
Dartmouth



Mentor Exchange

How to Serve as a Mentee

Be yourself; you have much to offer your mentor! Get to know your mentor and share your goals with him or her. Together establish expectations for the relationship.

1. **APPROACH THIS EXPERIENCE WITH AN OPEN MIND**—Your mentor may ask you to consider alternative approaches or behaviors. Try to feel comfortable to “think out loud” and together explore various approaches and what may work best for you in a given situation. Should your mentor introduce an idea or make a suggestion that you do not agree with, or do not completely understand, don’t be afraid to say so and ask questions to establish clarity.
2. **BE CURIOUS**—Your mentor may have more experience in our profession than you do, or more expertise in a particular area. He or she may be able to explain the reason why certain practices have evolved and help you make connections. Keep asking questions, listen, and be willing to explore and experiment.
3. **EXPECT MORE GUIDANCE THAN ANSWERS**—Your mentor wants you to stand on your own and be successful; that will not happen if he or she provides you with all the answers. Instead, expect your mentor to act as a sounding board prompting you to think through issues and arrive at your own solution.
4. **BE OPEN ABOUT YOUR ISSUES, SUCCESSES AND FAILURES**—Let your mentor know what is going on in your world. Although your mentor will not prescribe answers, he or she may be able to point you in the right direction or help you think about some alternatives that you did not even know existed. Your mentor cannot do this if he or she does not know your goals, career aspirations and current challenges.
5. **INITIATE CONTACT WITH YOUR MENTOR**—Work together to set up dates for meetings. Expect that these meetings may take place off-site for a breakfast or lunch. Do not sit back and expect all overtures to originate with your mentor.
6. **BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT**—Do not sit back and expect that your mentor will provide you with all kinds of advice and inside information. You are the one who needs to come prepared to the sessions, ready to discuss issues and options. You are the one who must level with your mentor about your challenges. You are the one

who should follow up and let your mentor know what progress you have made on the issues you have discussed.

Potential Issues to Explore:

- Navigating the people issues that are so critical to success
 - Influencing others over whom you have no formal authority
 - Career options that pull together your education and professional experience
 - Pivotal events in the life and career of your mentor and how they learned from experience
 - How you can use the knowledge you have in a more effective way
7. ENJOY THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP—Many people view these relationships as one of the learning highlights of their careers. Enjoy the moment!