

GTD | Mentoring



Phases of Mentoringⁱ

Preparing

The very beginning of a new mentoring relationship is the perfect time to take a step back and reflect on your own personal readiness. The following are some questions to ask yourself:

- What is driving you to enter into this relationship?
- What do you hope to accomplish?
- What do I bring into this relationship (skills, life experience, etc.)?
- What areas do I need to work on in order for me to be an effective mentor?
- How am I going to work on those areas?

After you have determined that you are personally prepared to mentor someone, it is time to talk with your mentee. Let your initial conversation be a time to gather information by getting to know each other, and discuss your expectations and roles.

Negotiating

During this next phase, the foundations for your mentoring relationship are laid. Together, you will define what your relationship will look like, establish goals, and determine how you will achieve the goals and measure success. At this point you should set boundaries, discuss confidentiality and set logistics such as when and where you will meet. Once all of this is established, make sure that you have consensual agreement before you move forward. The negotiating phase may take place over one meeting together or it may take several sessions.

Enabling

The fun in mentoring takes place during this phase! This will be the longest phase where not only does the relationship continue to develop but learning begins to take place. The mentor's role during this phase is to:

- foster growth by creating an environment where learning can take place,
- ensure that growth is happening, and
- keep the relationship moving forward.

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It is during this phase that you will encounter obstacles and will need to learn how to address each one. In order to keep the mentoring relationship healthy, it is important to give and receive feedback on a regular basis.

Closure

Eventually, all mentoring relationships come to a close. Some relationships end because learning goals have been met; others end because either the mentor or mentee move to another location. Sometimes interpersonal misunderstandings or conflict necessitate ending a mentoring relationship. Regardless of the cause of the end of the mentoring relationships, the closure phase is a good time to look back over the relationship and celebrate the growth that occurred. It is also a good time for both the mentor and the mentee to reflect on what they have learned about themselves through the relationship and how they can use this knowledge in future relationships.

ⁱ Taken from *The Mentor's Handbook: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*, by Lois Zachary.