

Best Practices for Mentors

- Take a learner-centered approach in which your Mentee is mutually involved in this process. Encourage your Mentee to develop an agenda and goals for the mentoring relationship. Mentees will benefit most when they are taking the lead presenting topics, goals, and strategies.
- Consider yourself as a guide that asks deeper questions. Allow for opportunities in which the Mentee can get to know themselves better and build confidence in their own decision-making.
- Recognize and communicate that you too will gain knowledge and skills from this relationship. You will be able to expand on your ideas, continue to build confidence in your own decision making and direction, connect you to more members of the organization, feel reenergized, and better be able to communicate your story and career path. (Fischler & Zachary, 2009).
- The following elements are said to be key components of a successful mentoring relationship according to experts in the mentoring field: “reciprocity, learning, relationship, partnership, collaboration, mutually-defined goals, and development” (Fischler & Zachary, 2009). To explore these topics further, refer to the article *Shifting Gears: The Mentee in the Driver’s Seat* under the ‘Mentor Resources’ tab.
- Set learning goals together as well as ground rules for your relationship. Decide who initiates contact, what form of communication will work best (phone calls, Video Chat, Email, in-person, etc.)
- Make it a goal for the Mentee to become increasingly self-directed. Share the responsibility and accountability for achieving goals. Move from dependence to independence to interdependence. (Zachary, 2012).
- Mentors still have a duty to report any circumstances involving discrimination and harassment. It may be beneficial to consult with the Office of Discrimination and Harassment if issues do arise.
- Familiarize yourself with adult learning theory. Learning is the foundational goal for the mentoring relationship.

