



Mentoring Program

Association of College and
Research Libraries
Instruction Section

Mentor Tip Sheet

1. Keep communications open.

Contact your mentee as soon as you receive his or her name. Tell the mentee a bit about yourself, professionally and personally. Listen carefully and ask questions for clarification, when needed. Be practical when sending out messages and reply promptly to messages sent to you.

2. Define expectations.

Establish clear expectations and ground rules at the onset of the mentoring relationship.

3. Take initiative and be an active participant.

Be proactive in all aspects of the mentoring relationship. Be sensitive to the needs of your mentee and offer your feedback/advice/counsel, but also feel free to introduce new ideas and opportunities to the mentee. The most effective mentor-mentee relationships are built on mutual learning, so be open and alert to what you can learn from the mentee. Collaborate on projects, ask questions, experiment, have fun.

4. Be supportive.

Establish realistic goals, suggest courses, encourage conference participation, and help create a solid career plan. Be supportive, but set clear boundaries.

5. Be available / accessible.

Be available to talk with the mentee, answer questions, and provide advice. Look ahead and let your mentee know if you will be unavailable for extended periods of time. Whenever possible, meet face to face (e.g. at conferences or other professional venues) for more in-depth discussions.

6. Be reliable and consistent.

Demonstrate to your mentee that you are consistent, dependable, and trustworthy. Gain your mentee's trust and your mentee will rely on you for help.

7. Be prepared to offer honest feedback.

Be truthful in your evaluations but also be tactful.

8. Be innovative and creative.

Share your ideas, give advice, and be a resource for new ideas.

9. Be aware of cultural diversity.

Value the diverse economic, cultural, religious, and/or other unique traits and perspectives of your mentee. Remember that people come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Get to know your mentee as an individual.

10. Be positive.

Recognize the work the mentee has done and the progress they have made. Emphasize areas

where the thinking has been clear, complete, and creative. Encourage him/her to move forward in these areas.

11. Be ethical.

Consistently act in ways that are ethical; uphold the law and professional codes of conduct.

12. Respect confidentiality.

Keep conversations between you and your mentee private and confidential.

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