



Suggestions for Mentoring Meetings

As the saying goes, you never get a second chance to make a first impression. By planning your first few mentoring meetings, you begin to build a strong foundation on which you can base your mentoring relationship. In order to help you get off to a positive start, we have listed some suggestions for your first mentoring meetings. Feel free to adjust these suggestions to your needs and your situation.

First Meeting

1. **Take time to get to know each other.** A helpful tool here is your personal timeline. Take a piece of paper and draw an 8 to 10 inch line across the page which represents your adult life. Above the line write 8 to 12 of the milestones, events, and experiences that have shaped who you are today. Below the line list some of the opportunities, unexpected delights, and obstacles that have effected your development as a person. Both the mentor and mentee should share their timelines with each other.
2. **Talk about mentoring.** Discuss past mentoring (and discipleship) experiences. What has gone well? What did you learn from the experience?
3. **Discuss the mentee's goals.** What does the mentee want or need to learn or know in order to be successful. A good starting point for discussing goals is the learning contract or reflection paper from CCMI.

If you would like to develop additional learning goals, a helpful approach is a technique called appreciative inquiry. To use this approach, explore the following questions: Imagine that it is a year (or two) from now. The mentoring relationship has gone well and has fulfilled or surpassed both the mentor's and mentee's expectations.

- What does our mentoring relationship look like?
- How often do we meet?
- How do we communicate?
- What has the mentee learned?

- How has the mentee developed spiritually, emotionally, relationally?
- What ministry skills has the mentee gained?)

You may not have time to fully develop specific goals in your first mentoring session, but thinking about what the mentee and mentor would like to accomplish in the coming year will get you off to a good start.

Second Meeting

1. **Establish mentoring expectations and boundaries.** Spend time talking about:
 - a. Who is responsible for setting and confirming mentoring meetings.
 - b. How often you will meet.
 - c. Confidentiality of what is discussed in mentoring meetings.
 - d. How much time the mentor expects the mentee to invest in mentoring and how much time the mentee can expect from the mentor.
 - e. A timeline for evaluating the effectiveness of the relationship.
2. **Determine the mentee's most pressing growth needs.** Several resources may be helpful.
 - a. Review the mentee's learning contract or reflection paper from Cross-Cultural Ministry Internship (previously called Pre-Field Training)
 - b. The 100-Day Transition Plan (available at www.gtdtraining.org)
 - c. The goals from your first mentoring meeting.

Most people can only work on 4 to 6 goals at a time. So begin to work on the learning goals that are **most urgent** and **easiest to accomplish**. By generating some early "wins" in the mentoring relationship, mentors can build a sense of momentum that will provide energy to tackle more challenging learning goals.
3. **Write out SMART goals;** in other words, goals that are:
 - a. Specific
 - b. Measureable
 - c. Action-oriented
 - d. Realistic
 - e. Timely
4. **Identify assignments for the mentee** which will help him or her move toward accomplishing one or more goals.

Third, Fourth, Fifth, etc. Meetings

As you move forward in the mentoring relationship, continue to work toward the goals you have established. Mentors who are intentional about building a meaningful relationship with their mentees and who work toward meaningful learning goals often see great growth.

If you have any questions or would like help getting started with the mentoring process, please contact John or Sue Burch at jandsburch@gmail.com.