

“The fundamental task of the mentor is a liberatory task. It is not to encourage the mentor’s goals and aspirations and dreams to be reproduced in the mentees, but to give rise to the possibility that the [mentees] become the owners of their own history.”

--Paulo Freire, *Mentoring the Mentor*

Mentorship

A mentor is a knowledgeable and experienced guide, a trusted ally and advocate, and a good listener.

Mentors play many roles, such as advisor, consultant, historian, teacher, storyteller, networker and friend.

Mentorship is a joint venture. Both mentors and mentees need to be committed to the mentorship experience.

Successful Mentorship:

- Is respectful. Commitments are kept and both parties are mindful during interactions.
- Values real life stories and experiences. These stories can offer valuable and unforgettable insights.
- Amplifies and builds on expressed interest and curiosity.
- Discusses challenges and shortcomings, as well as successes.
- Isn’t a one-time event, but rather a synthesis of ongoing events, experiences, observations and reflections.
- Helps someone network and make connections.
- Is proactive.
- Demystifies complex social and professional communities.
- Explores ways to honor the knowledge of both mentors and of mentees
- Let’s people know that they are valued. When someone doesn’t show up, it is communicated with them that they are missed.
- Is collaborative.
- Takes place in an informal environment where mentees can feel encouraged to discuss their needs and circumstances openly and in confidence.
- Doesn’t feel like work or school. It should be fun, but it should also feel meaningful.