**Mentor Factsheet**

**Mentor's Role**

The role of a Mentor is to provide advice and guidance to a mentee in relation to their career development. The purpose of the relationship is the passing on of knowledge, experience and offering advice. A good mentor is someone with strong communication and interpersonal skills. A good mentor must be willing and able to listen, guide and educate the mentee, providing them with insight from their own experience. A mentor’s role is to offer specific and constructive criticism, challenge, and the benefit of wisdom, as well as being supportive and encouraging. Mentors have the judgement to know the parameters of the mentor/mentee relationship in terms of where they can help or where other expertise may be required. Overall, a mentor should be someone the mentee can look up to, a good role model. A mentor can;

* Offer challenging ideas and wise counsel.
* Help build self-confidence.
* Offer inspiration to those during early-career stage.
* Listen to career issues and offer encouragement.
* Trigger self-awareness.
* Provide knowledge from their career to date.

**Mentor Responsibilities**

* Be willing to participate in the programme and commit to giving time, advice and guidance to the mentee.
* Explore the mentee’s skills, aptitudes and aspirations.
* Act as an advisor offering feedback and advice on how to accomplish professional goals.
* Approach each meeting fully prepared.
* Attend the mentor-training session.

**Benefits for Mentors**

* Further develops leadership skills including providing feedback, communication and interpersonal skills.
* Gain fresh perspectives through interaction.
* Satisfaction in enhancing skills and helping someone else to grow.
* Expand professional development network.
* Staying in touch with emerging issues relevant to less experienced economists.
* Opportunity to reflect on own practices.
* Cement role as subject matter experts and leaders.
* Extend ability to influence others.
* Increases awareness of diversity in different ways of thinking and working.

**Skills required to be an effective mentor include:**

* Active listening skills.
* Ability to give effective constructive feedback.
* Knowing how to help with goal setting and planning.
* Knowing when to give advice.
* The ability to instil confidence and motivate people.
* Strategic questioning abilities.
* Strong communication skills.
* The ability to inspire colleagues.
* High levels of self-awareness.
* Committed to learning and interested in developing others.

**Top Tips for Mentors**

There is no template for being a great mentor. The following list may be helpful as you craft your own mentoring approach.

* **Be willing to commit the time required** - Set aside time for the mentoring process and honour all appointments. At a minimum, mentors are required to meet with their mentee at least once every six weeks for one hour. Communication can also take place through email or over the phone.
* **Let the mentee take the lead –** Mentees are encouraged to take the initiative and to drive the mentoring relationship. Encourage your mentee to take initiative, but come to each meeting prepared. Ask them what they want from mentoring and what they hope to achieve. Be a guide, not a supervisor.
* **Act as an advisor –** Offer the mentee honest feedback and advice on how to accomplish professional goals.
* **Encourage them to reflect -** Encourage your mentee to be open-minded and to reflect on their more basic preconceptions about their future: What do they really want from their career? What do they want their daily role to be like? Why do they want to take this path?
* **Keep information that your mentee has shared with you confidential** - If something concerning the mentee needs to be discussed with others, it should first be discussed within the mentoring relationship.
* **Establish open and honest communication** - Act as a sounding board and provide opportunities for the mentee to talk about concerns and ask questions.
* **Foster creativity and independence** - Help build self-confidence and offer encouragement.
* Above all, **listen**.

**Mentor FAQs**

* ***What am I expected to do?*** Mentors are expected to meet and offer their mentee support for at least one hour every six weeks for the duration of the programme. Mentors should work with their mentee to determine what kind of support will be most useful—specific feedback related to finding jobs, general career advice, information on higher studies, personal encouragement, and so on. Training is provided for those who are new to mentoring or who have not attended the training session in the past. Your role is to support, inspire and encourage your mentee and to contribute to their professional development.
* ***How long will the commitment be?*** We ask that mentors commit to the programme for the full nine months to enable the mentee to fully benefit from the relationship. If a mentor must leave the relationship early, we ask that they let their mentee and the ISWE mentorship team know as soon as possible.
* ***Can I be a mentee as well as a mentor?*** No.

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