



UCLA

ALUMNI MENTOR
PROGRAM

Making the Most of Your Mentorship

Congrats! You've paired with a mentor you've requested, so now what do you do? Below are some tips and strategies for your mentorship moving forward.

- Take the first step in introducing yourself and ask to set up a time to connect with your mentor. Remember, you need to take the initiative to show you are invested. They are giving you their time, so make your interest known.
- Get to know your mentor's professional background, while maintaining respectful boundaries. Be willing to share your hopes, fears, and goals, so that your mentor can understand you best.
- Remember, the mentor's role is to guide you, not get you a job or internship.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. Mentors may not always know what you want, need, or seek, so don't shy away if you have concerns.
- Follow-up. Keep in touch with your mentor and share any updates about previous conversations. If your mentor provided you with helpful advice or resources, then you may want to send them a quick Thank You note or card.
- Stay engaged with your mentor. The number of times you connect with your mentor is up to each of you to maintain and determine, but we encourage you to connect at least once a month and maintain communication with your mentor. Keep in mind that your mentor may have a busy schedule; however, feel free to reach out if you would like to meet.
- Be willing to share new knowledge with mentors. Learning is a two-way street in mentoring relationships, and the relationship can be just as fruitful for the mentor.
- Listen well. Be attentive and actively listen when you converse with your mentor.
- If things don't seem to be working out. Don't give up on a mentorship if you don't seem to gel at first. Relationships take time to develop, and people take time to open up. However, if you find that your mentor has not been responsive for weeks, it's ok to send a final email saying that it seems that they have a lot on their plate and that you will cancel the mentorship based on their non-responsiveness. Thank them for the time they have given, and request a new mentor. While cancelling the mentorship is an option, we recommend you try multiple times to connect before you do.

Questions you can ask your mentor:

- Looking back on your career, what advice would you give your younger self?
- Now that you know more about me, what would you do if you were in my position?
- What used to be some of your biggest weaknesses?
- What are you most proud of?
- What professional organizations are you involved with and in what ways?
- Is there anything I can do to help you?
- Based on my interests, with whom else would you recommend I connect?

Questions your mentor could ask you:

- What are some of your career goals?
- What skills / knowledge are you hoping to develop?
- What is preventing you from achieving your goals?
- What are some areas for improvement that you wish to develop?
- What will you do differently to meet those challenges?
- How can I help? Where do you feel you need the most help?

Activities – below you will find a list of suggested activities to explore with your mentor:

- Virtual Coffee or Lunch
- Resume Critique
- Mock Interview
- Video introduction with a Colleague
- Pitch or Case Interview Practice
- Review an industry publication or discuss current trends

Strategies for an Effective Mentoring Conversation – The Mentor and Mentee Perspective		
Activities	Mentor’s Responsibility	Student’s Responsibility
Come prepared	Learn whatever you can about your student before your initial meeting.	Learn whatever you can about your mentor before your initial meeting.
Talk about the big picture	Recount your own mentoring experiences to your student. Explain what worked and what didn’t.	Listen and ask questions.
Discuss the student’s needs	Ask questions and listen.	Explain where you are and where you would like to be and how mentoring can help.
Seek mutual agreement on goals and expectations	Explain what you can and what you cannot do.	“This is what I hope to achieve through this mentoring relationship.”
Seek agreement on responsibilities	“I will do _____”	“I agree to do _____”
Set a timetable	“Let’s work on this for one month. Then we’ll review progress and determine if we should continue.”	“Let’s work on this for one month. Then we’ll review progress and determine if we should continue.”
Agree on meeting times and who will set them	Provide days and times that work for the student.	“I will take responsibility for finding dates and times that also fit into your schedule.”
Agree to be candid	“If this mentorship isn’t producing the results you expect, or if you disagree with my advice, please say so. Our time is valuable.”	“I will tell you if this mentorship isn’t producing the results I hoped for. I understand that our time is valuable.”