

# Tips for Working with a Mentor



## 1. Ask for what you need

Be clear with your mentor about what you're looking for in the relationship. Outline your goals and identify areas in which you're seeking help. Track your progress and come to each session prepared. As seasoned Procter & Gamble veteran and author Scott Mautz says in his Inc. article, [12 Keys to Being a SuperMentee \(the Kind of Mentee Every Mentor Loves\)](#), "Research is clear that the more specific an ask, the more potent the assistance offered."

## 2. Manage the relationship

As the mentee, it's your job to drive the relationship. Think of it this way: your mentoring relationship is a project and you are the project manager. Your role includes coordinating meetings, preparing agendas and conducting any necessary follow-up.

## 3. Respect your mentor's time

Time is a valuable commodity and your mentor is choosing to share their time with you. Respect your mentor's time by coming prepared to meetings, arriving on time and honoring any time limits set. In her Inc. article, [How To Be A Great Mentee](#), multi-generational workplace expert Ashira Prossack suggests mentees "establish some ground rules around contact so that you know how much time they're willing to give you." This will reduce any misunderstandings from the onset.

## 4. Demonstrate reliability

Demonstrating reliability shows your commitment to the relationship. Things like keeping your agreements and following through on what you say builds trust and establishes a positive tone. The greater the trust, the more successful the relationship.

## 5. Be open to feedback

Being open to feedback is crucial to professional growth. Mentoring researcher Victoria Black shares in her [TEDx Texas State University](#) talk that being open-minded is the most important characteristic mentees can bring to the relationship to make it thrive. She recounts that no matter the setting, role or geographical location, respondents consistently cite this as the most important mentee trait.

## 6. Be engaging

In their article, ["What Mentors Wish Their Mentees Knew,"](#) for Harvard Business Review, Dr. Vineet Chopra and Dr. Sanjay Saint point out that engaged mentees are favored by mentors. "The best mentees are fun to work with. They are energy donors, not energy recipients. They come to work with enthusiasm, excitement and eagerness to move projects forward." Through being present, asking thoughtful questions and not focusing on the negative aspect of challenges, you can help cultivate a fruitful mentoring relationship.

## 7. Practice gratitude

Like in any relationship, demonstrating gratitude has a positive impact. A thank-you note goes a long way. Whatever your approach is to showing your appreciation, it's important to acknowledge those who help you on your career journey.