Trauma Association of Canada
Association Canadienne de Traumatologie

Trauma Association of Canada – Injury Prevention Mentorship Program

Prepared by TAC Injury Prevention Committee
Last updated: October 2024

How to Be a Good Mentor

Mentorship is an invaluable opportunity to share knowledge, guide future leaders, and foster professional growth in others. A good mentor plays a critical role in shaping their mentee's career while gaining fresh perspectives and learning in return. This guide will help you understand the key objectives of mentorship, set clear expectations for yourself as a mentor, and provide tips on how to build a meaningful and effective mentoring relationship.

Goals and Objective of the TAC-IP Mentorship Program:
Skill development and knowledge transfer between injury prevention professionals working in Canadian Trauma Centers.

Goals:

- Community building, expanding professional networks across Canada,
- Knowledge sharing and mutual learning,
- Facilitating goal setting between mentors and mentees.

Expectations:

A successful mentorship relationship relies on the mentor's ability to lead with empathy, provide meaningful feedback, and invest time and energy into their mentee's success.

Tips for Being a Good Mentor:

1. **Active Listening** - Effective mentorship begins with understanding your mentee's goals, concerns, and aspirations. Practice active listening by giving them your full attention, asking probing questions, and seeking clarification when needed.
2. **Provide honest and constructive feedback** - Whether it's pointing out areas for improvement or helping your mentee navigate a difficult situation, your input should be both candid and compassionate. Balance criticism with encouragement to help your mentee stay motivated.
3. **Be supportive -** Create a safe and supportive environment where your mentee feels comfortable discussing their challenges and aspirations. Make it clear that you are there to support their growth and that they can approach you with any questions or concerns.
4. **Set boundaries and confidentiality -** Be clear about your availability, the level of support you can offer, and the areas in which you can provide the most value. Do not share confidential information about your mentee's experiences or work with others.
5. **Share your experiences -** Rather than telling your mentee exactly what to do, share your own experiences, challenges, and the lessons you've learned along the way.

Suggested Meeting Times:

The structure of your meetings may vary based on the goals of the mentor and mentee. It is recommended to meet once a month for 30-60 minutes. As a mentor, your mentee will prepare an agenda and share it with you ahead of time. Reflect on the topics of the agenda before each meeting and be prepared to answer your mentee's questions.

Initial Meeting:

Objective: Create goals for the mentoring relationship.

Proposed Agenda:

- Introductions (who are you, where do you work, what projects do you work on),
- Optional icebreaker questions,
- Listen to your mentee's goals and be honest with what areas you can help them in. Set goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.
- Discuss the frequency of meetings, and ideal communication styles (emails, texting, phone calls, etc.). Share your availability for communications, especially if you are in different time zones.

Follow-Up Meetings:

Objective: Discuss progress on goals, new challenges, provide feedback.

Agenda Topics: Reflect on recent developments, discuss actionable steps, and provide guidance on ongoing issues.

Tips for Maintaining a Strong Mentorship Relationship:

1. **Communicate Regularly** - Ensure that you maintain open lines of communication, even between meetings. If something important comes up, send an email or a message to keep the mentee informed.
2. **Be Flexible** - Be accommodating of your mentee's schedule. If a meeting needs to be rescheduled, adapt and be understanding.
3. **Celebrate Wins** - Share your successes with your mentee and celebrate their success with them.
4. **Be Honest** - If you're struggling with the mentorship be open about it. Honest conversations build trust.
5. **End Gracefully** – If the mentorship concludes, express your gratitude, and keep the door open for future interactions.

If there are questions or concerns regarding the mentorship program, please contact Emma Schmidt at emma.schmidt@sickkids.ca.