

STAGES OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Stage 1: Developing Rapport and Building Trust

The “getting to know you” phase is the most critical stage of the relationship. Some things to consider during Stage 1 include:

Consistency: During the first stage of the relationship, it is critical to be consistent. If you schedule an appointment to meet with your mentee/mentor, it’s important to be there and to be there on time. It is understandable that at times things come up and appointments cannot be kept. Naturally, communicating to your mentee/mentor about this in a timely fashion would be appropriate. This is critical because in the trust-building process, consistency is extremely beneficial.

Testing: In the beginning, mentee may use testing as a way of beginning to build trust.

Confidentiality: During the first stage of the relationship, it is important to establish confidentiality. This helps develop trust. The mentor should let the mentee know that whatever he or she wants to share with the mentor about their internship experience will remain confidential. This supports the ability to be vulnerable, yet safe, in difficult conversations.

Mentors should encourage open communication and discussion about work-related issues. While an absolute guarantee of confidentiality cannot be granted in every circumstance, these conversations should largely be kept confidential.

Goal-Setting: (*transitions into Stage 2*) It is helpful during Stage 1 to take the time to set at least one achievable goal together for the relationship. What do the two of you want to get out of this relationship? Also, mentors can help mentees set personal goals.

Stage 2: The Middle – Reaching Goals

Once trust has been established, the relationship moves into Stage 2. During this stage, the mentor and mentee can begin to start working toward the goals set during the first stage of the relationship. Generally, during the second stage the mentor and mentee can sense a genuine closeness in the relationship. If conflicts arise, do not hesitate to seek support from the program contacts (page 27).

Stage 3: Closure

Be mindful that at some point the internship will come to an end. Be sure to prepare for how you will stay in touch once summer placements are coming to an end. Do not wait for the very last meeting to say goodbye. Provide opportunities for saying goodbye in a healthy, respectful and affirming ways.

Setting the stage for staying in touch

Decide how you would like to stay in touch when the summer placements are coming to a close. Mentors and mentees can agree to email once a month and/or on a regular call time.