

What's expected of ICRS mentors and mentees.

What's expected of a mentor?

Good mentors can identify the most appropriate and useful support for their mentees. They also aim to learn from the relationship and are open to new perspectives. A mentoring relationship should be mutually beneficial. They work best when there is a sense of equality where both parties are open to learning from one another.

Here are some of our tips for mentors:

1. Build an open and trusting relationship:

Establish a foundation of trust with your mentee. Open, honest, and transparent communication is key to building a strong mentoring relationship. So is confidentiality. Build rapport, so your mentee feels comfortable sharing their thoughts, concerns, and aspirations with you.

2. Set clear mentoring goals

Work with your mentee to set clear mentoring goals. Help them define both short-term and long-term objectives. Goal setting provides direction and motivation, and it allows you to tailor your mentoring conversations to their specific needs.

3. Listen!

Practice active listening and be present so you fully understand your mentee's perspective and needs.

4. Mentor, don't tell!

What has worked for you may not work for your mentee. So instead of jumping to advice-giving too quickly, adopt a coaching approach by asking thoughtful, open questions that help your mentee to explore their own solutions, and empowers them to take ownership for their learning and growth.

5. Give feedback

As a mentor, you are uniquely positioned to be a sounding board and offer constructive feedback in a safe context. Focus your feedback on specific behaviours and outcomes, and help your mentee identify concrete actions for improvement.

6. Share Knowledge and Experience:

Sometimes, specific advice is exactly what your mentee wants and needs. Draw from your own experiences to provide insights when it's helpful. Share both, your successes and challenges as the latter are often what we learn from the most.

7. Show up!

We know life gets busy and mentoring takes commitment and time. Be honest regarding how much time you can devote to this at the beginning of the relationship. For many mentoring pairs talking once a month for about an hour is right, but for you that might be too much/ little. Whatever you agree with your mentee, try your best to honour your commitment and show up for them.

As a mentor, you are not there to:

- Give academic instruction
- Get the mentee their next job
- Delegate any of your work to the mentee
- Be the undisputed expert or have all the answers
- Do all the talking
- Encourage dependency
- Provide counselling

What's expected of a mentee?

A mentee takes responsibility for getting the most out of the mentoring opportunity. They give thought to what they'd specifically like to achieve from the relationship.

As a mentee, you will:

- Know what you want to achieve, and how you think your mentor can support you
- Thoroughly prepare for mentoring sessions – think about making best use of this opportunity
- Recognise that your mentor's time should be respected, appreciated and used carefully
- Listen to your mentor's opinion but take responsibility for making your own decisions and choices
- We willing to be pushed outside of your comfort zone
- Be willing to work hard
- Offer your mentor honest feedback about the relationship and the help you are receiving from them
- Take responsibility for managing the relationship: set up and plan meetings and follow up on action points.