

Getting started in the process

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Associated Video: What mentoring means to both the mentor and mentee

What will you cover at the first meeting

The relationship that evolves over a period of time is crucial to the success of the mentoring journey. Although your mentee will control what they get out of the relationship you are the guardian of the relationship because of your knowledge and experience. The first meeting is vital because it will set the tone of the relationship which will, ideally, get off to a swift and productive start.

Your mentee or the IAgrE Office will get in contact initially to say would you be interested in becoming their mentor and what they are hoping to achieve from the partnership, ie professional registration, career move etc.

Arrange a mutually convenient time, either face to face or telephone conversation, skype etc with your mentee direct.

During the first meeting

The first session is all about setting the ground rules and acknowledging that the relationship is two-way.

We recommend you:

- Tell your mentee something about yourself, this could include information about both your professional and personal life. This will help build rapport (see section below)
- Explain why you got involved in the mentor programme
- Your mentee's ambitions and goals in relation to why they want to be involved in the programme, ie issues beings faced, professional registration, expectations, priorities etc
- Cover basic essentials – frequency of meetings (we suggest monthly), venues, confidentiality, recording of meetings, targets etc

You must also consider the mentee's point of view. They may not know what to expect from the mentoring process and therefore it is important that you invest time in agreeing their role as well as yours.

Meetings need to follow a formal agenda, although this does not imply a rigid structure or approach. Effective mentoring meetings provide a sense of purpose and achievement.

When arranging a meeting with your mentee, ensure this is in a suitable environment. This could be at a shared meeting venue, offices, etc. Coffee shops and hotel meeting areas are also suitable places to run mentoring sessions. Whatever works best for both parties.

Building rapport with your mentee

Below is a **3 step process** to help create an effective relationship:-

1. Draw up a timetable in advance of regularly spaced meetings and establish a set of ground rules to which you will both abide. These can be face-to-face, telephone or e-mentoring.
2. Maintain a session log, including session sheets and action plans which will act as the basis for ongoing discussion.
3. Work towards developing a trusting relationship and establishing a good rapport with your mentee.



[DOWNLOAD - 'Session Sheet'](#)

Giving and Receiving Feedback

The skills of giving and receiving feedback are fundamental to effective relationships and are an essential part of the mentoring process.

Methods of giving feedback

There are a number of ways you can give feedback, some more helpful than others!

1. **Positive feedback** – praises strengths and achievements. It is the easiest form of feedback and extremely important
2. **Negative feedback** – involves commenting on actions or behaviours that may be hindering a person's involvement. This is more difficult to give but is equally important. If given skilfully, it is an invaluable way to identify areas in which the person has an opportunity to grow and develop
3. **Constructive feedback** – combination of positive and negative feedback and focuses on joint problem-solving. This is probably the most productive way of giving feedback
4. **Destructive feedback** – has no benefits. This is criticism without positive suggestions and is to be avoided at all costs – it dampens enthusiasm and reduces commitment.

Receiving Feedback

The way you receive feedback may affect the way it is given to you. You can influence the person who is giving you feedback to become more effective by responding and asking constructive questions.

Some tips for receiving feedback:

- Always welcome positive feedback and enjoy the praise!
- Always listen to what is being said and do not jump to conclusions.
- Try not to be defensive
- Ask the person to give examples of your behaviour that have given rise to the feedback.
- Agree what needs to happen next, what both of you will do and by when

Reflective Practice

It is really important for both the mentor and the mentee to reflect on the mentoring meetings and the actions taken.

It helps a mentee:

- to accept responsibility for their own personal and business growth
- to see a clear link between the effort they put in and the outcome
- to get value from each mentoring experience
- to 'learn how to learn' and add new skills over time

It helps a mentor:

- Develop your analytical skills and creative thinking
- Highlight areas where you need more knowledge
- Leads to greater understanding ability
- Increases the chance of the mentee receiving effective mentoring from you
- Helps your self-awareness and your personal and professional development



[DOWNLOAD - 'Post-meeting reflection: mentee' by David Clutterbuck](#)



[DOWNLOAD - 'Post-meeting reflection: mentor' by David Clutterbuck](#)

Managing the relationship over time

Once you have made initial contact with your mentee, your role as mentor will come into play. It is your responsibility to give frank and honest feedback with regard to progress being made. By

establishing a timetable of regularly spaced out meetings, you will be in a position to review your mentee's success.

We suggest you speak to your mentee on a monthly basis (more often if support is needed). This will need to be agreed by both parties.



[DOWNLOAD - 'Mentoring lifecycle' by David Clutterbuck](#)



Session Overview

