively listen to the mentee and ask a range of open questions to encourage thinking and raise self-awareness
- Offer advice, support, ideas, encouragement, that are relevant to your mentee
- Be a sounding-board and sign-post to further support
- Provide non-judgemental, honest and useful feedback and challenge
- Co-create a safe and confidential partnership with your mentee
- Attend the mentoring meetings in person or virtually

Mentoring partnerships are often for a certain amount of time e.g. six hours over six months. Your mentee will be expected to drive the partnership, set the agenda, liaise with you to agree a mutually suitable date and time for each meeting, and complete any actions or homework they agree with you. Therefore, as a mentor you are **not** expected to:

- Give your mentee a job or ask them to do unpaid work
- Give your mentee training or instruction
- Tell your mentee what to do
- Take on any actions or do any homework
- Solve your mentee's problems or achieve their goals for them
- Take the responsibility for making your mentee's career successful – the responsibility is always the mentee's

Mentor skills

As a mentor you will need to bring many of the qualities you use at work, such as being positive, curious, patient, encouraging, and be able to see things from the mentee's perspective, and skills such as listening and asking open questions. Taking part in mentoring will enable you to use and build on many of these qualities. You will also bring your ability to build and maintain relationships

and you and your mentee will both aim to build rapport and create a safe space where they can feel comfortable to be open about their goals strengths and weaknesses.

Really actively listening means being fully present and focused, and summarising regularly. Put your phone and email to the side, pay full attention, be curious, stay focused on the meeting, keep the mentee's goal in mind, ask relevant open questions that will help the mentee to think, explore, and generate their own ideas.

Offer advice and share your ideas that relate to the mentee and their goal. You and your mentee are different people and what has worked for you may not work for the mentee in their current situation. So do be ready to discuss how your advice can be modified and tweaked so that it is useful to the mentee in their current goals.

Your responsibilities

It is your mentee who is responsible for most of the logistics of a mentoring partnership, preparing for the meetings by setting the agenda, arranging the meetings for a mutually convenient date and time, and doing the homework or actions in between the meetings. Your meetings could take place at a shared meeting venue, office or public place such as a café or hotel reception/coffee lounge. Virtual meetings (on the phone or a video call) work very well especially if you are in different parts of the country, do not have time to travel or are unable to travel. If you do meet in person, this must be in a suitable venue where you both feel comfortable. Never meet at a home address or somewhere either of you feel vulnerable or uneasy. Please read the ScreenSkills Safeguarding and Mentoring guide.

It would probably be helpful if your mentee sent you a calendar invitation for each meeting, with details of what they want to discuss, their goal, and the location or link or phone number to use.

Whilst the mentee sets the agenda in the form of a mentoring goal, it is your responsibility to keep the meetings focused on their goal. Mentoring focuses on what the mentee wants to discuss and could fall into any of the broad topics below:

- Learning from your experience and relating that to their situation
- Receiving general career advice
- Getting feedback on their CV, practicing job interviews
- Discussing a problem and how to solve it, a challenge and how to overcome it or a barrier and how to push through it
- Getting individual feedback
- Getting feedback on their work
- What they can do to achieve their career goals or next step
- Understanding more about working in the screen industry

The first meeting

At the first meeting it is important that you and your mentee take some time to begin to get to know each other and build rapport. Have an initial chat about your careers to date, this could include your area of expertise, the roles you have held, what a typical day or week looks like for you, high and low points of your career to date and what you both hope to give and get from mentoring, as well as discussing your mentee's career and mentoring goals. Tell your mentee how you would like them to be in touch with you (phone, email etc), and how much contact you are expecting from them in between the meetings. Discuss any access needs. Agree with them that they will be responsible for liaising with you to set up the meetings at a mutually convenient date and time, and they will be responsible for setting the agenda, goal, topic for each meeting. Confirm the duration of the partnership e.g. one hour a month for six months.

Agree how you will work together

When you first meet it is important to discuss how you will work together and agree the ground rules. This will help to limit any future problems or misunderstandings.

It is very important to discuss and agree confidentiality as it is fundamental to a good mentoring partnership. Confidentiality works both ways, neither of you should discuss the content of the mentoring meetings with others unless you have agreed to do so. Things that are not confidential include if the mentee says:

- they are going to harm themselves or someone else
- they are doing something illegal, unethical or are breaking a policy e.g. health and safety
- they are being bullied or harassed

In these situations you should discuss the consequences of their actions, or in-actions; where or who to report the situation to; where to seek support. Depending on the situation, you may encourage your mentor to speak to the person running the mentoring programme, their work supervisor, manager, HR department, doctor or the Film and TV Charity 24-hour support line for example. You may seek support and advice yourself from the mentoring programme manager, a colleague or your own manager.

Everything else should be confidential between you. If either of you involve a third party by speaking to someone else about some of the content of your mentoring meetings, this should be discussed and agreed between you both first.

Boundaries or 'what mentoring is and is not' should be clear when you start your mentoring partnership. Mentoring focuses on your mentee's goals (see below). Neither of you are expected to share your private and personal lives with each other. However, if your mentee has a personal situation which is impacting them at work, they may want to talk to you about how to do the best they can at work whilst dealing with a personal issue. Mentoring is a learning and development activity and is not a replacement for a training course, placement or trainee scheme for example. Mentoring focuses on what your mentee wants to solve, overcome, or achieve in the industry, it does not involve you giving them a job, an award, or a commission.

Confirm with your mentee that they will organise the meetings, set the agenda, and will do the actions after each meeting.

Discuss your commitment to the partnership and both agree to be punctual and make mentoring meetings a priority in your calendars.

Be aware of any conflict of interest that may surface during the partnership. What happens if:

- your mentee talks about someone you know
- your mentee wants to apply for a job at the company or production your work at
- your mentee wants to apply for a job at a company that is in competition with the work you do

Discuss if you both would feel comfortable to continue mentoring or not, and whether you could discuss that topic at mentoring or not – and come to an agreement.

Feedback and challenge

The presence of feedback and challenge in mentoring can make the difference between a good partnership and a great partnership. It is probably easier for mentees to receive feedback and challenge from their mentor than it is from a parent, a teacher or a manager. Receiving feedback and challenge can give the mentee more stretch and help increase their self-awareness. Your mentee may want feedback about the first impressions they give, how they put across their ideas, or feedback on their CV for example. Agree with your mentee how much feedback and challenge they would like from you and check in with them that you are giving them the level of feedback and challenge they are looking for.

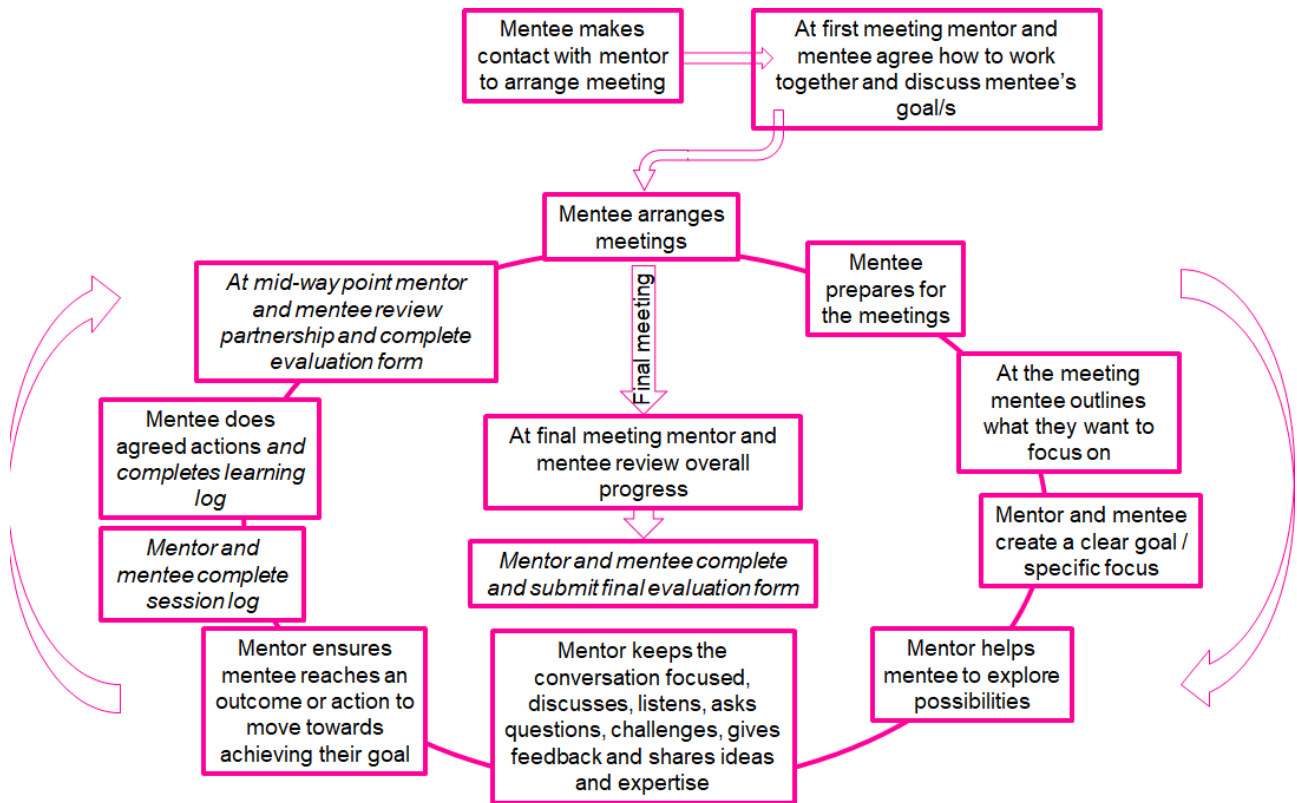
It is good practice for you and your mentee to discuss how the mentoring partnership and meetings are going so that you can keep them on track and relevant. Don't let the partnership just fizzle out if things don't seem to be going as either of you expected. If you are not sure how things are going, or you feel something is not working well, discuss this with your mentee. You can use the prompts below to give and get feedback from each other. All feedback should be specific, helpful and non-judgemental.

- What I/you bring to the partnership is...
- What I value about what you bring to the partnership is...
- What is going well...
- What could be better...
- What could I/you do differently, more or less of...

Discuss some options and agree what you will do differently etc in future meetings. If you think that mentoring is going off track, you are not getting on together, or are not finding the meetings useful, use the prompts above to have an adult-to-adult conversation about what to do differently or whether to end the partnership.

Mentoring meetings

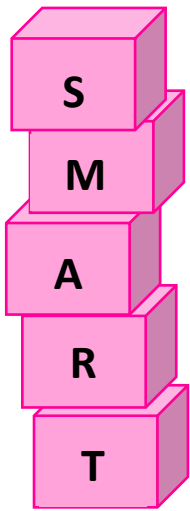
During each meeting you and your mentee will have a focused conversation based on a topic/goal set by the mentee. Together you will explore the situation and, as a mentor, you will encourage your mentee to think things through, look at things in a different way, come up with their own ideas. By encouraging them to think about their options and next steps, helps to develop their problem-solving skills and their confidence and draws on their own creativity and experiences. As the mentor, you will add to their ideas by sharing your own ideas, advice and suggestions based on your experience. Then together you can identify which one or two your mentee could take forwards to help them start to take steps to achieving their goal. Below is an overview of the mentoring partnership.



Structuring mentoring meetings

Mentoring is a learning and development (L&D) activity not just a one-off nice chat. It is your responsibility to keep the meetings focused on the mentee's goal or topic. You may be aware of different models to help structure mentoring meetings and conversations that focus on someone's development, or you may have your own structure that you use. Mentoring meetings have a beginning, a middle and an end – a goal, ideas and an outcome. The GROW model (goal, reality, options, will) can be a useful model to keep in your toolkit to help structure a good mentoring conversation.

Having a goal or topic for each meeting is an important part of making sure you have focused and useful conversations with your mentee, rather than a one-off nice chat. Your mentee should set the agenda by creating a goal or objective which is something they want to solve, overcome, explore or achieve. It is good to have an overall mentoring goal, and then individual smaller ones for each meeting. Your mentee should share them with you before each meeting. You may be aware of SMART which can help create a good goal, here is a reminder:



Specific: specifically what it is that the mentee wants to focus on, achieve, solve, overcome, explore

Measurable: how will they know when it has been achieved, solved, overcome; what will be different; what will they be more aware of; what will people notice

Achievable: it must be something within their control; how achievable it is in terms of their time, money, skills, support and what they may need to do to make it achievable. If it is not achievable, they may need to tweak their goal

Realistic: how realistic it is in terms of how the industry works, where they are in the industry now, and what they may need to do to make it realistic. If it is not realistic they may need to tweak their goal

Timed and timely: when they want to achieve, solve, overcome it by; assess if this the right time for this goal

An overview of the GROW model is below with some suggested questions you could ask at each stage. Mentoring is not a specific script, so the questions below are really just suggestions. The best question you can ask is one that is relevant to what your mentee has said and to their goal.

Example structure	Tip
Hello	
<p>Hello and any initial chat</p> <p>General update since previous meeting</p> <p>Review actions from previous meeting</p>	<p>In the first meeting, spend time getting to know each other, building rapport, and agreeing how you will work together</p>
Goal and session focus	
<p>What do you want to focus on today?</p> <p>What would success look and feel like?</p> <p>When do you want to achieve this?</p> <p>What makes this important to you?</p> <p>What do you want from this meeting?</p>	<p>Must be specific and positively worded</p> <p>This sets the agenda and focus</p> <p>If the focus appears to change, ask your mentee if the goal needs to change</p>
Reality	
<p>What is the context?</p> <p>If you have been in a similar situation, what did you learn?</p> <p>What is holding you back from moving forwards?</p>	<p>Keep it short</p> <p>Don't get bogged down in the past or in the detail</p> <p>Empathise</p>
Options (mentee generates ideas)	
<p>What is a new idea you could consider?</p> <p>What else? And what else? And what else?</p> <p>If you had a super power/were a superhero, what may be possible?</p> <p>What might a friend or colleague advise?</p> <p>What have others done in similar situations?</p>	<p>A one-person brainstorm</p> <p>Ideas can be wild, whacky, practical, bold, creative – they are just ideas at this stage</p> <p>Encourage</p> <p>Reference goal regularly to keep focus</p>
Share your knowledge	
<p>Share your knowledge, experience and ideas tailored to the mentee, their goal, career stage etc</p> <p>Build on their ideas</p>	
Will and getting commitment	
<p>Which one or two idea/s are you most drawn to?</p> <p>What are some of the step or actions involved?</p> <p>What do you need to have to be able to take one or two steps towards achieving your goal?</p> <p>Specifically what will you do first?</p> <p>When will you do it?</p>	<p>Reference and make links to the goal</p> <p>Ensure the action/s are specific, realistic and manageable</p>
Next steps	
<p>Discuss what worked well or could be better</p> <p>Agree next meeting</p> <p>Mentee may complete a session log or learning journal (templates are available on the ScreenSkills website)</p>	

Using a structure helps to keep the conversations focused. The conversation will naturally go backwards and forwards, but the general flow should: identify the focus/goal; briefly explore the current situation; identify options and choices together; agree an outcome/action.

Ending the partnership

In the same way you would contract or agree ground rules at the start of mentoring it is equally important to mark the end of the partnership appropriately. Whether mentoring is ending early or at the agreed duration, do not let it fizzle out or part awkwardly from your mentee just because you are not sure how to say goodbye. Mentoring partnerships generally last for a specific period, they are not dependent partnerships or ones that go on for ever. The end may be when: your mentee's goals have been achieved; your mentee has identified how to progress; the duration or end date has been reached; circumstances have changed and either one of you no longer has time for mentoring; or if you both decide it is not working. Although you may continue to have some form of contact, it is likely to be on a more informal basis.

Sometimes you and your mentee may agree to have a couple of extra sessions if for example your goals have not been achieved or your circumstances have changed. This needs to be discussed and mutually agreed.

When it is time to end the partnership, you may want to use the whole of the final session, or at least put aside 20 minutes to mark the end of the partnership. You can discuss your mentee's next steps to maintain and build on what they have learned as well as what you will both do to continue your learning and development beyond mentoring. Identify progress, celebrate any success and discuss what you have both enjoyed and got from the partnership.

Thank your mentee for organising the sessions and tell them what you have particularly valued about being in a mentoring partnership with them and add anything else you feel appropriate to say or offer.

Having said goodbye and marked the end, you can transition smoothly out of mentoring. You may also reflect on mentoring and consider being a mentor again in the future, or getting a mentor for yourself.