

'Spotlight on' series

Mentoring

Mentoring is a powerful way to share knowledge, build confidence, and support personal and professional growth. This guide offers top tips to help mentors create meaningful connections and guide their mentees effectively.

1 Invest time in establishing a comprehensive agreement with your mentee

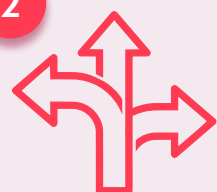


Set out the goals and boundaries of the relationship, and how the mentor and mentee will work together.

Check back in throughout the relationship to ensure that things are on track.

Ensure you have genuine capacity to give the time that mentoring requires.

2 Separate mentoring from other work processes



Mentoring arrangements should be separate from probation, performance management, appraisal, and progression processes.

Having a mentor who is not a close colleague or line manager will typically allow mentees to speak more freely.

3 Allow the agenda and goals to be driven by the mentee



Support the mentee in exploring their ideas, and avoid leading them to a particular conclusion or solution.

Empower your mentee to find their own solutions and take ownership of their development.

4 Listen effectively



You should listen significantly more than you talk.

Pay attention not only to the mentee's words, but also to their delivery, in order to gain deeper insight.

Consider what environment you need to listen attentively to your mentee.

5 Question effectively



Ask powerful questions that come from a place of curiosity, and avoid closed or leading questions.

Avoid questioning that leads the mentee to a pre-determined conclusion.

Be genuinely interested in your mentee and their development.

6 Offer constructive feedback



Ensure feedback is balanced, based on behaviours you have observed, objective, specific, and timely.



Don't be afraid to provide challenging but supportive feedback.

7 Be truthful and honest



You should be an inspiring role model to your mentee.

Be true to your values and authentic in your dealings with your mentee.

8 Access training and support



Seek develop opportunities to build mentoring skills, keep up to date and refresh as needed.

Consider accessing regular supervision. Group supervision allows the opportunity to compare approaches and experience with others.

9 Champion your mentee



Support your mentee's development and career aspirations by facilitating access to a wide range of contracts and opportunities.

Boost your mentee's self-confidence and challenge and support them to consider stepping outside their comfort zone to further their professional development.

References and useful links

RCR Mentoring Scheme: <https://www.rcr.ac.uk/career-development/mentoring-schemes/>

Effective mentoring: A resource and guide for mentors. NHS Leadership Academy, July 2024.

<https://eoe.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2024/08/060824-V2-Exec-Career-Mentoring-Resource-EoETalentLeadership.pdf>

A Guide to Mentoring. NHS England, October 2014.

https://cec.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NHS_England_Mentoring_Guide_5bv5_FINAL5d.pdf

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