Why Mentoring?

Women who have a mentor can advance more quickly, and to higher levels, than those who are not supported. Mentoring relationships can be formal or informal, and short or long term.

Formal relationships are often arranged by an organisation or workplace, have pre-articulated expectations, and often include launches, wrap-ups, and socials to normalize expectations. Formal mentorships create an environment where it is easy to get involved, but may cause concerns of time commitment and how “visible” the relationships are.

Informal mentoring is often arranged by individuals, so expectations are not always pre-determined and must be set by the mentor and mentee. They often focus on a specific need. Time commitments are more flexible, and informal mentorship is less “visible.” Difficulty establishing connections can make it challenging to become involved.

Short term mentoring formats include speed mentoring, project-specific mentors, shadowing, or transition mentors.

Long term mentoring may include regular or ad-hoc meetings, peer mentors, and most mentoring programs.

Online mentoring may use either format.

What is Mentoring?

Development for upward mobility

Advice and modelling

Effective mentoring relationships address both how and why questions

Personal support navigating the workplace environment

Explores values and uses critical reflection

How...?

Why...?

Types of Mentoring

Triads

Team

Group

Peer

Speed Mentoring

1 on 1

Virtual Mentoring

What is Mentoring?

Advice and mentoring

Explores values and uses critical reflection

Shares knowledge and experience

Development for upward mobility

Personal support navigating the workplace environment

How...?

Why...?
In a mentoring relationship, how you respond affects how the other person responds. Choosing a response is context and relationship dependent.

### Types of Questions

**Effective:**
- Are person-centred
- Are open
- Ask “why” (without being intimidating)

**Ineffective:**
- Completely change the focus
- Are binding
- Solicit agreement
- Force choices
- Have “no good answer”
- Are yes/no

### Tools for Mentoring

**Preparing for Mentoring**
- Decide what you want to get from this experience
- Determine what you can give (time, knowledge)
- Know your own values
- Review the facilitative responses
- Decide on 3 questions you want to ask

**Setting Expectations**
- Set & communicate expectations (meetings, forms of communication, etc.)
- Discuss any limitations to the relationship, confidentiality, what to do if one person wants to end the relationship
- Write this into a simple agreement

**Building the Facilitative Conditions**
- Find common ground (personal, professional interests)
- Leave the workplace – go for a walk, or for coffee
- Use open questions & positive body language
- Talk about why mentoring appeals to you; previous valuable mentoring relationships you’ve had, and how they were helpful

**Tools to Explore**
- Choose a specific topic to focus on for each individual session
- Have the mentee create a pie chart of what is important in their life, then create one of what they spend their time on – compare & discuss
- Approach issues with PEST analysis: Political, Economic, Social, Technology

**Tools to Reflect**
- Review highlights from the meeting at the end
- At home, spend 15 minutes writing about what you learned, what was helpful, what you’d like to do next time
- At the end of the mentoring relationship, or yearly, reflect on how it has contributed to your growth and development
References

Recommended Readings

About WWEST
Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science & Technology (WWEST) is the operating name for the NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering (CWSE), BC and Yukon Region. Our mission is to advance engineering and science as welcoming careers that serve our world through holistic understanding and creative, appropriate and sustainable solutions. WWEST works locally and, in conjunction with the other CWSE Chairs, nationally on policy, research, advocacy, facilitation, and pilot programs that support women in science and engineering.

About the Chairholder
The Chair is held by Dr. Elizabeth Croft, P.Eng., FEC, FASME. Dr. Croft is the Associate Dean, Education and Professional Development in the Faculty of Applied Science, and a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of British Columbia. She is also the Director of the Collaborative Advanced Robotics and Intelligent Systems (CARIS) Laboratory. Her research investigates how robotic systems can behave, and be perceived to behave, in a safe, predictable, and helpful manner. She is the lead investigator of “Engendering Engineering Success,” a 3-year interdisciplinary research project that aims to take an evidence-based approach to increasing the retention of women in engineering by understanding and changing aspects of workplace culture that place women at a disadvantage.

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