Building the Mentoring Relationship

Every mentoring relationship is unique. We offer the following guidelines that we hope will help you in creating a satisfying relationship with your mentor.

**Get to know your mentor**

- Be sure to get to know your mentor on a personal level. While mentors are excellent career resources, you can learn a lot from their personal stories as well.

**Set goals with your mentor**

- Setting goals with your mentor is critical. It gives direction and clarity to the mentoring relationship. It also increases the likelihood of a successful relationship.
- Think about what you hope to gain from this experience and what activities you might be interested in doing with your mentor.
- Remember, goal-setting can be a process – priorities can and will change/evolve.

**Set expectations with your mentor**

- Determine how and when you will communicate with each other. Renegotiate as needed.
- It might be difficult to find the time to talk or meet with your mentor, so schedule your next meeting time – if only tentatively – at the end of each meeting.
- Keep the relationship a priority. Even if you cannot meet or talk with your mentor very often, at least try to keep communication consistent (i.e., send an email message every couple of weeks).
- Be proactive. If your mentor has not responded to you in a while, do not be shy about sending another email message or calling him/her again. He/she simply may have gotten busy or missed your previous message. If you don’t hear after several attempts, please contact us at (877) 811-ALUM or sam@stfrancis.edu
Suggested Questions to Ask Your Mentor

**Job Description**
- What is your job title?
- What is your typical day on the job?
- What percentage of each day do you spend in various work activities?
- How free are you to do your work independently?
- What types of problems are you likely to face during the day?
- What are the most satisfying and the most frustrating parts of your work?

**Advancement**
- How did you get to your current position?
- What are the future trends and developments that you see affecting careers in your field?

**Preparation**
- What preparations do you recommend for a person entering this occupation?
- What education/degrees/training/licenses are required?
- If you could start all over again in launching your career, what steps would you take?
- What courses do you recommend taking for this occupation?

**Lifestyle**
- What hours do you normally work?
- Is overtime common?
- Is travel a factor in this job?
- What are the professional organizations in this field?
- What are the pressures that you face?
- How does this occupation affect your private life?
- What is expected of you outside of working hours?
- Is there a formal mentor program set up in your workplace?
- Who was/is your mentor?

**Tips for Mentees**
- We encourage you and your mentor to start discussing your goals for the mentoring relationship as soon as possible.
  - Goals are important because they provide direction and clarity, and help to improve the success of the relationship.
- You both attended USF, so you will be able to relate on that level.
- Remember to communicate your enthusiasm and gratitude about working with your mentor.
Goal Setting Worksheet

Discuss mentor's background and the mentee's major coursework and work experience to date.

The mentee can indicate their level of interest in the following activities. Rate interest level as low (L), medium (M) or high (H).

1. Gain insight into mentor's academic experience  L M H
2. Introduction to colleagues or contacts      L M H
3. Attend a professional meeting or program with mentor L M H
4. Critique mentee's resume/portfolio          L M H
5. Develop interviewing or informational interview skills L M H
6. Discuss how personal and professional life can fit together L M H
7. Review of mentor's resume                  L M H
8. Consider the decision to attend graduate school L M H
9. Guidance on how to seek a job/internship in the field L M H
10. Discuss how the mentor navigated graduate school/worked with advisors L M H
11. Shadow mentor at workplace                 L M H
12. Other____________________________________ L M H

After completing the above, discuss ways that the mentor might be able to help the mentee with items rated high or medium interest.