



Central PA Academy
of Nutrition & Dietetics

Mentoring Program

What is mentoring?



- Mentoring is a positive developmental partnership, which is driven primarily by the Mentee. It offers a reflective space where the Mentee can take responsibility for and discuss their development
- Its primary aim is to build capability and self-reliance in the Mentee
- Mentors help an individual to develop his or her own vision for the future
- They can help clarify the Mentee's perspective while bringing an additional impartial view to bear on the issues
- Sometimes, when the issues are straightforward and urgent, a Mentor might offer advice or give some direction
- Confidentiality, trust, understanding and positive expectation are key to a successful partnership

Accepting that useful inputs may come from a variety of (sometimes unexpected) sources, including one's peers, is a key discovery in one's learning



Mentor Guidelines – Overview

Mentoring is about transferring information, competence, and experience to mentees, so that they can make good use of this, and build their confidence accordingly. As a mentor, you are there to encourage, nurture, and provide support, because you've already "walked the path" of the mentee.

Also remember that mentoring is about structured development – you don't have to tell the mentee everything you know about a subject, at every opportunity.



Skills Required By Mentors

- **Have the desire to help** – you should be willing to spend time helping someone else, and remain positive throughout.
- **Be motivated to continue developing and growing** – your own development never stops. To help others develop, you must value your own growth too.
- **Provide feedback** – do this in a way that accurately and objectively summarizes what you've heard, but also interprets things in a way that adds value for the mentee.
- **Ask the right questions** – the best mentors ask questions that make the mentee do the thinking. A simple guide is to think of what you want to tell the mentee, and to find a question that will help the mentee come to the same conclusion on their own.
- **Listen actively** – be careful to process everything the mentee is saying. Watch body language, maintain eye contact, and understand which topics are difficult for the mentee to discuss.



How Do I Begin as a Mentor?

Mentees may be prepared with questions and concerns, but the suggestions below will help you in your preparation.

1. Provide your mentee with information about your educational background, professional experiences, interest, and professional satisfactions.
2. Provide your mentee with information about your mentoring experiences as a student, new professional, and established professional.
3. Discuss the benefits of organizations and professional development opportunities, and make recommendations, if appropriate.
4. What "one piece of advice" would you give to mentee?
5. Share resources, as appropriate.
6. Invite the mentee to meetings or activities, as appropriate.
7. Arrange further contacts through telephone, lunch, or social occasions, as appropriate.
8. Facilitate linkages with other professionals.



Setting expectations for Mentor and Mentee Roles

Mentor Roles:

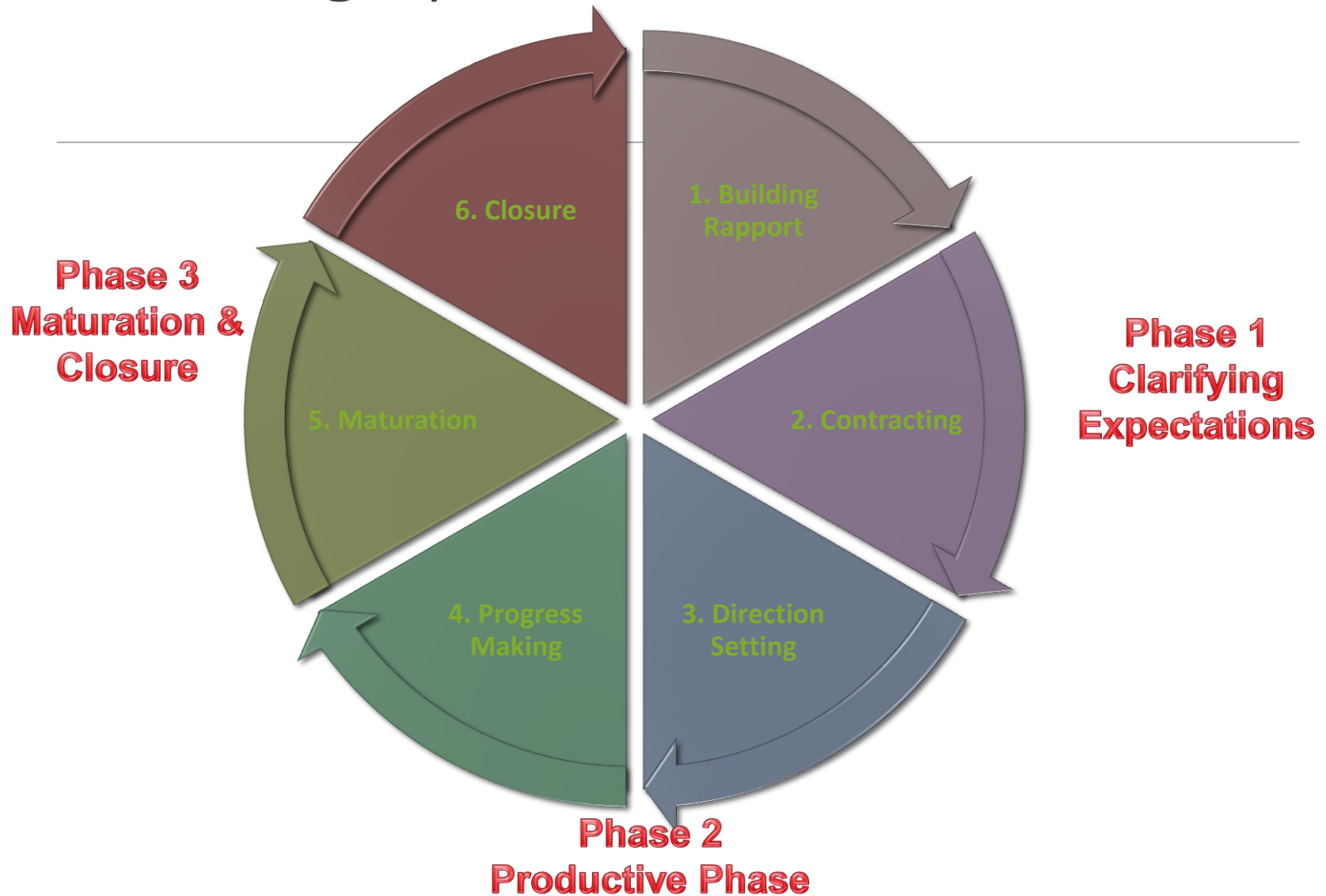
- Listen
- Share experiences
- Foster skill building
- Refer and network
- Be one of many influences

Mentee Roles:

- Active participant
- Identify initial learning goals
- Seek new capacities, not just knowledge
- Remain open to multiple influences
- Own responsibility for success



Mentoring Cycle





The Mentoring Cycle

1. Rapport-building:

- Developing mutual trust and comfort

2. Contracting/Ground Rules:

- Exploring each other's expectations of mentoring

3. Direction-setting:

- Agreeing initial goals for the relationship

4. Progress making:

- Experimentation and learning proceed rapidly

5. Maturation:

- Relationship becomes mutual in terms of learning and mentee becomes increasingly self-reliant.

6. Closure:

- Formal relationship ends, an informal one may continue



Summary – Key Points

- ‘Contracting’ at the beginning of the partnership e.g.
 - Discuss and clarify each other’s expectations
 - Be clear about roles
 - Agree logistics such as meeting arrangements (location, frequency etc.)
- Maintain a structure i.e. clear goals, actions between meetings
- Review relationship regularly – is it still of value?
- Continue only as long as there are goals to achieve
- Mentor style is guiding and facilitative
- Keep it confidential



Advice to Potential Mentors

- Recognize that mentee may be uncomfortable asking for help – break the ice by sharing some of your career experiences
- Stay in your zone of expertise/experience
- Be clear that mentee sets pace of relationship
- Advise, do not manage
- Extend mentee's developmental network – suggest additional mentors to address unique needs



Advice to Potential Mentees

- Understand what you want from the relationship and communicate your goals and aspirations to your mentor
- Understand that you also have to give to the relationship
- Be realistic; maintain a positive attitude
- Balance the personal and professional acquaintance with your mentor.
- Keep all scheduled appointments, display professional behavior and dress appropriately
- Maintain regular contact with your mentor – but do not ask for advice about everything or ask your mentor to tell you precisely what to do. Have a purpose for each contact.
- Be proactive



Distance Mentoring

■ How to use e-mail

- Use e-mail to set up meetings (face-to-face or phone), clarify plans/goals, pose non-time urgent questions, review plans, maintain contact.
- Don't use e-mail to give critical or complex feedback, provide impressions of other's behavior, provide impressions of third parties, exchange sensitive information.

■ Communication Challenges

- Listen for nonverbal cues (e.g., pauses, voice tone, tempo, volume)
- Push for specific information, clarify meanings
- Summarize agreements



How the mentoring program works

- Mentoring and Education Chair will coordinate the program
- Enrollment forms available for those interested in participating
- Requirements for participation will be established (i.e. both mentors and mentees must be active members and willing to commit to the program for a specified time)
- Mentors will be assigned for a specified amount of time such as one semester or one academic year.
- Specific program guidelines may include:
 - Mentor must make initial contact with mentee within one week of assignment.
 - Mentors must communicate with mentees at least monthly
 - Mentors and mentees must complete at least two of the suggested activities.



Possible Mentor/Mentee Activities

- Lunch with mentor, mentee, and other RDs to discuss everyday challenges practitioners encounter in their work.
- Mentor and mentee discuss proper business and telephone etiquette and corporate protocol.
- Mentee accompanies mentor to a professional meeting.
- Mentee observes the development of a special project such as a wellness program or health fair.
- Mentor reviews mentee's resume and offers suggestions for improvement.



Responsibilities of the Mentoring and Education Chair

- **Acquire mentors and students for the program.**
 - Publicize the mentor program through the chapter website, announcements at meetings, letters to members, and personal contacts.
 - Publicize the program to the student nutrition groups and dietetic internship programs and provide application forms to interested students.

- **Match mentors with mentees.**
 - Match students and professionals based on factors such as mutual areas of professional interest, schedules, geographic proximity, etc.
 - Make assignments and provide participants with a brief biography of their new mentor or mentee.
 - Establish a date by which mentors and mentees should make contact.



Responsibilities of the Mentoring and Education Chair

- **Monitor and evaluate the results of the program.**
 - Follow-up with participants to ensure that mentors and mentees have made initial contact by suggested deadline date.
 - Request a written summary of their mentor experience from all participants.
 - Conduct year-end interviews or group meetings to ask for program feedback.
 - Have all participants complete a program evaluation form at the end of the program.