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# College of Business, Government & Law Mentoring Program Guide for Mentors

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**Thank you for agreeing to act as a mentor in our program. We hope the time spent as a mentor is as valuable and rewarding for you as it will be for your mentee. Below is a basic guide to establishing and maintaining your mentoring relationship.**

**Some foundation principles:**

- the mentoring relationship provides a confidential, non-judgmental and non-directive environment
- the parties to a mentoring relationship are equal within, and share responsibility for, the relationship.

**The mentor and mentee should negotiate the operational details of the mentoring relationship in the first few meetings. Issues for consideration include:**

- When, where, how often, and how long will the mentor and mentee meet?
- How formal/informal and how flexible would the mentor and mentee like the relationship to be?
- What are the mentee's objectives for the mentoring relationship?
- What are the expectations and roles of the mentor and mentee?
- What kind of issues, tasks or projects would the mentee like to work on with the mentor?
- What types of activities would the mentee find valuable, in addition to meeting and talking with the mentor? For example:
  - Observing the mentor in action
  - Shadowing the mentor to see what he/she does on a typical day
  - Asking the mentor to review the mentee's work
  - Asking the mentor to observe the mentee in action and provide feedback, and/or
  - Working on a joint project or task together

- What kind and how much contact will the mentor and mentee have in between meetings, eg by email or phone?
- How will the mentor and mentee keep the relationship going if either party is away or if meetings have to be cancelled or rescheduled?
- What are the confidentiality requirements?
- Do both parties understand the no blame exit rule?

**As much as possible, the mentor should anticipate offering the mentee support in one or more of the following areas:**

- Listening objectively, and acting as a sounding board and confidante, to the mentee's ideas, ambitions, plans and problems;
- Asking questions that will encourage the mentee to explore issues from a variety of perspectives, and sharing expertise and experience;
- Challenging the mentee's traditional ways of thinking and acting to encourage them to try strategies that are outside her or his "comfort zone";
- Facilitating the mentee's learning and development and "raising the bar" in relation to her or his potential;
- Providing information, guidance, support, encouragement and constructive feedback eg on further professional contacts as appropriate;
- Providing guidance to the mentee on negotiating the agenda for discussions within the relationship;
- Respecting the mentee's standing, desire to be mentored and improve in their professional development and sensibilities;
- Facilitating problem-solving, decision-making and strategic planning processes in relation to work or career matters;
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times;
- Providing one-on-one career and professional guidance, not direction, and possibly including such things as how to manage difficult personalities or work situations.