

WE² Mentor Tip Sheet

1. Know Your Strengths

Know what you bring to the table. Take an inventory of your mentoring skills. Think about the guidance that was the most and least helpful to you as you traveled your career path.

2. You Don't Have To Be Perfect

You don't need to know everything. There are some areas in which you might not be the most helpful resource for your mentee. That's ok! You can figure it out together, or help them connect to the appropriate resource and focus your time with your mentee on other areas. Don't be afraid to learn along side and share your previous mistakes with your mentee.

3. Set Expectations Early

You and your mentee must clearly outline and agree to expectations for each other and the relationship. This will help avoid role confusion and give the mentorship great potential for success.

4. Take an Interest

Spend time in the beginning getting to know each other on a personal as well as professional level. This will promote effective and fluid communication, as well as develop trust and a safe space for open communication. Find common ground, but also acknowledge how you are different.

5. Provide Feedback that Can Be Heard

Remember that you are a guide, and your mentee may not always take the advice you give. You may have the very best of intentions, but if you do not provide feedback in a way that works for your mentee, the opportunity for a constructive conversation will most likely be lost. Don't jump straight to giving advice; try to listen and understand first, and then continue listening as needs and goals may change over time.

6. Challenge and Encourage

Encourage your mentee to pursue new opportunities. Foster your mentee's autonomy and independence. Fill in any skill gaps that she will need to succeed in her career and steer her in the right direction. Understand her end goals and position her for success. Inspire her to be ambitious and push her goals further. Help her focus in on tangible actions to move forward.

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7. Stay Positive

Stay positive, especially when your mentee seems to be struggling to do so herself. When your mentee has some areas that need to be strengthened, choose the time and place for this conversation carefully. Disappointment for some mentees will be more discouraging than motivating.

8. Share Your Network

Networking and making meaningful industry connections is often the hardest part for young professionals. They may be afraid to ask. Developing a professional network takes time and years of practice, but you can accelerate the process for your mentee by making introductions. Invite them to networking events with you, and encourage them to attend events even when you cannot be there. Always look for opportunities to open a new door for them.

9. Celebrate Achievement

Recognize and celebrate milestones, even when your mentee does not think it is a big deal. Confidence is vital for professional success. When they show a strength or improvement, acknowledge it.

10. Follow Up

Always end your current meeting by scheduling your next meeting and clearly setting expectations for any follow-up work that needs to occur. If you have not heard from your mentee lately, send a quick check-in email.