

Mentor Relationship Life Cycle

Most mentoring relationships go through predictable stages. It's Important to know the phases to have more realistic expectations in the relationship and overall program. The more frequently you connect with your mentee, the easier it may be to move through developing trust and establishing a solid relationship. If you communicate less frequently, it may take more time to move through the cycle and establish a solid mentoring relationship.

Beginning and Building Stage:

- Getting to know each other
- Everyone on their best behavior
- Can be an awkward time and some relationships never get past this

Testing and challenging Stage

- Mentees May begin to test boundaries and challenge expectations
- Remain consistent and keep showing up
- Reach out to ACE for support if needed

Growth and Maintenance Phase:

- Where True Mentoring starts to happen
- Trust is established
- Might still have ups and downs, but likely able to discuss and work through them

Closure or Transition Phase:

- Discuss with students any transitions or relationship closures
- Never ignore a student or just stop engaging with them. Reach out to ACE if you need to close the match.

Transformative Mentoring

Mentoring is

A development tool to help students create networks, professional skills, and gain tools to be successful in their studies and ACE career

A resource provider to help students identify what they might need and points them in the direction of finding resources, including ACE internships & jobs.

A non judgement listening resource for mentees. Concentrates on the student's needs and goals based on their career aspirations

Mentoring Is Not...

A job placement or internship search program. Mentors should assist mentees with obtaining internships, but that is not their sole purpose.

A tutoring program. If a student needs educational assistance, a mentor can help and provide resources

Mental health counseling: It is best to seek help on personal issues from a mental health professional.

Financial management. Mentors can provide referrals for students regarding financial aid, but that is not the primary focus

TOP 10 ACE TPP MENTOR TIPS



1

ESTABLISH TRUST

Youth establish trust through actions. Being consistent in your mentoring relationship is a great way to start...Call when you say will, send regular email messages, follow through on promises, and take a genuine interest in your mentee. Remembering important dates, sending a note before a big exam or helping with a resume are ways to start. Learning to trust is a gradual process that occurs over time...have patience!

2

GIVE ACE STUDENTS VOICE & CHOICE

When deciding what you and your mentee want to accomplish, allow your mentee to take the lead. At first, this might not come easily to your mentee...so maybe start with a couple of options to choose from. Then, encourage your mentee to take on more of a lead in the relationship. Knowing when to lead and follow takes time and practice - so stick with it! Over time, your role as a mentor becomes a knowledgeable navigator and a partner whose goal is to affirm, support, and encourage students to continue on their ACE path.

3

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Mentors who set realistic expectations for their experience tend to be more satisfied. Start with asking yourself - What do I hope to accomplish as a mentor? How much time do I have to commit to this relationship? Then, when you meet your mentee, ask them the same questions. Are you both aligned? Manage expectations over communication and goals by setting up a schedule, determining preferred communication methods and setting specific goals for the year. Throughout the program year, check in on your expectations vs the reality and adjust things as needed.

4

HELP YOUR MENTEE DEVELOP A SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE BUILDING AND DESIGN INDUSTRY

When youth feel they belong in their A/C/E field, they are more likely to persist in their chosen path. Mentors can help support a feeling of belonging by providing opportunities for youth to get connected to their chosen field, such as internships, summer jobs, or professional events. Find opportunities where students can see ACE professionals who look and think as they do. Encourage them to join professional societies on campus and seek opportunities for them to find like minded students.

5

PRACTICE CULTURAL HUMILITY

Cultural humility entails learning how social identity and experiences are shaped by people's lived experiences. It's important to reflect on your own social identity and make efforts to learn the same about your mentee. Ask questions about their family, high school experiences and college life. ACE mentors can also make time to learn and identify barriers to diversity in the building and design industry and discuss these barriers with their mentee. We want ACE students of all backgrounds to know they belong in ACE.

6

PREPARE BEFORE EACH MEETING

While we want a mentoring relationship to become a natural partnership and friendship, it may not always start that way. It helps to prepare topics or questions before each meeting. If you set goals, try to make sure topics are working toward them. Consider starting each session with an activity that helps break the ice. Having a regular meeting schedule and being prepared will help foster the mentor relationship. Another way to prepare for a session is to take a few minutes and shake off the stress or hustle of your day so you come into your mentor meeting fully focused on your student!

7

LISTEN MORE...TALK LESS

When talking with youth, it's always best to ask open ended questions, and wait before responding. Allow your mentee to ask questions and find ways to answer their questions with another question. Get them talking more, so you can listen and learn more. Be aware of your body language to show students you are interested in what they are saying, and try to follow up on things they tell you at the next session. Take notes during a session so you can follow up on what was shared. It can be hard to come to a meeting ready to listen and engage, so take a few minutes before each session to quiet your mind and destress a bit!

8

REMEMBER YOUR ROLE TO HELP MAINTAIN BOUNDARIES

Remember your role is to be an ACE TPP mentor. You aren't a social worker, counselor, teacher, or disciplinarian. Maintaining boundaries around your roles as a trusted guide and friend is essential to success. Youth need boundaries in the relationship, and when you remember your role, it's easier to maintain them so everyone understands the relationship. Maintaining boundaries also applies to how much time and availability you commit to your mentee. Setting up clear expectations can help define your boundaries, then work to maintain them! For example, if you don't want a mentee to text you after the work day, just let them know and remind them if needed!

9

SET MEANINGFUL GOALS TO HELP STUDENTS ACHIEVE A SENSE OF MASTERY IN THE A/C/E FIELDS

Goal setting is the foundation of helping youth develop resilience – an essential element for success in the rigorous A/C/E fields. Strive to set small goals that can be accomplished easily (to help foster a sense of success), while working toward the larger goals accomplished long term. Identify when your mentee falls short of the goals and discuss ways to get back on track. Always praise progress and effort, not just successful outcomes. Example TPP goals might be a short term goal of preparing a resume and long term goal of securing a summer internship.

10

KEEP IT FUN & ASK FOR HELP!

Mentoring should never feel like a chore or something you dread! We hope you look forward to checking in with your mentee and have fun during your meetings. If your meetings feel forced, consider finding some ways to lighten the conversation - watch a fun video together or play a quick trivia game. When working towards goals, make sure your mentee isn't stressed or overwhelmed. If you get stuck in a rut or feel like you need support, reach out to ACE National!

How you approach the relationship matters!

Just as in construction there are different ways to approach a job spec - there are different approaches people tend to bring to mentoring relationships, and one often leads to better outcomes than the other!

Most mentoring relationships can be characterized as developmental or prescriptive. Developmental relationships allow for more flexibility and are based on cues from the youth's needs and/or interests. Prescriptive relationships are more rigid, and the mentor has set expectations for the youth's role in the relationship (Jekielek et al., 2002). "Research suggests that programs focused on a developmental approach last longer and provide higher levels of satisfaction to both the mentor and the mentee (Jekielek et al., 2002; Spencer, 2007)."

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/mentoring/types-mentoring-relationships>

DEVELOPMENTAL MENTORING VS. PRESCRIPTIVE MENTORING

ALLOW STUDENTS TO HAVE INPUT ON WHAT YOU WILL DO/DISCUSS



DICTATE ALL ACE PROGRAMMING



KEEP IT FUN AND LIGHT HEARTED



OVERLY FOCUSED ON TASKS AND OUTCOMES



LISTEN MORE THAN TALK



GIVE ADVICE MORE THAN THAN LISTEN



ALLOW THE MENTEE TO BRING UP TOPICS OF INTEREST



DICTATE TOPICS OF CONVERSATION



HELP BUILD MENTEE'S OWN CONFIDENCE TO SOLVE PROBLEMS



TRY TO "FIX" THE MENTEE OR SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS



ALLOW THE MENTEE TO BE THEIR OWN LIFE EXPERT



PROVIDE ADVICE AND SOLUTIONS BASED ON THE MENTOR'S LIFE EXPERTISE



The Framework

Developmental relationships are the roots of thriving and resilience for young people, regardless of their background or circumstances. Through these relationships, young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. Just as trees rely on a system of roots to support and nourish them, young people need to experience developmental relationships in their families, schools, programs, and communities. However, too many young people miss these opportunities due to bias, prejudice, and systemic exclusion based on their race, ethnicity, income, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, or other differences. Ensuring that every young person experiences the developmental relationships they need is a vital challenge for the 21st century.

The Developmental Relationships Framework was developed by Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN; 800-888-7828; www.searchinstitute.org.

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EXPRESS CARE

Show me that I matter to you.

Be dependable

Be someone I can trust

Be warm

Show me you enjoy being with me

Listen

Really pay attention when we are together

Encourage

Praise me for my efforts and achievements

Believe in me

Make me feel known and valued



CHALLENGE GROWTH

Push me to keep getting better.

Expect my best

Expect me to live up to my potential

Hold me accountable

Insist I take responsibility for my actions

Stretch

Push me to go further

Reflect on failures

Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks



PROVIDE SUPPORT

Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.

Navigate

Guide me through hard situations and systems

Advocate

Stand up for me when I need it

Empower

Build my confidence to take charge of my life

Set boundaries

Put limits in place that keep me on track



SHARE POWER

Treat me with respect and give me a say.

Respect me

Take me seriously and treat me fairly

Collaborate

Work with me to solve problems and reach goals

Include me

Involve me in decisions that affect me

Let me lead

Create opportunities for me to take action and lead



EXPAND POSSIBILITIES

Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

Inspire

Inspire me to see possibilities for my future

Connect

Introduce me to people who can help me grow

Broaden horizons

Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places



Setting Boundaries

It is important to set and discuss boundaries in your mentoring relationship. Some boundaries apply to all mentoring relationships in our program. For example, violence is never OK in a relationship, romantic relationships between mentor and mentee are not permitted, and mentors are not permitted to drive mentees in their personal vehicle (see mentor agreement for full list). There are also boundaries that are more personal and could be different in every mentoring match. We encourage you to take the time to talk openly with your mentee about boundaries. Below are some tips to help you set boundaries:

1. Think about the boundaries you want to set early, even before the first meeting.
2. Talk with your mentee about boundaries.
3. Be consistent and stick to your boundaries once you establish them.
4. Avoid judgment- of your own and your mentees boundaries

As you think through your boundaries, here are some guiding questions:

- How much time are you willing to commit to this mentoring relationship?
- Do you want your mentee to text you whenever they want? Would you prefer your mentor only e-mail you?
- How much of your personal and/or professional life do you want to share with your mentee?
- Do you only want to connect with your mentee during established meeting times or can your mentee reach out to you at anytime?
- Do you intend to immediately respond to your mentee every time they reach out or do you want to let your mentee know a set amount of time to give you to wait for a response (for example once a mentee emails you might ask them to give you a day or two to respond.)

Quick note on sharing your story: Much of mentoring involves sharing your experiences to help guide your mentee. In ACE TPP, we encourage you to focus on sharing your professional experiences. However, there will likely be times when you want to share a personal experience that could help provide guidance or support. When this arises, we encourage you avoid anything too personal, sharing anything illegal or inappropriate and only share what is truly necessary.