



# A Navigator's Guide to Mentoring

This guide is intended to give you tools to develop mentorships and make the most out of them. Mentoring relationships can take many forms, including formal structured programs or a casual conversation.

The mentee should drive the mentoring relationship by setting goals, scheduling meetings, creating agendas, and tracking process. The mentor acts as a facilitator who empowers the mentee to problem solve and make decisions. But mentorship is a reciprocal relationship where both mentor and mentee can learn from each other. Duke Human Resources is here to support you in this work.



## What is Mentoring?

### MENTORING IS A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING RELATIONSHIP THAT:

- ★ focuses on facilitating personal growth and development.
- ★ plays a major role in the mentee's career decision making by providing guidance, encouragement and empowering them with the knowledge, confidence and skills necessary to succeed.
- ★ provides an opportunity to remind mentees that life and career are a journey and they have time to figure things out.
- ★ builds on a foundation of mutual effort, respect, trust and the courage to communicate openly.

### MENTORING IS A PROCESS:

- ★ of engaging in intentional conversations between mentee and mentor.
- ★ that can last a few weeks, months or even years.

## What Does Mentoring Require from Mentors?

1. Meet with your mentees regularly (at least once a month).
2. Ask thought-provoking and challenging questions to guide decision making and problem solving.
3. Engage in active listening in regular and meaningful conversations.
4. Provide and accept objective feedback and guidance.
5. Facilitate and engage in self-reflection and self-development.
6. Collaborate on plans and ideas to help mentee reach their goals.
7. Commit time, attention and effort.
8. Periodically assess and celebrate success.
9. Ensure confidentiality (unless mentee's health or safety is at risk).
10. Maintain an open line of communication between meetings.

## Key To Dos for Mentors Early in the Relationship

### SET EXPECTATIONS



Define the relationship and build a clear understanding of what the mentee wants and needs from the mentoring relationship.

### SET GOALS



Work with mentees to set goals at the beginning of the relationship to give focus and direction for how you can best assist them.

### GET TO KNOW YOUR MENTEE



Be fully present and listen actively to establish rapport and to create a positive, accepting environment that allows for open communication. Listen actively and ask thoughtful questions to gain insight into your mentee's ideas, goals and dreams.

## Developing the Mentoring Relationship

### SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell your mentee about yourself and your experiences to build trust and respect. Mentors can create a trusting environment through sharing stories about their own professional and personal journeys. Be open to sharing the challenges you faced, your failures and how you overcame them.

### ASK QUESTIONS

Ask questions that are open, challenging and call for a reflective response. This will help you identify the mentee's needs, values and interests. It is also a great way to encourage your mentee to think through situations themselves and draw out the consequences of the various choices or actions they might take.

### OFFER OPTIONS VERSUS SOLUTIONS

Help your mentee process their own ideas. Offer suggestions the mentee might try and talk through the reaction to these suggestions. Encourage and support mentees by helping them plan for success and overcome roadblocks.

### BE A SOUNDING BOARD

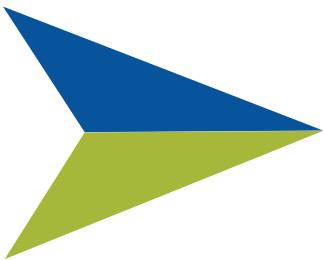
Allow your mentee to explore their thoughts, ideas and curiosities with you. This will often help them clarify their thinking and gain insights about a situation as they share their concerns/thoughts/ideas with you.

### PROVIDE RESOURCES

Share additional resources with your mentee, including people, resources, articles, and web-based information. You can't be an expert on all things, but you can point the mentee in the right direction to get what they need. Think of yourself as a learning facilitator rather than the person who has all the answers.

### OFFER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Provide honest, thoughtful and supportive feedback that helps your mentee acquire insight to further develop specific qualities or skills.



# Questions for Mentors to Consider

Mentoring new supervisors is crucial for their growth and effectiveness. Here are some thought-provoking questions that mentors can ask new supervisors to facilitate their development:

- ★ **What are your biggest fears about managing people?**  
Understanding specific concerns and fears can help direct support and guidance.
- ★ **What are your leadership goals?**  
Understanding their aspirations helps tailor guidance.
- ★ **How do you plan to build trust with your team?**  
Trust is the foundation of effective leadership.
- ★ **How do you handle conflict resolution?**  
Discuss strategies for managing team dynamics.
- ★ **What communication style do you prefer?**  
Adaptability is key in leadership.
- ★ **How do you prioritize tasks?**  
Time management is essential for supervisors.
- ★ **What motivates you?**  
Explore their intrinsic drivers for better team engagement.
- ★ **What challenges do you anticipate?**  
Identifying potential obstacles prepares them.
- ★ **How will you balance authority and approachability?**  
Striking the right balance is crucial.
- ★ **What feedback mechanisms will you use?**  
Regular feedback fosters growth.
- ★ **How do you plan to develop your team members?**  
Discuss coaching and skill-building.
- ★ **How can we celebrate individual contributions?**  
Recognize and appreciate each team member's unique strengths and efforts.
- ★ **What strategies promote collaboration across different roles or departments?**  
Bridging silos enhances overall team effectiveness
- ★ **How do we ensure everyone feels valued and included?**  
Advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ★ **What actions demonstrate that it's safe to take risks?**  
Encourage experimentation and learning from failures
- ★ **How can we create a culture of psychological safety?**  
Lead conversations with empathy, openness, and affirmation.

Remember, mentoring is about guiding, supporting, and empowering new supervisors on their leadership journey.