

Structuring a mentoring session

The key issues to be covered in the first mentoring session are:

- What do we want/need to know about each other
 - Socially
 - Career ambitions
 - Development goals
- Expectations regarding the relationship
- Ground rules
- Practical arrangements – where, when, how long
- Priorities
- Any pressing issues

Typical areas for exploration

What do we want/need to know about each other

Socially – domestic circumstances, interests and hobbies

Career ambitions – what do you like/dislike about the industry? Where do you want to be in five years time? Achievements/failures? Definition of success? Career goals?

Development goals – areas for improvement in current job, prep for future role, where guidance/advice/support would be most valued

Expectations regarding the relationship

What will make this productive and successful for both of us? What do we want of each other? How does the mentee want the mentor to act – advisor, counselor, guide?

Ground rules

What's acceptable with regards to things like confidentiality, accessibility, contacts?

Practical arrangements – where, when, how long?

Priorities – are there some things that are more important to discuss than others?

Any pressing issues – is there anything that needs immediate attention?

Having discussed these issues, it might be useful to note down the outcomes in the form of a mentoring arrangement.

Mentoring Arrangement

Mentor

Mentee

	Notes
1. Expectations a) Are we clear about our expectations of: each other our relationship what we hope to learn from each other b) How closely do our expectations match? c) Should the mentor take a directive or non-directive role in meetings?	
2. Discussion topics a) What are the key topics for discussion? b) Are there any limits to the scope of discussion?	
3. Meeting arrangements a) How often will we meet and for how long? b) Where will we meet? c) Who will set the agenda, including defining learning goals? d) How formal/informal should our meetings be?	
4. Relationship a) How will we maintain openness and trust between us? b) Are we both willing to give honest and timely feedback? c) To what extent is the mentee able to access the mentor between meetings?	
5. Confidentiality a) What are the limits to confidentiality in this relationship?	

b) What are we prepared to disclose to others?	
6. What responsibilities do we have to others as a result of this relationship – Line manager? Training dept HR? Dept managers?	
7. Review How often will we review progress? How will we measure the success of this relationship?	

Next meetings

We need to avoid formalizing meetings – producing and sticking to an agenda, minute taking etc are not necessary. However, meetings do need to be focused have purpose and outcomes.

A framework for a mentoring meeting might look like this:

- Establish relaxed, businesslike atmosphere
- Agree on the purpose of the meeting
- Explore issues from the mentee's perspective
- Develop understanding
- Action plan
- Summarise
- Outline next meeting

You can also use a pro-forma for structuring a mentoring session, for example, based on Alred's model

Take the format on the slide – what's the most challenging part of conducting the meeting?

Explore issues from the mentee's perspective, develop understanding, action plan