

If you want a mentor / coach or you've been asked to mentor / coach someone, these tips should help you set up the coaching / mentoring process for success.

Don't be afraid to share this with your potential coach / mentor, the demonstration of your willingness to be prepared and structured will help them to agree to the process.

THE FIRST MEETING

Tips for your first meeting

- ✓ Allocate at least an hour of uninterrupted time: no mobile phones, no emails!
- ✓ Prepare a draft agenda to ensure structure to the meeting.
- ✓ Use this initial time to build rapport with the each other; a 'getting to know you' type of conversation will ensure better understanding in later sessions.
- ✓ Share career aspirations, strengths and developmental areas.
- ✓ Agree the purpose of your partnership.
- ✓ Share and agree the expectations of each of you.
- ✓ Set ground rules, see page 2 for tips.
- ✓ At the end of the meeting (end of every meeting), set a time, date and place for the next meeting and a draft an agenda.

SETTING THE GROUND RULES

Ground rules help build a relationship; it might feel clunky or strange to talk all about rules to start however it will set you both up for a successful professional relationship. Consider the following issues as part of setting and agreeing your ground rules:

- ✓ The meetings:
 - How often you will meet
 - How long each meeting will be
 - Where the meetings will take place
 - How you will handle interruptions

- ✓ Additional contact:
 - How often you can contact each other (be sure to respect each others time)
 - How you can contact each other (e.g. phone, email, etc.)
 - When you can contact each other

- ✓ When coaching, the coachee needs to understand s/he must make an effort to implement the actions and take ownership for his / her own development.

- ✓ When mentoring, the mentee needs to understand the mentor is guiding them, not acting for them.

- ✓ Feedback:
 - Honest feedback in both directions
 - Not taking feedback personally

- ✓ Topics for discussion
 - Coaching is about developing skills
 - Mentoring is about guidance for work, career and leadership
 - In mentoring, discuss what topics are appropriate and what are not

- ✓ Confidentiality

- ✓ Set and acknowledge checkpoints, milestones, achievements and successes along the way. Follow up is critical.

- ✓ Identify if you will set an end date and how you will mark the end of the process.