

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS FOR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

- 1. Valuing Differences:** During the mentoring process you are likely to hear perspectives that are different from your own. These may be due to generational, learning style, gender, cultural, ethnic, and/or geographic differences. Try to be open and welcoming to different perspectives and ideas.

- 2. Giving and receiving feedback:** Be open to asking for, giving, and receiving feedback. It is important that both the mentee and mentor offer and hear feedback in the spirit of building on competencies and strengthening areas of weakness (see more on page 18).

- 3. Building relationships:** Share your stories to get to know each other. Approach the relationship with curiosity and commitment.

- 4. Communication and Listening:**
 - Throughout the mentoring process use communication that is clear and effective.
 - Ask open-ended questions.
 - Paraphrase and summarize what you heard to be sure that is what was said.
 - Use “I” statements rather than “you” statements.
 - Listen with total attention. The goal is for the other person to feel heard.
 - If there is a pause, don’t start talking. Allow the person time to process and continue with their point or to answer your question.
 - Convey your feelings in a non-threatening manner.

5. Conflict Resolution: Conflict is a natural result of two unique individuals interacting and working with each other. Both mentee and mentor should work together to resolve differences when they arise, the successful resolution will have positive benefits to the mentoring relationship.

To successfully manage conflict:

- Develop a supportive environment.
- Clearly state what you want to happen.
- Explicitly express why you feel there is a disagreement.
- Listen openly and accurately to feedback.
- Check the meaning behind the messages you are giving and receiving.
- Seek to identify a common goal through compromise.
- Discuss the issues (use facts rather than opinions).
- Stay solution-focused.

6. Goal-Setting: Focus on the goals of the mentee. The mentor's role is to help clarify what the mentee wants to achieve from the mentoring relationship. The goals need to be specific, measurable, aligned with the mentoring component, realistic and time bound, engaging and reaching (see Smarter Goals on page 11).

7. Follow-through: Follow through with your commitments. Honoring agreements strengthens trusts and keeps the mentoring relationship focused and productive.