

Worksheet:

Planning for Mentor-Mentee Conversations

This worksheet is part of the self-paced course: *Building Effective Mentoring Relationships with Graduate Students and Postdocs*.

At the end of each module of the course, pause to complete different sections of this worksheet. The purpose of this worksheet is to support you as you prepare for important conversations (which would ideally occur early in your mentoring relationship) with your mentees. During the conversations, encourage your mentee to ask follow-up questions and share their thoughts with you.

Start Here!

Did you and your mentee discuss how you will partner to build and maintain the mentoring relationship in the following five areas?

Check “Yes” or “No” for each of the areas below:

	Yes	No
1. Goals of the mentoring relationship	☐	☐
2. Roles and responsibilities	☐	☐
3. Logistics and norms of the mentoring relationship	☐	☐
4. Exchanging feedback	☐	☐
5. Reviewing your mentoring relationship	☐	☐

If you answered “No” to any of the above, use the guide below to develop a plan for how you will discuss these areas with your mentee.

Plan Your Conversation with Your Mentee

Preparing to Mentor

In Module 1, you were encouraged to reflect on your own professional journey and mentoring practices, and introduced to principles of effective mentorship. Based on this self-reflection, what might you share with your mentees about the following:

- The ways in which your mentoring relationship may align or deviate from the current mentoring culture in your department, school, and discipline?
- Unspoken expectations that your mentees should be aware of to increase their likelihood of successfully achieving their goals?
- The types of support you are able to provide your mentee in the key areas for mentorship?

Establishing the Mentoring Relationship

1. Goals of the mentoring relationship

An effective mentoring relationship is a partnership between the mentor and the mentee. Refer to Module 2.2 and draft a plan for how you will help your mentee establish and refine their goals.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Refer to Module 2.3. Identify topics of discussion for aligning expectations regarding the roles and responsibilities of you and your mentee. Key areas for discussion include research, education, professional and career development, and support.

3. Logistics and norms of the mentoring partnership

Refer to Module 2.4. Identify topics of discussion for determining the logistics and norms with your mentees in areas such as meeting time, communication, confidentiality, accountability, and boundaries.

Enabling Growth in the Mentoring Relationship

1. Exchanging feedback

Refer to Module 3. Draft a plan for how you will establish the norms for exchanging feedback with your mentee.

- What is your feedback approach? How will you communicate it to your mentee?
- What questions will you ask your mentee to determine your role and their role in exchanging feedback so that the feedback exchange is built on dialogue?

Reviewing Your Mentoring Relationship

In Module 4, you learned about the value of regularly reviewing your mentoring relationship with you mentees, and ways to use the insights you gain to improve and even redefine your mentoring relationship. To prepare both you and your mentee for this review, consider the following questions:

- At the start or early in the mentoring relationship, how might you prime your mentee for reviewing and iterating on your mentoring relationship with some regularity?
- What questions about the mentoring relationship might you ask your mentee to consider to prepare for the review?
- What lesson have you learned about yourself from the mentoring relationship that you might share with your mentee?
- What else might you ask or share with your mentees to invest in / increase the utility of this iterative process?

Refer to Module 4 to draw on additional reflection prompts and suggested questions to ask your mentees.

The CTL is here to help!

Have questions about this worksheet? Looking for more support? The CTL is available to assist as you apply the principles of mentorship outlined in the “Building Effective Mentoring Relationships with Graduate Students and Postdocs” course, as you reflect on your mentorship approaches, and plan for conversations with your mentees. Please contact CTLfaculty@columbia.edu to schedule a consultation.