

Why Mentoring?

Women who have a mentor can advance more quickly, and to higher levels, than those who are not supported.³

Mentoring relationships can be formal or informal, and short or long term.

Formal relationships are often arranged by an organisation or workplace, have pre-articulated expectations, and often include launches, wrap-ups, and socials to normalize expectations. Formal mentorships create an environment where it is easy to get involved, but may cause concerns of time commitment and how “visible” the relationships are.

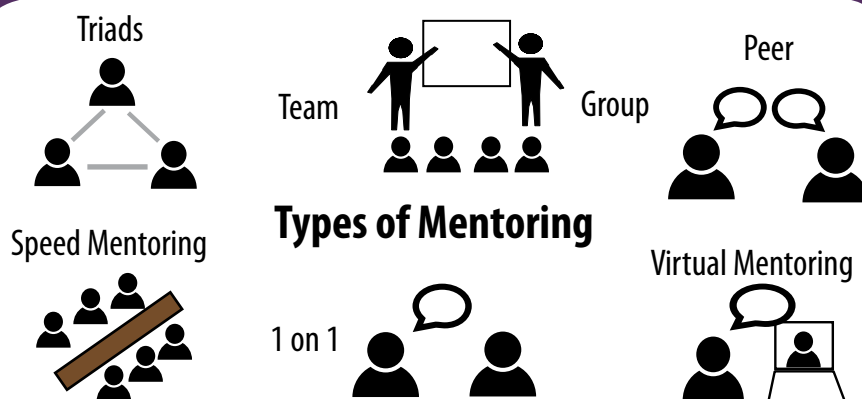
Informal mentoring is often arranged by individuals, so expectations are not always pre-determined and must be set by the mentor and mentee. They often focus on a specific need. Time commitments are more flexible, and informal mentorship is less “visible.” Difficulty establishing connections can make it challenging to become involved.

Short term mentoring formats include speed mentoring, project-specific mentors, shadowing, or transition mentors.

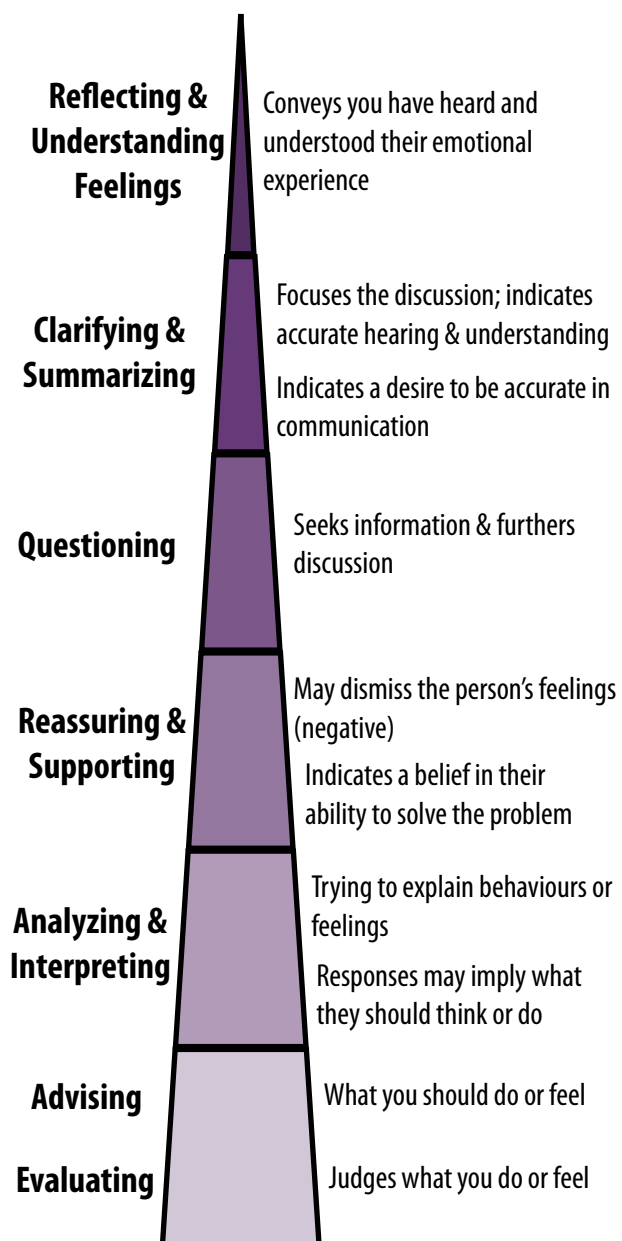
Long term mentoring may include regular or ad-hoc meetings, peer mentors, and most mentoring programs.

Online mentoring may use either format.

What is Mentoring?^{9,10}



Ranked Facilitative Responses in Mentoring Conversations²



In a mentoring relationship, **how you respond** affects how the other person responds. Choosing a response is context and relationship dependent.

Facilitative Conditions¹

Friendliness	Sharing mutual interests	Genuine warmth	Genuine sense of comfort and support
Understanding	Empathy	Perceive and acknowledge their experiences	
Caring	Value them as a person	Personal commitment to the process	Personally care about their well-being
Respect	Right to express their own ideas and feelings		Right to shape their own lives
Trustworthiness	Confidentiality and security in relationship		Honesty
Acceptance	Accept who they are	Respect the personal worth and dignity of a person	

6 conditions must be met to create a relationship in which a person feels **comfortable to self-disclose**.¹
In a mentorship, this relationship is **reciprocal**.

Types of Questions

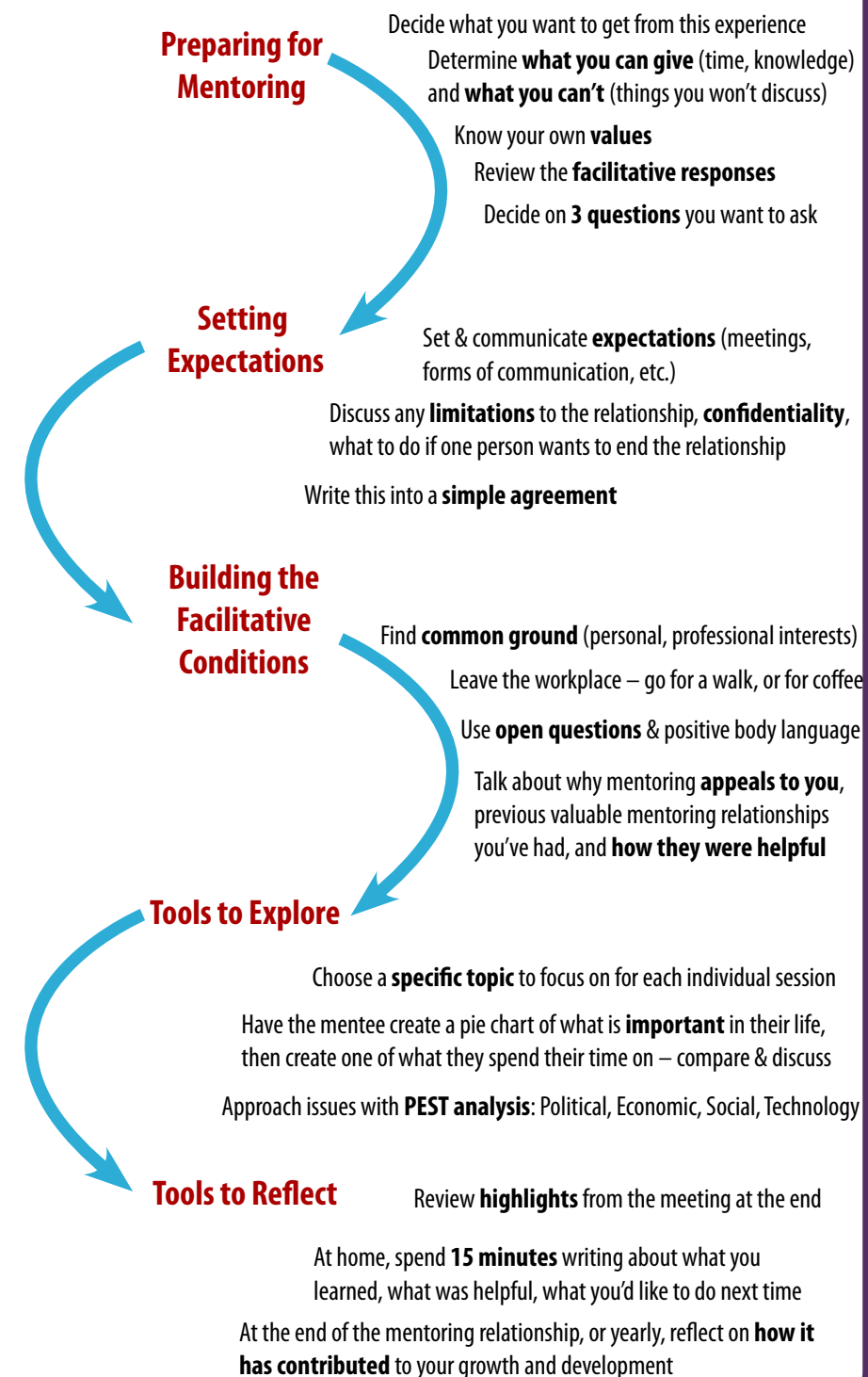
Effective:

- Are person-centred
- Are **open**
- Ask "**why**" (without being intimidating)

Ineffective:

- Completely change the focus
- Are binding
- Solicit agreement
- Force choices
- Have "no good answer"
- Are yes/no

Tools for Mentoring^{4,5}



Mentoring at Work

Increasing workplace diversity, especially at the mid- and upper levels, can be supported through diversity mentoring programs.⁸ Organisations should also consider how to promote and support a variety of forms of mentoring, and reduce barriers to employees' participation.

Often, individuals who need mentoring the most are unable to find mentors because they are afraid to ask, or are searching for the "perfect fit" mentor.⁷ Informal mentoring can help resolve this. Peer mentoring is also beneficial; individuals with similar levels of experience act as both mentees and mentors to each other,⁷ offering advice and support in navigating the workplace and decision-making.⁶ There is value for employees at all levels, including executives.⁵

Finding mentors outside of the workplace can address individuals' life satisfaction levels, and provide outsider perspectives on work-related issues.⁵ Participating in multiple types of mentorship (peer, seniority-based, non-work, etc.) provides more opportunities for an individual's holistic personal development.⁵

Facilitative responses should be used as tools for strengthening relationships, and ensuring individuals feel comfortable self-disclosing. Setting expectations is key in ensuring a successful mentoring relationship.



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4. Zachary, L. (2009). Make mentoring work for you: Ten strategies for success. *T + D*, 63(12), 76-77.
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10. Bozeman, B. & Feeney, M. K. (2007). Toward a useful theory of mentoring: A conceptual analysis and critique. *Administration & Society*, 39(6), 719-739.

Recommended Readings

1. Bachkrova, T., Jackson, P., & Clutterback, D. (Eds.). (2011). *Coaching and mentoring supervision: Theory and practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
2. Clutterback, D., Poulsen, K. M., & Kochan, F. (Eds.). (2012). *Developing successful diversity mentoring programmes: An international casebook*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
3. Clutterback, D. (2012). Coaching and mentoring in support of management development 1. In Armstrong, S., & Fukami, C. (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Management Learning, Education and Development* (pp.477-497). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

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About WVEST

Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science & Technology (WVEST) is the operating name for the NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering (CWSE), BC and Yukon Region. Our mission is to advance engineering and science as welcoming careers that serve our world through holistic understanding and creative, appropriate and sustainable solutions. WVEST works locally and, in conjunction with the other CWSE Chairs, nationally on policy, research, advocacy, facilitation, and pilot programs that support women in science and engineering.

About the Chairholder

The Chair is held by Dr. Elizabeth Croft, P.Eng., FEC, FASME. Dr. Croft is the Associate Dean, Education and Professional Development in the Faculty of Applied Science, and a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of British Columbia. She is also the Director of the Collaborative Advanced Robotics and Intelligent Systems (CARIS) Laboratory. Her research investigates how robotic systems can behave, and be perceived to behave, in a safe, predictable, and helpful manner. She is the lead investigator of "Engendering Engineering Success," a 3-year interdisciplinary research project that aims to take an evidence-based approach to increasing the retention of women in engineering by understanding and changing aspects of workplace culture that place women at a disadvantage.

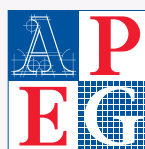
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