Mentoring Students & Providing Effective feedback: Job Aid/Workbook

This is a quick start guide where you will find best practises for effective mentoring along with some reflection exercises to prepare you in advance of meeting your mentee. Feel free to use and adapt these tools to suit your needs. To learn more about the Connect Concordia mentorship program, please see the Planning for the mentorship experience document.

# What is mentorship?

As a mentor, you play a crucial role in the student’s personal and professional development. This is foremost a formative experience for the student, and so they will benefit from your support and feedback. Your mentorship can help them discover and overcome their personal barriers to success and develop transferable skills.

As a mentor, you will benefit from an opportunity to cultivate your leadership style and develop your leadership toolbox. Helping students grow and succeed is also a rewarding experience.

# Activity: What are the qualities of a good mentor?

List 3 qualities that you believe a good coach should have.



Reflection: Think about a positive experience that you had as a coachee. What did the coach do well?

# Preparing to Mentor a Student

1. Get to know yourself

* Determine what you can offer
* Be aware of your limitations

1. Get to know the student

* Assess their needs
* Assess their strengths

1. Set an action plan

* Assess their goals
* Determine an appropriate timeline to meet their goals

1. Offer on-going support

* Follow-up with the student
* Offer advice and encouragement
* Help them adjust their action plan, if necessary

# How to Give Feedback

Giving appropriate feedback is the most important part of your role as a mentor. Students will look to you for advice, encouragement, and ways that they can improve their performance. Below are some best practises to guide you.

**Communication style**

* Ask the student how they like to receive feedback.
* Some prefer direct, unfiltered feedback while others prefer to be eased into the conversation.

**Timing**

* Be timely, provide your comments as soon as possible.

**Details**

* Be specific and explicit in your commentary:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Example:* | Vague feedback: |  | *Specific feedback:* |
|  | It’s important to make a good first impression with clients. |  | *Did you notice that you interrupted your teammate in front of the client?* |

**Awareness**

* Encourage reflection.
* Ask a thoughtful question to motivate the student to generate their own solution(s)
* See [Guiding questions](bookmark://_Guiding_Questions)

**Negative Feedback**

* Criticize in private, unless the student has explicitly said they can handle public feedback.
* Keep a neutral body language.
  + Deliver criticism by using a matter-of-fact tone of voice with a relaxed facial expression.
  + Unemotional delivery shows the student that the criticism is simply part of doing business and that it’s not personal.

**Guiding Questions**

Use these questions in your discussions with students to guide their reflections on their own performance. Feel free to adapt them to specific situations.

1. What did you learn from today’s activity?
2. What steps did you take to be successful today?
3. What are some difference strategies you could have to used to improve your success?
4. How did you keep going which things got tough?
5. What can you learn from your opponent today?

# Suggested Feedback Activity

The 5 + 1 rule

* Provide 3-5 positive/encouraging comments for every criticism.
* Tell students what they’re doing well so they can repeat it, as well as what they can improve.
* You can also ask the student to complete a 5 + 1 self-assessment of their own performance to share with you.

# Practise

Reflect on an experience where you were in a leadership position. Give yourself 5 + 1 feedback.

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| **5 Positive Comments** | | **1 Criticism** | |
| 1. | | 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |