

# Guide for mentees

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7. Introduction & overview

NGIN wants to encourage young professionals to create mentoring relationships. Mentoring is a vital tool to networking, progression and career development.

The purpose of this guide is to assist mentees in creating and maintaining a successful mentoring relationship with their mentor. We want you to understand what mentoring is, recognise the benefits and understand the roles and responsibilities of a mentee.

1. What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person.

As a mentor you will receive support in meeting your career objectives. Your mentor will provide you with guidance and insight.

In many organisations a formal mentoring programme will already be in place. The way our programme differs if that we put in contact young professionals from different companies – this enables our participants to talk openly about issues they might not feel comfortable speaking to a manager from their company about.

Our mentoring programme is non-judgemental, confidential and the focus is purely on listening and giving advice.

1. Roles and responsibilities of a mentee

The mentee is someone who wants to learn from their chosen mentor. They should recognise the areas where there is potential for self-development and be willing to talk openly with their mentor about their strengths as well as their weaknesses. The mentee will be the one to define their expectations and set their goals.

Here are some examples:

* Mentees should prepare in advance for meetings with their mentor and recognise that their mentor’s time is invaluable.
* Mentees should listen actively and demonstrate that they are interested in what their mentor has to say.
* Mentees should drive the relationship and take ownership for their own development.
* Mentees should follow through on actions discussed with the mentor.
1. Getting started and setting goals

As a mentee, you should be able to tell your mentor what you want from the mentoring relationship. Goals and objectives should be clear and achievable. We recommend you use the SMART criteria to ensure your goals are specific and measurable.

* S = Specific – target a specific area for improvement;
* M = Measurable – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress;
* A = Assignable – specify who will do it;
* R = Realistic – state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources;
* T = Time-related – specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

We have provided you with a record sheet where you can record the goals and track progress.

1. The stages of the mentoring relationship

You will go through different stages of the “mentoring relationship”.

* **Stage 1:** Initiation and relationship development. This is where you get to know each other and determine what you each want from the mentoring relationship. You should talk openly and honestly about what you both want from the mentoring relationship. This way you can set expectations and determine needs.
* **Stage 2:** Cultivation. At this stage mentor and mentee should feel comfortable with each open, be open with each other and be honest to each other. This is where you will obtain the most benefit from the relationship. Goals are being reached and progression is being made.
* **Stage 3:** Separation and conclusion. The relationship draws to a close and mentor and mentee review the progress made and reflect on what they have learned. At this stage you can choose to redefine the relationship to colleagues/peers/friends or you may choose to continue the mentoring on a more informal basis.

Our initial mentoring programme will last 3 months but mentors and mentees can choose to make it longer or shorter.

Successful mentoring relationships are planned and nurtured. We therefore recommend mentors and mentees make the effort to plan ahead to meet regularly. You should meet at least once a month and if you can more frequently.

1. Mentoring rules and difficulties you may encounter

To ensure the mentoring relationship remains beneficial to both of you here are a few points you should bear in mind:

* Ensure confidentiality;
* Set ground rules and share responsibility between yourselves;
* As a mentee make sure you see the bigger picture and that you are learning from the relationship;
* Are goals and objectives being met?
* Are follow up action items coming out of each meeting?
* If the relationship is not working, take some time to discuss why, is there anything you can do to change it or are the participants simply not compatible?
* Remember that mentoring is a development tool and should not be used to seek alternative employment!
* Mentoring provides the mentee with guidance but it does not replace the need for formal Learning & Development.