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Career Mentor Link

Perth

CAREERS CENTRE, STUDENT SERVICES

A manual for
Mentors and
Mentees

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1. Acknowledgements and general information

Acknowledgements

Sections of this manual are taken from the *Friends in the Workplace: 2nd Edition* mentoring handbook which was written in 2001 by Jane den Hollander in conjunction with Professor Lyn Abbott, Elizabeth Eaton and the WA branch of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology. We sincerely thank them for the opportunity to share this work.

About this manual

This manual is an introduction to the Career Mentor Link program and the roles and responsibilities of the participants. Additional resources can be found on the Career Mentor Link website careermentorlink.uwa.edu.au

Definitions used

Program Coordinator: UWA Careers Centre

Mentor: The more experienced and senior person in terms of career

Mentee: The UWA student

Publication information

This document was originally published by the UWA Careers Centre, April 2005.

Reviewed and updated January 2012.

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2. Introduction to mentoring

Historical context

Mentoring was first documented in Homer's *Odyssey*. Odysseus, about to leave on his long journey to fight in the Trojan Wars, appointed Mentor as guardian to his son Telemachus. Mentor acted as guardian, friend, adviser and teacher to the boy for many years. This historical classic provides an insight into the modern day definition of mentor as 'a wise and trusted counsellor or teacher'.

Definition of mentoring and career mentoring

Mentoring involves matching a more experienced person (the mentor) with a less experienced person (the mentee). In career mentoring, the relationship relates to career-specific interaction.

In the workplace, career mentoring is widely used as a means of progressing and supporting employees during their career. This means that an employee has a supporter who acts as a sounding board for ideas, is able to provide advice on suitable career paths, provides introductions within the industry and generally 'keeps an eye' on the well being and career progress of the junior colleague. Career mentoring is also a successful way of helping university students link to industry, develop career objectives and career management skills, and prepare for the transition out of university and into the workplace.

In mentoring, the relationship may be a formal or informal process.

Informal mentoring

In informal mentoring relationships the mentor and mentee are attracted by mutual interests or friendship. Meetings are often less formal and may include social as well as work related scenarios. Characteristically these relationships extend over a long period of time and endure changes of workplace and successive career moves. Informal mentoring is rare and usually luck or circumstance plays a part in establishing the relationship.

Formal mentoring

Formal mentoring is an organised mentoring process. It is usually organised by a third party (eg human resources division) and is based on a matching program which links up mentors and mentees with common work interests or expertise. In all formal mentoring programs the mentor and mentee are linked via a matching questionnaire.

In larger organisations where formal mentoring is part of the human resources package and where mentoring relationships are expected to endure for some time, a sophisticated questionnaire may be used, for example, the Myers Brigg Type Indicator I which identifies compatible personality types. However, most mentoring programs have not developed to this level and rely on a basic questionnaire which requests information on work interests and qualifications.

For some people, formal mentoring will lead to deeper associations along the lines of informal mentoring.

A mentoring relationship typically involves:

- ✉ Initial contact between the mentor and the mentee
- ✉ Ongoing regular contact
- ✉ Discussion
- ✉ Guidance, support and advice by the mentor
- ✉ Energy, enthusiasm, initiative and curiosity by the mentee
- ✉ Mutual respect, trust and openness
- ✉ Constructive two-way feedback

3. Introduction to Career Mentor Link

Students spend a good deal of time at universities and institutions acquiring the technical expertise and knowledge to make effective contributions to the workplace. However, as all good educational institutions will concede, the learning obtained in an educational institution is only part of the deal. Understanding the workplace and how to succeed in it are also important. This is the premise on which Career Mentor Link was established.

Career Mentor Link is co-ordinated by the UWA Careers Centre. It is a formal career mentoring program that uses a basic questionnaire to match professionals generally with at least four years work experience (the mentors) with UWA students who will have completed at least one year of study. The Perth program runs annually over the academic year, from April to October, and participants can nominate to continue the same mentoring relationship into a second year if preferred.

It is important to note that Career Mentor Link is not intended to be a work experience program or an 'extended interview' for possible employment. Nor is it a student resource for course work or a professional counselling program. It is a career mentoring relationship focused on introducing students to the professional workplace, helping them to establish links within the industry and providing them with the opportunity to obtain advice and guidelines about future career decisions.

The mentors are not intended to be professional counsellors or trained career advisors. Similarly, if a job or vacation work eventuates from the program, this is a bonus for the student, and should not be an expectation.

Objectives of the program

- ✉ Assist students in developing career management skills
- ✉ Provide students with an industry perspective to enhance academic learning
- ✉ Establish mutually beneficial relationships between industry, the university and its students

4. Benefits of Career Mentor Link

Benefits to students

- ✉ Broaden your knowledge of the career options open to you
- ✉ Increase your understanding of industry
- ✉ Be able to link academic study to industry realities
- ✉ Build professional networks
- ✉ Receive honest and constructive feedback which is not assessed
- ✉ Learn how to communicate effectively with industry professionals
- ✉ Develop practical skills and confidence to enter your chosen profession
- ✉ Learn what employers are looking for when they hire graduates

Benefits to mentors

- ✉ Obtain a sense of personal satisfaction from contributing to a student's development
- ✉ Gain recognition for your professional experience and knowledge
- ✉ Enhance your own professional development in areas such as coaching, communication and leadership
- ✉ Review your own knowledge and professional practices
- ✉ Build links with the University
- ✉ Learn about current curriculum and academic trends
- ✉ Network with other mentors
- ✉ Opportunity to meet potential employees

5. The phases of the mentoring relationship

Career Mentor Link – Perth runs for 6 months each year, from April to October. The minimum contact that is required is 2 face to face meetings and monthly contact by email or phone. The mentoring relationship can be divided into 4 phases:

Phase 1: Planning (prior to April)

This phase occurs prior to meeting your mentor/mentee. You should think about your strengths, any limits or preferences and anything you may have learned about past mentoring experiences. Mentees should be identifying their goals and objectives for the relationship (refer to Appendix 1).

Phase 2: Building the relationship (April – May)

You meet for the first time at the Breakfast launch. You begin to get acquainted and to establish your goals and priorities for the program. Ideally you should have a follow-up face-to-face meeting within 2 weeks of the launch in order to cement these initial introductions. Your mentoring agreement needs to be completed and returned to the Career Mentor Link Coordinator.

Phase 3: Maintaining the momentum (June – mid September)

You should have contact by email or phone at least once per month. Ideally however face-to-face meetings are generally the most productive. Review the goals and objectives that are in your mentoring agreement – are you on track? Stuck for ideas as to what you'll do or say? Refer to the Resources section on careermanitorlink.uwa.edu.au. Submit your mid-program progress report.

Phase 4: Consolidating and moving on (mid September – October)

Maintain contact. Review your agreement – have all goals been achieved? If not, then review why not. Were they unrealistic, have your goals changed over the 6 months? Is there something that you can do that will help you achieve your goals?

Consider continuing the formal relationship for a second year. Complete the evaluation form. Attend the end of year function to celebrate your successes and show appreciation for all the efforts that have been made.

Based on *Mentoring Year at a glance* by Dr Linda Phillips-Jones available at: mentoringgroup.com

6. Keeping in touch

There is a minimum amount of contact required of participants in the program but it is up to the mentor and mentee to agree on a contact schedule that suits them. This contact schedule should be reflected in their mentoring agreement.

Initial contact

Once a match has been made, the mentee will contact the mentor and invite him/her to the launch function organised by the UWA Careers Centre. At the launch function the mentor and their mentee/s will meet, discuss and agree on their program goals and what their mentoring process will involve. This is recorded on their mentoring agreement and it is the mentee's responsibility to forward a copy of the agreement to the Program Coordinator by the due date (or hand it in at the end of the Launch).

The first meeting is like most first meetings between strangers. It will be fairly formal and may take a little while for each party to relax and feel able to actively participate in the process. Therefore it is recommended that the next face-to-face meeting be arranged within the following two to six weeks, so that the initial introductions can be cemented.

Unable to attend the launch

If the mentor or mentee could not attend the launch function, it will be their responsibility to make the initial face-to-face contact, complete the mentoring agreement and return a copy to the Program Coordinator by the due date. It is also recommended that the next face-to-face meeting is arranged at their initial meeting.

Subsequent contact

The number of face-to-face meetings is up to the mentee and mentor involved. However, to develop a proper relationship at least one face-to-face meeting every two months, supplemented by monthly phone or email contact is recommended at a minimum. It is recommended that 45-60 minutes minimum is scheduled for any face-to-face meeting. Besides the launch function, the Careers Centre organises a number of events and workshops throughout the program, which provide opportunities for the mentor and mentee to meet up in person. Details of all events will be circulated.

Be prepared

In order to achieve the objectives outlined in your mentoring agreement in the relatively short period of time, each contact should have a specific purpose. Ideally, the agenda for the next contact should be set at the previous contact. It is the mentee's responsibility to drive the

relationship and keep it on track (with help from the mentor of course). The mentee should maintain a record of contact (Appendix 3) and use it as part of the mid-program progress report. It may also be useful to keep a more detailed record of meetings that take place (Appendix 4).

Keeping in touch

If you have let communication lapse, don't be scared to initiate contact again. Often an email explaining that you've been busy but that you want to focus on the program again soon, will let the other party know your situation and put them at ease.

Places to meet

It is recommended that meetings be arranged at the mentor's workplace during office hours, or at the university. Alternatively a public place such as a coffee shop is another good venue. Although mentees and mentors may become friends over the course of the program, it is important to remember that the relationship is a professional one.

Contact commitment in summary

At a minimum, mentors and mentees are expected to:

- ✉ Attend the launch function to meet each other
- ✉ After the launch function, meet face-to-face at least 2 times over the duration of program
- ✉ Maintain monthly telephone and/or email contact
- ✉ Attend the end of program function in October
- ✉ Attend at least one of the other Career Mentor Link events/workshops organised throughout the program

7. Responsibilities of the participants

Mentor responsibilities

- ✉ Complete the Mentoring Agreement in conjunction with the mentee
- ✉ Agree on a regular mutually convenient contact schedule
- ✉ Advise mentee if unable to attend scheduled meetings
- ✉ Observe confidentiality and professional boundaries
- ✉ Encourage exploration of ideas and facilitate self-directed learning – try to avoid providing the solution
- ✉ Encourage mentee's strengths and help to minimise their weaknesses
- ✉ Check on the effectiveness of the communication – "Are we connecting?"
- ✉ Check on the effectiveness of the relationship – "Are we making progress?"
- ✉ Avoid becoming your mentee's tutor or counsellor – Contact the Program Coordinator if any concerns arise

Mentee responsibilities

- ✉ Complete the Mentoring Agreement in conjunction with the mentor
- ✉ Agree on a regular mutually convenient contact schedule
- ✉ Advise mentor if unable to attend scheduled meetings
- ✉ Observe confidentiality and professional boundaries
- ✉ Be receptive to feedback and suggestions from the mentor
- ✉ Fulfil commitments as agreed or negotiate changes
- ✉ Explore own strengths and weaknesses to set relevant goals
- ✉ Complete program reports and evaluations in agreed timeframes
- ✉ Take up opportunities for networking and building professional relationships
- ✉ Contact Program Coordinator if any concerns arise

Program Coordinator responsibilities

- ✉ Establish and monitor guidelines and procedures
- ✉ Attract and match mentors and mentees
- ✉ Deliver training and information material
- ✉ Provide confidential advice and support to address any issues or concerns
- ✉ Organise the program events
- ✉ Obtain feedback, evaluate and report on program outcomes

8. Program policies, procedures and general information

Change of details

Change in contact details, being on leave and changing jobs are all part of life. Please keep your mentor/mentee and the program coordinator informed.

Duty of care / occupational health and safety

Mentors have a responsibility to adhere to all relevant occupational health and safety requirements during mentee visits to their workplaces. This may include an induction for the mentee about safe working practices.

Ethical responsibility

At all times mentors and mentees must act in a responsible and ethical manner. The relationship is a professional one and therefore both parties must respect commercial ethics and share information in confidence. The relationship must not be exploited.

Evaluation / feedback

It is important that the Career Mentor Link program continues to develop and achieve its objectives. Therefore mentees will be required to complete a mid-program progress report and mentees and mentors an end-of-program evaluation. Informal feedback throughout the program is also very welcome.

Grievance policy

Any issues should be discussed with the Program Coordinator. If this is not possible or the participant does not wish to do so, then the participant should discuss the issue with the Senior Careers Adviser of the Careers Centre. Students' complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Careers Centre's Feedback and Complaints Procedure in our Statement of Service (careers.uwa.edu.au/statement).

Insurance and remuneration

Students involved in Career Mentor Link are generally covered by the University's insurance for the purposes of unpaid work experience provided they are enrolled at UWA. The UWA Student Personal Accident Plan will respond in the event of an injury resulting from unpaid work experience/observation. The UWA Public Liability plan will respond should an incident occur whereby a student is negligent.

It must be reinforced that at no time can students receive any form of remuneration whilst undertaking this mentoring program. If they receive any allowances from the company/organisation, they are strictly deemed to be employees under the workers compensation act and as such, the University's insurance programs would not respond.

Any questions relating to insurance cover should be directed to the Program Coordinator who will liaise with the UWA Insurance Office.

Mentoring Agreement

The Mentoring Agreement is a document which is completed and signed at the start of the relationship by the mentee and the mentor. It outlines the nature of the mentoring relationship and up to three objectives to be achieved during the program. The agreement is an important component of the Career Mentor Link program because it ensures that both parties have the same goals and expectations and it provides a reference to help keep the relationship on track. A copy of the Mentoring Agreement must also be forwarded to the Program Coordinator by the due date.

No-fault clause

In any relationship there will undoubtedly be some instances where there are personality clashes or some form of incompatibility. It's part of life. In the Career Mentor Link program this has fortunately been very rare. However, if either participant feels that the relationship is difficult in some way, they should contact the Program Coordinator as soon as possible. The mentoring agreement contains a no-fault clause which enables either the mentor or mentee to end the relationship without any blame attached.

Program conclusion

Once the program finishes in October, the formal mentoring relationship has concluded for the year. However, this does not mean that you cannot keep in touch. Many participants stay in touch informally after the conclusion of the program. It is also possible for both mentor and mentee to return for second year in the program. Full details are available on the Career Mentor Link website.

Training

The Career Mentor Link program organises an annual introductory workshop for mentors and mentees. It is mandatory for all students and an optional orientation tool for mentors. Additional optional training opportunities are also offered during the program.

9. For mentees

Characteristics of a good mentee

- ✉ Desire to be mentored
- ✉ Willingness to drive the relationship
- ✉ Open to new ideas, suggestions and feedback
- ✉ Committed to self development and achievement of career goals
- ✉ Able to give and receive constructive and honest feedback
- ✉ Skilled with good organisational, time management and goal setting skills
- ✉ Able to communicate needs, goals and expectations

Be confident

It may be daunting to meet someone new, especially someone who is potentially older, more senior and more experienced in the workforce. However, be confident! Your mentor has applied for the program because they are interested in you and your career. Don't be scared to share relevant information about yourself or to let them know what your career needs and goals are. If you're not sure what your career goals are, that's fine too. However let them know this so they can help you. Remember, the UWA Careers Centre also has experienced career advisers who can help.

What to say

If you get nervous or have difficulty thinking of things to say, the list of starter questions shown below may help you get going. The mentor will be eager to establish a rapport with you and will help with conversation but it's always worth having a few questions up your sleeve.

Conversation starters:

- ✉ How did you get this job?
- ✉ What experience and qualifications do you need?
- ✉ Do you have a mentor?
- ✉ What is the most satisfying part of your job?

What to take to meetings

Remember to take along something (eg pen/notepad, tablet etc) to every meeting so that you can record information and plan your next meeting. It also makes you appear organised and interested.

What to wear

If you are visiting the mentor's workplace, it is important that you find out about the dress code. For example, if you are visiting a laboratory or an outdoors work-site then there may be specific clothing such as a laboratory coat or steel-capped boots that you may need for occupational health and safety reasons. Similarly, many businesses in the Perth CBD have casual dress days where you can wear smart-casual dress rather than a suit. To be sure, always check with your mentor.

Feedback

Whether you are matched with a mentor who is new to Career Mentor Link, or a more experienced one, it will be beneficial for you to provide them with feedback along the way. This feedback will let them know that they are doing a good job and are on the right track or alternatively, help them adjust their methods and to try and find other ways of helping you.

Make the most of it!

It is easy to fall into the trap of making the Career Mentor Link program a lesser priority behind assignments and exams but before you know it, the year will have passed and the opportunity will be lost.

It's up to you to make the most of having access to a dedicated professional person who is interested in helping your career.

Thank you!

Your mentor is volunteering their time to help you so remember to say thanks and to acknowledge their contribution to your future career.

10. For mentors

Most university students have spent most of their lives in educational institutions, working in a competitive environment of lectures, projects and assessment. All of this is predictable and controllable. What is less predictable is the next step out of education and theory into work and application. Many students will admit to high levels of apprehension and anxiety when discussing employment, careers decision making and choice. It is worth thinking back to your own student days and remembering the period before the first ‘proper job.’

Students do not need to be spoon fed. They may need to be challenged, drawn out and helped with setting the agenda for future meetings. This should be done in a positive and creative manner. It is important that you show the student that you are keen to take part in the mentoring relationship. This will be encouraging and confidence building.

Characteristics of an effective mentor

- ✉ Desire to share information, expertise and experience
- ✉ Willing to invest time and effort in the relationship
- ✉ Committed to achieving the agreed objectives
- ✉ Encourages the mentee’s potential
- ✉ Ability to give and receive constructive and honest feedback
- ✉ Helps the decision making process by listening, sharing and reviewing options
- ✉ Willing to facilitate networking opportunities

You do not have to do it all!

It is worth remembering that the mentor does not have to personally provide all the contact to achieve the objectives outlined in the mentoring agreement. A mentor can provide just as much assistance to their mentee by facilitating other relationships and opportunities. For example, the mentor could arrange for a mock interview with someone from human resources or arrange job shadowing with a colleague from another department, or provide networking opportunities.

How to begin

The easiest way to break the ice with your mentee is to share a little bit of information about yourself. Talk about your background, interests and values and anything else that is relevant can help put your mentee at ease. Your mentee may well expect you to initiate this first conversation so that they do not appear too inquisitive! Some general questions to cover could be:

- ✉ What do you like most about your job?
- ✉ What is your proudest moment in your career?
- ✉ What did you want to be when you were five years old, at high school, at university?
- ✉ Have you ever been involved in mentoring before?

Communication

The essence of any good mentoring relationship is good communication. As the mentor that means you need to be a good active listener. You need to engender trust and encourage your mentee. The relationship you have with your mentee as part of Career Mentor Link is a professional one and this has been stressed to all the students taking part. However, you should also provide the opportunity for your mentee to talk about personal issues where appropriate.

Staying in touch

All mentees have been told that they should take responsibility, make the contact and drive the relationship. The reality is though that many may be reluctant to do so in case they appear too demanding. To help avoid this, it is a good idea to plan for the next meeting/contact at the end of each communication. If communication has been lost, sending a quick email can often remedy the situation.

Sometimes a lack of communication by your mentee can be explained by the ‘awe factor’. Perhaps your mentee is slightly intimidated or in awe of you and your accomplishments and feels reluctant to ‘bother’ you. There is an excellent article on this subject available on careermanitorlink.uwa.edu.au (Resources section).

If a meeting has to be rescheduled then it is a good idea to arrange an alternative date straight away so that momentum is not lost. “Too little time” is often cited as a difficulty in relationships in Career Mentor Link so discuss the issue openly.

Appendix 1: Some possible objectives

The following are some possible objectives that mentees can establish with their mentor within Career Mentor Link. The list is by no means exhaustive but is designed to be a starting point.

1. What's the right career for me?

Working out what is the right career for you involves research, self assessment and decision making. Your mentor won't be able to give you all the answers but he/she might be able to make sure you're asking the right questions.

Possible discussion points or activities with your mentor:

- ✉ What do you like and dislike? What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ✉ What's most important for you in your future career?
- ✉ What sort of work environment suits you best?
- ✉ What are some of the career options for your degree?
- ✉ Ask your mentor how he/she found out what they wanted to do.

Before talking with your mentor you can:

- ✉ Build a profile of your personality, interests, skills and aptitudes by completing on-line tests.
Refer to the Links section on UWA CareerHub careers.uwa.edu.au
- ✉ Borrow one of the many Careers books in the Reid Library (visit the Careers Centre or careers.uwa.edu.au for a list of all the books available)

2. Develop a career plan

If you've already got an idea about the direction you want for your career then your mentor can assist you in developing a career plan so that you start working on your career goals.

Possible discussion points or activities:

- ✉ What strategies can you use at university to further your career? i.e.
 - ✉ What are the best subjects to choose?
 - ✉ What is a good topic for a 3rd/4th year research project?
- ✉ Should you pursue Honours or postgraduate study?
- ✉ What generic skills have you learnt through your studies?
- ✉ What do employers look for in your chosen career?
- ✉ What do I need to be doing now in order to achieve my goals? e.g. work experience.

Before talking with your mentor you can:

- ✉ Look at past job vacancies on CareerHub (careers.uwa.edu.au)
- ✉ Meet with a Career Adviser
- ✉ Refer to the Career Fact Sheets section of CareerHub

3. Networking

Perhaps you'd like to focus on developing some practical strategies for networking. It's a necessary element in developing your career, so ask for some advice on how to do it well.

Possible discussion points or activities:

- ✉ Ask about how to start a networking conversation, about how to overcome nerves/shyness
- ✉ Ask your mentor for advice on the most relevant professional associations for you and perhaps attend an event with your mentor
- ✉ Attend industry events/professional seminars
- ✉ Ask your mentor to introduce you to some of their contacts
- ✉ Conduct informational interviews (don't know how? Ask a Career Adviser)

Before talking with your mentor you can:

- ✉ Research relevant professional associations – Refer to the Career Fact Sheets section of CareerHub careers.uwa.edu.au
- ✉ Read the “Networking and Volunteering” section of the Career Fact Sheets feature of CareerHub careers.uwa.edu.au

4. Practicalities – Interview skills, addressing selection criteria, resumé writing

You know where you want to go and you're starting to apply for jobs – graduate or vacation. Perhaps you'd like some practical advice on writing a resumé preparing a job application, or attending an interview.

Possible discussion points or activities:

- ✉ Discuss if there are any elements of your resumé that should be particularly highlighted in the industry you want to work in
- ✉ What are some of the skills that you've developed at university that make you employable?
- ✉ Ask your mentor for a mock interview

Before talking with your mentor you can:

- ✉ Attend a Careers Centre Workshop on Interview Skills, Resumés and Selection Criteria, Assessment Centre
- ✉ Prepare a draft resumé using the CareerHub Resume Builder
- ✉ Use the Careers Centre's Resumé and Application Review service

5. Workplace insights

It can be really useful to use Career Mentor Link as a means of gaining some real insights into the world of work. Job shadowing is an excellent way of achieving this and can occur over a few hours or for a whole day. If job-shadowing isn't possible then you can gain a lot of information from discussion with your mentor and his/her colleagues. In either situation, researching the organisation prior to job-shadowing or discussion is crucial.

Possible discussion points or activities:

- ✉ Workplace tour
- ✉ Introduction to other workplace colleagues
- ✉ Observation of client meetings
- ✉ On-site visits
- ✉ Attendance at staff meetings

Before talking with your mentor you can:

Visit the Occupations section (The facts > Work and employment > Occupations) of **myfuture.edu.au** – there are over 2000 occupations listed with details on main duties, working conditions etc.

6. Work experience – how do I get it?

Obtaining work experience (either paid or voluntary) during your studies is crucial, and being matched with a mentor can be a useful start. Mentors are not required to provide work experience but they can help you identify possible avenues and the most effective type of work experience for your future career. They may also be in a position to put you in contact with someone in their network who could provide work experience.

Possible discussion points or activities:

- ✉ Identify employers offering work experience or vacation employment
- ✉ Is there voluntary work available?
- ✉ What are employers looking for in work experience students?
- ✉ What is the best way of finding work experience?
- ✉ Assist with preparation of resumé and job applications
- ✉ How can International students find work experience and what are the visa implications?

Before talking with your mentor you can:

- ✉ Look at past job vacancies on UWA CareerHub careers.uwa.edu.au and see which employers offered vacation employment
- ✉ Refer to the Links and Career Fact Sheets sections of CareerHub for information on volunteering and networking

7. I'm an International student – where do I go after uni?

If you're an International student then all the above objectives can still be relevant for you. However, there are issues that will be of particular concern to you especially if you wish to stay in Australia once you have finished your degree. Your mentor can possibly help you work through these issues.

Please note: Your mentor is not an expert in Immigration laws and should not be expected to assist you with gaining Permanent residency in Australia. He/she is there to help you think about some of the broader issues.

Possible discussion points or activities:

- ✉ Do I intend to go home once I've finished my degree or can I stay in Australia?
- ✉ Will employers employ an International student?
- ✉ What are the cultural differences between my home country and Australia particularly in regard to job applications, preparing a resumé, attending interviews?
- ✉ Can I get work experience while I'm in Australia and is it relevant to me if I intend to return home at the end of my degree? Should I get work experience in my home country instead?

Before talking with your mentor you can:

Refer to the Career Fact Sheets section of UWA CareerHub careers.uwa.edu.au

Appendix 2: Distance mentoring

Successful mentoring often takes place when the mentor and mentee are able to meet frequently and discuss things face-to-face. However, sometimes this is not possible as the mentee is based in Perth while the mentor is located outside the Perth metropolitan area or even overseas. This presents some potential challenges but distance mentoring can also be highly successful.

In a distance mentoring relationship the same rules apply as in traditional mentoring.

Both mentor and mentee need to:

1. Build rapport. This may take a bit longer when done via the telephone or email but the principle is the same as in face-to-face meetings. You should be prepared to share appropriate personal and background information. Perhaps swap digital photos so you can “see” who you are communicating with.
2. Set goals and ground rules. You will need to complete a mentoring agreement that outlines your goals for the mentoring relationship, sets the terms of contact – ie who is responsible for initiating contact, how often will you phone or email each other. If using email, what is the agreed “turn-around time” for answering an email?
3. Discuss issues or topics in depth. Again this may take a little longer than it would in a face-to-face situation, but using email for such discussions does also have the advantage of providing reflection time before you answer a question.
4. Plan your next contact and what you will discuss. It is very easy to forget about emailing or phoning someone. Make sure you organise your next contact well in advance and diarise it.

Tips on using the phone or email in mentoring:

1. When on the phone, give the conversation your full attention – avoid multi-tasking. Try to avoid interruptions and listen actively.
2. Try using different technologies if both mentor and mentee are comfortable with this. Technologies such as Skype and Google video are relatively easy and inexpensive to set up. VOIP (Voice over IP) offers a cheap alternative to traditional telephone calls.
3. Be spontaneous. Between your scheduled catch ups, give yourselves permission to send a quick email or make a quick phone call to share some news, an interesting article or just to say hello. It all helps to build rapport. (However, mentees ensure you are not sending off a quick email to get help on an issue that you could easily solve yourself).
4. In phone and email conversations there is a lack of body language that provides cues in a face-to-face meeting. It is crucial therefore that you listen actively and attentively in phone conversations. Also check the tone of your emails before you send them and don’t make assumptions about a perceived tone when you receive emails.

Appendix 3: Contact record

(This document is available to download from careermanitorlink.uwa.edu.au under “Resources”)

Appendix 4: Meeting record

Mentee:	Mentor:
Date of Meeting:	Meeting Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Face to face <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone
Issues discussed: For example: professional and personal development/training, professional relationships, workplace issues, wellbeing, etc.	
Action items:	
Mentee signature:	Mentor signature:
Date:	Date:

Based on Advanced Well Technologies Mentor Meeting Report, used with permission.

(This document is available to download from careermanitorlink.uwa.edu.au under “Resources”)

Sources

APEN Mentoring scheme: a guide for mentors and mentees

Mentoring Group website: mentoringgroup.com

Career Mentoring 2007 Program Guidelines – The University of Melbourne

Mentoring: the leadership edge, Australian Institute of Management

Mentoring Works website: mentoring-works.com

How to design and run your own mentoring program by Ann Rolfe

Long distance mentoring guidelines for success by Adele B Lynn:
lynnleadership.com/distance_article.htm

Clutterbuck Associates website: clutterbuckassociates.com



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