

MENTORSHIP HANDBOOK

This handbook offers tips and practical guidance for mentors

Introduction

Dear mentor,

This handbook provides an overview of how to approach your use of the “Yoga for Youth: Mental Health And Harmony” manual. We recommend you review it before the first meeting with your mentee and revisit it as often as you wish. We hope it can help you navigate the mentoring relationship in a structured and effective manner.

At any point in the process, you can contact us at migrationandmigrationalignment@gmail.com to ask for advice, voice a concern or simply tell us how your mentoring relationship is going.

1. Mentoring Overview

1.1 Benefits for Mentors

Mentoring is a relationship between two people aimed at professional development. It is based on mutual respect, trust and integrity. Why is mentoring important? Relationships drive growth, motivation and inspiration in an organization.

Mentoring relationships are proven to improve productivity, staff engagement and retention.

And connecting with mentees and building these relationships can be a fulfilling part of one's career.

Some benefits we hope you will gain from this pilot include:

- Gain new insights and perspectives
- Develop your management skills
- Reflect on your accomplishments
- Reduce isolation

1.2 What Mentoring Is and Is Not

It is important to understand what constitutes a mentoring relationship.

Mentoring Is...	Mentoring Is Not...
Development tool — a mentoring relationship can help you understand more about you and what you want out of your life.	Replacement for formal development — Mentoring cannot take the place of formal training but can augment it.
Knowledge-sharing opportunity — mentoring facilitates the flow of information and ideas.	Management replacement — A mentor should not take on the role or responsibilities of a mentee's manager.
Organizational culture support — mentoring can help staff better understand the Organization's cultural norms, some of which are not captured in written policies and rules.	A guaranteed promotion — A mentoring relationship provides no assurance of

Candid and Specific — a good mentoring relationship provides honest and specific feedback and a route to growth.	a promotion. However, both parties may develop competencies and skills that improve overall job performance. Personal counselling — It is best to seek help on personal issues from a life coach or mental health professional.
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1.3 Mentoring and Coaching: What's the difference?

Mentoring and coaching differ in their objectives, impact and duration.

Mentoring • Tends to focus on an individual's overall career goals and aspirations • Mutually benefits the mentor and mentee. • Formal mentoring period may be finite, but the relationship may continue	Coaching • Assesses and improves an individual's performance in a particular area. • Benefits the coachee more than the coach • Often has a time-bound relationship defined to meet specific goals
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1.4 Cornerstones of Mentoring Relationships

Self-reflection

Some important traits of a mentor include empathy, curiosity, authenticity and the ability to connect and impart trust. Research shows that these are more important than the professional skills a mentor may have. Reflect on how you display or convey these traits in your relationships and how you might use them in mentoring.

Building Trust

Trust is a cornerstone of effective mentoring relationships. As a mentor, remember that your mentee will need to trust you rather quickly in order to accomplish their goals. Everyone has a different trust profile. Some of us trust people quickly and others take longer, withholding trust until the other person has proven trustworthy. Keep this in mind as you get to know your mentee

There are actions that erode trust in a mentoring relationship. These may include:

- Cancelling meetings for more important priorities
- Lack of follow-through on planned actions
- Impatient or unfocused listening
- Lack of preparedness
- Breaches of confidentiality

Confidentiality

Personal and professional information divulged during a mentoring relationship may be confidential. It is expected that both parties do not disclose such information to anyone else unless both mentor and mentee agree otherwise.

1.5 Role of mentor and mentee

The mentor-mentee relationship plays a crucial role in personal and professional development. The mentor, with their experience, knowledge, and skills, guides the mentee towards achieving their goals, offering support, insight, and feedback. They act as a role model, advisor, and sometimes a coach, helping the mentee navigate challenges and explore opportunities. The mentee, on the other hand, brings enthusiasm, willingness to learn, and fresh perspectives. They actively engage in the relationship by setting goals, asking questions, and reflecting on the guidance received, which fosters their growth and development.

1.6 Obstacles to the Mentoring Process

Obstacles to the mentoring process can include mismatched expectations between mentor and mentee, lack of commitment from either party and poor communication. Cultural or personality differences may also hinder the relationship's development. Additionally, insufficient time and resources, along with a lack of clear goals or structure, can impede progress. Overcoming these challenges requires open dialogue, mutual respect, and a willingness to adapt and address issues as they arise, ensuring a productive and beneficial mentoring experience for both parties.

1.7 Mentoring online

Mentoring online offers flexibility and accessibility, breaking geographical barriers and allowing mentors and mentees to connect from anywhere. It requires clear communication, reliable technology, and a commitment to regular, scheduled interactions. Challenges include building rapport and maintaining engagement without face-to-face meetings. Success in online mentoring relies on setting clear goals, using effective digital communication tools, and fostering an environment of trust and support.

GETTING STARTED

Some mentees may know just what they want to discuss from the first meeting. Some may need more encouragement to open up. Some mentees can be keen on more structured meetings and have a detailed plan while others prefer more spontaneity.

There is no right mentoring formula. All of these approaches and preferences are okay! Aim to simply get to one another at first and communicate expectations and preferences. Together you will figure out what works best for both of you.

Also, keep in mind that if you've been a mentor before, the way you communicated last time may not work this time. Many factors influence communication in a mentoring relationship including interpersonal chemistry, years of experience in the Organization, one's cultural background and one's personality type, to name a few.

For both first-time mentors and more experienced ones, we recommend that you consider the following phases and related steps.

Establish	Create	Meet
Establish expectations and build trust (pre-work & sessions 1-2) Identify your expectations for the mentoring relationship	Create an action plan (sessions 2-3) Ask about your mentee's strengths and challenges	Meet consistently and revise the action plan (session 3 onward) At each meeting, review

• Hold introductory meeting • Listen to your mentee's expectations and goals • Clarify roles and responsibilities • Share your expectations for the programme with the mentee	• Discuss their goals and action items for the programme • Encourage your mentee to fill out the Mentorship Agreement • (or another action plan document of their choosing)	• progress on actions items • Discuss items of interest, current challenges, recent successes, etc. • Foster learning and development with practical exercises
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Phase 4: Reflect on your experience and determine next steps (last session)

- Acknowledge your relationship and what you accomplished together
- Discuss next steps: challenges ahead and new goals
- Provide feedback on the Together mentoring programme

The next section provides more details on how to address each phase.

2.1 Phase 1 – Establish Expectations (pre-work & sessions 1-2)

At the start of a mentoring relationship, it's important to focus on expectations – for both parties to understand what each would like to give and gain from the relationship. Part of this process is figuring out what kind of role you might play. The list below has roles that mentors typically have and the effective and ineffective behaviours that can result.

	Effective Behaviours	Ineffective Behaviours
ADVISOR	☐ Acts as a sounding board and facilitator ☐ Maintains privacy/confidentiality	☐ Fixes problems ☐ Assumes responsibility for mentee
PROTECTOR	☐ Supports, is a safety net	☐ Fights mentee's battles ☐ Overprotects

	Ensures a safe environment to take risks	
DEVELOPER	- Gives structure and direction - Provides guidance based on observations during interactions with mentee - Empowers mentee to handle their problem independently	- Dictates, controls learning - Looks for quick-fixes - Provides general criticism or judgment - Tells mentee what to do
BROKER	- Identifies skill or competency gaps through a “third party” lens - Identifies and facilitates development opportunities	- Allows for personal biases - Abdicates does not follow up
CHALLENGER	- Positively provokes, pushes toward highest standards - Helps mentee explore potential career opportunities	- Pushes too far too soon - Discounts mentee’s thoughts and opinions

Remember that the role(s) you take on – and they may change periodically - depend on your personal preferences and personality, the approach you might have to mentoring and your mentee’s expectations and goals. Again, there is no right formula.

Get to know each other as people. Spend time introducing yourselves, sharing information such as your preferred names, one another’s current positions and your relevant job histories, why you decided to participate and any information about hobbies and interests that you feel comfortable sharing. You might use some of the following questions to help drive conversations:

	Effective Behaviours	Ineffective Behaviours
CLARIFIER	□ Acts as a sounding board and facilitator □ Maintains privacy/confidentiality	□ Fixes problems □ Assumes responsibility for mentee
AFFIRMER	□ Supports, is a safety net □ Ensures a safe environment to take risks	□ Fights mentee's battles □ Overprotects
SPONSOR	□ Gives structure and direction □ Provides guidance based on observations during interactions with mentee □ Empowers mentee to handle their problem independently	□ Dictates, controls learning □ Looks for quick-fixes □ Provides general criticism or judgment □ Tells mentee what to do

Questions for the first meeting

Examples

- What is your motivation for signing up for the mentoring programme?
- What is your educational and professional background (including an explanation of your current role)?
- What have been some high points in your career? Some low points?
- What is interesting about life in your duty station?
- What is your next big challenge?
- What are your greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?
- What do you hope to accomplish in the next 6 months, 1 year, 3 years and 5 years?
- What are your hobbies/interests outside of work?
- Discuss things about the mentee's profile that were interesting to you.

Also, keep in mind that mentors can learn from mentees. You will need to communicate with your mentee about what you would like to learn. Review their profile and identify a topic that you would like their input on or a skill you would like to develop during the four months.

In the mentoring pilot, participants may define how often they meet. We suggest twice monthly for four months but this is not required. Meeting lengths are flexible. Your mentee will be responsible for scheduling and leading each session, but we recommend that in the beginning, you decide on a time that usually works for both. Having sessions booked in advance in your calendar will help you prioritize them.

Finally, mentoring programmes can contribute to civility and “good citizenship” in an organization. In other words, in places where mentoring programmes are successful, staff tend to treat each other well, staff engagement is high and staff focus more on their development goals.

2.2 Phase 2 - Create an action plan (sessions 2-3)

Once you have gotten to know each other's expectations for the programme, you can help your mentee develop an action plan for a mentoring period. Together you can create an action plan feature called the Mentorship Agreement. You could encourage your mentee to fill it out and then review it with them and give feedback. You both could formalize the process by signing the document (typing your name).

Or your mentee may want to use another type of action plan document; this is fine too. On the other hand, your mentee may not be interested in developing a written action plan; this is okay too. You might remind them, however, that people tend to achieve goals and accomplish action items more often when they have written them down.

Mentorship Agreement Template

The purpose of this template is to assist you in documenting mutually agreed-upon goals and parameters that will serve as the foundation for your mentoring relationships. While mentors and mentees may find mentorship agreements to be useful, they are optional. This template is expected to be altered to meet individual needs.

[1] *Goals* (what you hope to achieve as a result of this relationship; e.g., gain perspective relative to skills necessary for success in academia, explore new career opportunities/alternatives, obtain knowledge of organizational culture, networking, leadership skill development, etc.):

[2] *Steps to achieving goals* as stated above (e.g., meeting regularly, manuscripts/grants, collaborating on research projects, steps to achieving independence, etc.):

[3] *Meeting frequency* (frequency, duration, and location of meetings):

[4] *Confidentiality*: Any sensitive issues that we discuss will be held in the strictest of confidence. Issues that are off limits for discussion include:

[5] Plan for *evaluating relationship effectiveness* (e.g., bi-annual review of mentorship meeting minutes, goals, and outcomes/accomplishments): _____

[6] *Relationship termination clause*: In the event that either party finds the mentoring relationship unproductive and requests that it be terminated, we agree to honor that individual's decision without question or blame.

[7] *Duration*: This mentorship relationship will continue as long as both parties feel comfortable with its productivity or until:

Mentor's Signature _____

Mentee's Signature _____

Date _____

2.3 Phase 3 - Meet consistently and revise the action plan (sessions 3 onward)

The topics you discuss during mentoring sessions should be centered around the goals. If you have time, help your mentee track progress and reassess the action plan. Encourage them to adjust some actions if they are no longer useful and to add new ones that might serve their goals better.

Of course, conversations tend to flow into other areas that can be equally useful and interesting. **As a mentor, try to remember that finding a balance between structure and flexibility can help ensure fulfilling meetings for both parties.** Using exercises or activities during sessions can accelerate learning and growth. Take a look at the list below.

Ideas for Exercises and Activities

- Situation-based exercises: discuss with your mentee how to best address past or upcoming situations they need help with.
- Role Play: do they have a tough conversation or presentation ahead? Take time to talk through it and help your mentee prepare.
- Shadowing: ask your mentee to join you for an event or a meeting so they can learn from observation. This can work in a virtual environment too!
- Networking: think of colleagues that you can introduce your mentee to
- Peer Feedback: encourage your mentee to get feedback from someone they work with. Then discuss the feedback.
- Attend a digital education webinar or event on a topic that interests you both and discuss what you have learnt later.

2.4 Phase 4 - Reflect on your experience and determine next steps (last session)

1. Reflect

- Thank each other and acknowledge what your time together accomplished. What were the most useful exercises? What were the biggest takeaways?

2. Going forward

- Determine if or how you want to stay in touch. If there's more you can accomplish together, set up more monthly sessions!
- Share your success: as you make traction, update each other. Send an email when you have news to share.
- Spread the word: did you find the experience rewarding and fulfilling? Invite other colleagues to serve as mentors.

3. Feedback

- Respond to the survey. You can also share feedback with the project team through migrationandmigrationalignment@gmail.com. Your comments will help the programme grow.

REFERENCES

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What is Mentoring? – Definitions, History and Guides

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