

How to be a great mentee

Good relationships don't just happen; they take work - establishing and maintaining trust is essential to a good mentoring relationship. No matter who your mentor is, they have experience and expertise to share with you.

TIPS TO BE A GOOD MENTEE

- Be open about your needs
- Be available and responsive
- Come to each meeting with an agenda
- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Set your goals
- Learn and have fun
- Develop trust
- Heed mentors experience and advice
- Communicate your goals with your mentor
- Set yourself tasks: read books and blogs, attend events, listen to podcasts
- Maintain regular contact
- Don't be defensive; your mentor is trying to help you out with constructive feedback
- Don't ask for a job - your mentor is a trusted advisor not recruiter
- Being a mentee shouldn't be a chore. It should be an engaging and fruitful experience

QUESTIONS

Ask your mentor to tell a story from his or her career
Some questions to consider asking:

- How did you land your current role?
- Think back to five years ago - did you envision this is where you would be?
- Can you tell me about a time when you had a **difficult boss?** How did you handle it?
- How did you learn to embrace failure?
- What's the most important leadership lesson you've learned and how is it valuable?
- Tell me about a recent setback and how you recovered?
- Was there ever a job position that you applied for and got, but you weren't 100% qualified?
- How did you build the skill of always **speaking so engagingly** in front of others?

MENTEE CHECKLIST

We encourage all mentees to make it as easy as possible for their mentors and prepare to get the most out of this experience!

Before your first meeting

- Check out your mentor's digital footprint. Are they on Twitter or LinkedIn? Do they have a blog?
- Consider your goals for this mentorship. Your mentor will likely ask you 'what do you want to achieve here?' It's good to have an answer
- Help them help you. Your mentor is there for support. But do them a favour and consider how they might help you
- Who, what, when, where, how. How often do you want to touch base? Will it be a Zoom call or at the local cafe?

During your meetings

- You are responsible for driving this relationship
- Present your goals in a clearly articulated fashion
- Seek feedback
- Find a way to show your appreciation ie pay for the coffee, send a thankyou email etc

After your meetings

- Follow up with a summary email include your actions and confirm your availability for the next meetup
- Send them an invite to connect on LinkedIn or follow their blog
- Prepare for your next meeting – have you set new goals, planned out your actions
- Be grateful and pay it back

Things to remember

- A mentor is not a therapist. Try to avoid conversations that veer away from your goal or objectives
- They're not a recruitment agent either. Avoid the temptation to ask them for a job
- And they're definitely not your parent. They're not here to solve your problems for you
- Don't be too clingy or too standoffish – find the balance

SITUATIONS

Ask your mentor to act as a sounding board. Identify a challenging situation and share it with the mentor. Some questions to consider:

- I'm considering a career transition. What do you see as the pros and cons?
- Who are the people I need to align with to achieve success?
- What advice can you offer on how to progress in my career?

Give your mentor a clear view of your expectations, and aspirations

SELF-AWARENESS

Ask a question that invites your mentor to contribute to your self-awareness. Some questions to consider:

- Where do you see my strengths and what should I focus on to improve?
- What do you see as some of my blind spots?
- How do you think others perceive me?
- Do I come across as poised and calm?
- How could I communicate my ideas more clearly?

SKILL-BUILDING

Identify a skill you currently want to develop, and ask your mentor for advice or resources. Some questions to consider:

- How do you approach risk-taking?
- What new skills do I need to move ahead?
- How can I become a more assertive negotiator?
- How can I become better at managing people who do not report to me?



For more information please email the mentoring team mentoring@dairyaustralia.com.au

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