



APS CUWiP at Argonne

Making Mentoring Meaningful— Identifying Needs and Mapping a Mentor Network

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Learning objectives

Using the resources provided, following this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Define mentor
- Identify reasons for seeking a mentor
- Map a mentoring network
- Plan mentoring conversations

Word Association Time!



WHAT IS A MENTOR?



SHOUT OUT YOUR
ANSWERS!

A Mentee's Job

If I tell my mentor I need help getting a book down from the top shelf of a very tall bookcase and they hand me a ladder, it's up to me to decide if I want to climb the ladder and get the book.

It's my mentor's job to advise and help think through solutions.

It's my job to do the work.



A Working Definition of Mentoring

*Mentoring is a **professional alliance** built on trust in which individuals work together to support the personal and professional **growth** of **both the mentor and mentee**. Through this **collaborative learning** relationship, mentors share their experience and knowledge to **help mentees develop** and succeed to their full potential.*



Introduce yourself to the others at your table



Think about the different ways mentors have helped you



Discuss with your group



Group share—what are reasons for seeking a mentor?

Group Activity— Why Seek a Mentor?

Mapping Your Mentoring Network

The “Guru Model”—
one mentor
to provide
all the
answers



The Mentor Network Model —Your “Go To” Mentors for Different Needs



Who are the potential mentors in your network?



Group Activity



Refer to handout



Discuss your mentoring priorities—what would you want to work on? What are the areas for development?



Identify potential mentors within your current network.



Identify gaps in your network—who do you need to meet?



Connecting with a Mentor

Where/How do you find mentors?



Tips for Connecting

The "cold email"

- Find a common interest--*research area, profession, field, etc.*
- State why you want to connect with this person—"I see that you are experienced in...I've read your work on...and am interested in knowing more about this [topic, line of work, role, career path, etc.]."
- Share the nature of your interest—"I'm considering a similar career path and would like to learn what it takes to get there..."
- Ask for 15 or 30 minutes of their time for a first introduction.
- Offer to set up the appointment based on their availability and send a meeting invitation
- **Is it a referral? Great! State who referred you to them.**
- Be flexible—offer potential times, dates, etc.
- Say thank you!

Should you say you are looking for a mentor initially?

- You could, but not necessarily needed. Could simply connect over mutual interests.
- First meetings are about assessing fit. If it doesn't seem like a good fit, you still would have learned something useful.
- If you are in an organization that has a mentoring program, then go ahead and mention that you are seeking a mentor through the program.

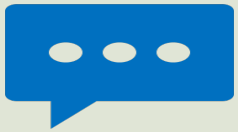
The First Meeting

- Ask about your mentor's career journey
- What challenges did they face?
- Who helped them along the way? How?
- Share your journey—where have you been? Where do you want to go next?
- What do you need to get there? What are you looking to learn from a mentor
- Be prepared to answer the question, “So, how can I help?”



Other tips for getting started while working remotely

Strategic communication is the key!



Set up a regular meeting schedule

- Teams is at your disposal—other platforms?
- Send agenda items ahead of time
- Ask clarifying questions



Virtual communications may take more work

- Be open about concerns
- Be open to listening AND asking questions
- Confirm what you heard (reframe/paraphrase/summarize)



Stay connected!

- Send follow up/thank you email
- Summarize a few key things you learned from your meeting
- Offer to schedule next meeting

Moving from needs
and interests to goals

Translating Needs and Interests Into Starter Goals

Some goals may be considered “starter” as in, they are a starting point for further refinement.

Examples of starter goals:

- Becoming more efficient
- Learning a new skill
- Improve time management
- Build communication skills
- Learn to navigate office politics
- Work-life balance

Goals can be “Be” goals or “Do” Goals

- “Be”—longer-term, career or person-focused
- “Do”—shorter-term focuses on skills to help get you there

Reference: Zachary, Lois and Fischler, Lory. *The Mentee’s Guide: Making Mentoring Work for You*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2009.

Building on Starter Goals to Make “SMARTer” Goals

Specific

- What are you really trying to accomplish? What can help address the underlying issue of your starter goal?

Measurable

- How will you know you are making progress?

Action-Oriented

- Can you identify specific activities to work on to help you achieve your goal?

Realistic

- Can you break the goal into achievable tasks? What resources are needed?

Timely

- Can you identify a plan to make progress in the desired time frame?

Activity



Refer to the starter goals in the handout.



How would you translate these into SMART goals?

SMARTer Goals from Starter Goals

Starter Goal	SMARTer Goal
Improve work/life balance	
Improve communication skills	
Become an independent researcher	
Build Self-Confidence	
Be better at managing projects	
Learn about career paths	

Sample Activities for Mentors and Mentees Based on Interests, Needs and Goals

Mentee's frustration—can't seem to make bring any of my projects to completion. I'm working hard and making progress, but none are ready to be written up for publication yet.

Starter goal—be better at project and time management.

SMARTer goal—identify specific strategies to prioritize projects and develop a timeline for deliverables and milestones to meet in the next 6 months.

Potential Activities:

- *Review current projects together—what is expected and when?*
- *Map out questions that can be asked of the project leader or principal investigator to clarify expectations*
- *Identify an article or resource that outlines the project management process for scientists. Discuss the article together and identify gaps in current approach.*
- *Develop a timeline for deliverables and review at each meeting.*

Summary

Is a collaborative learning relationship

Starts with self-awareness by the mentee

Meaningful Mentoring

Requires clear, focused goals

Can be attained through a mentor network