
CAREER MENTORING

HDR CANDIDATE GUIDELINES

UQ GRADUATE SCHOOL



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
A U S T R A L I A

What is career mentoring?

Career mentoring is an arrangement that connects you (mentee) with an experienced industry/business professional (mentor) from the private or public sector, and provides an opportunity for you to gain wisdom and advice to support your career development.

Career mentoring is not work experience, paid employment or about being matched with someone doing your ideal job. It is a mentoring partnership focused on developing career management skills and identifying career options and goals.

Benefits:

- Assist your transition in to employment by imparting your mentor's expertise and practical experience;
- Gain insight into the reality of a specific industry, an in-depth understanding of organisational culture, politics, networking and protocol;
- Be guided by an experienced and willing professional to achieve self-reliance and learn new expertise;
- Networking opportunities; and
- Encourage self-directed reflection, analysis, negotiation and problem solving skills.

Your role:

It is your responsibility to engage with and prepare for meetings/conversations with your mentor by identifying the guidance and information you need most. Mentors are not required to provide all the answers; instead the mentor encourages the mentee to use their available resources to identify solutions. It is therefore a partnership, whereby the mentor and mentee work in a collaborative manner. You should be open to feedback and willing to listen to advice, even if you decide not to act on some of your mentor's recommendations.

What you should do:

- Be proactive and initiate first contact/meeting with your mentor;
- Provide an account of academic/professional activities and experiences by sharing your CV;
- Agree upon a mutual understanding of confidentiality;
- Respond promptly to all requests made of you by your mentor, to help facilitate the mentoring relationship; and
- Communicate questions and concerns about University life, career development and industry success.

As mentors are busy professionals, it is expected that you take primary responsibility for organising meetings and initiating communication. The usual commitment is five or more face-to-face meetings **a year**, with regular (usually monthly) contact via phone or email. You should discuss what arrangement best suits your mentor before commencing.

If, the match is not working for either party, mentoring pairs should not feel pressure to maintain the relationship. To ensure you end the relationship on a positive note be clear about why you want to end the relationship.

- If you've achieved your goals - celebrate! Let your mentor know how they have helped you, and show your appreciation.
- If you're ending the relationship for other reasons, let your mentor know what the reason is. Perhaps you would like to spend time engaging in other professional development activities.

Promoting Effective Communication:

- Be prepared to ask for explicit advice on your skill sets, goals, and challenges;
- Make it easy for your mentor to give you honest and specific feedback. Ask for it early in your relationship;
- Be willing to accept constructive criticism. Thank your mentor for being honest with you and request precise recommendations for areas of improvement; and
- Set career goals both short term and long term and review them often.