Example

Advice and resources for mentors

This document provides an example of the guidance you could provide to mentors on your mentoring programme.

# Advice and resources for mentors

This document includes advice, guidance and resources for mentees taking part in the mentoring programme.

Separate advice is available for mentees.

## Your role as a mentor

### What we mean by mentoring

Mentoring is a relationship between two people: a ‘mentor’ and a ‘mentee’.

There are many different kinds of mentoring relationship. For this mentoring programme, experienced, more senior LGBT+ civil servants like you act as mentors to less experienced, generally more junior, mentees.

As part of the mentoring relationship, you’re being asked to informally share your knowledge and experience with your mentees to support their professional and career development. Your role will likely be a mixture of giving advice, tutoring and coaching mentees to think about how to develop their skills, solve problems, and move their career forward.

### What good looks like

There are many ways to approach a mentoring relationship, and each mentor brings different skills and experience to the table. There’s no “right way” to be a mentor.

We think that great mentors:

* **are self-aware**, with a good understanding of their own strengths and development needs
* **have good communication skills**, with an ability to ‘actively listen’ to mentees and to approach conversations in an open, respectful way
* **are empathetic** and have a willingness to understand different perspectives and approaches of mentees
* **are encouraging and inspiring** their mentees by challenging mentees to step up, role modelling positive behaviours and providing positive feedback
* **act as brokers** by linking mentees to resources, opportunities and people in their networks that might help them to learn and grow
* **can recognise risks** and can help mentees understand them so they can take appropriate risks at work and in their career
* **are trustworthy**, meaning they keep conversations with their mentees confidential, are reliable, and follow through on their promises
* **maintain boundaries** so that the mentoring relationship remains appropriate for the workplace

These are just examples. Not every mentor will be able to do all of these, all of the time. This may provide a framework for you to think through where your own development needs are.

### Benefits of having a mentor

## Being a mentor can be a rewarding experience. As a mentor in the mentoring programme, we hope you will be able to:

* support your own career development by learning new skills, and developing your leadership and communications capabilities
* gain insight and perspective from in other parts of government
* use your mentoring role as evidence of a strong corporate contribution, as part of your performance management process
* feel good about supporting the development of the other staff in the organisation

## What to do as part of the programme

As part of the mentoring programme you have been asked to:

* meet with up to 3 mentees for a ‘speed mentoring’ session
* choose 1 mentee from those 3 mentees you meet to mentor longer term

The following sections explain how you could structure the time you spend with your mentees during their ‘speed mentoring’ session and in later sessions if you have them.

## You speed mentoring

### Before the session

After we have completed the matching exercise, your mentees will individually contact you to arrange a speed mentoring session. We will send you the names of your mentees as part of the matching process.

A speed mentoring session is a one-off session, and it should last for around 30 minutes. As each mentor will be paired with a maximum of 3 mentees, the initial time commitment from you is likely to be around 1 hour, 30 minutes.

### During the session

Each speed mentoring session will be different and 30 minutes isn’t very long.

We’ve recommended that mentees come to their speed mentoring session prepared to:

* tell you whether they just want some one-off advice now or are looking for a mentor long term
* explain why they signed up to get a mentor and what they hope a mentor can help them with
* talk about their career journey so far and ask you about your skills, experience and career journey
* bring one issue to the meeting that they’d like some quick advice about

We have asked mentees to lead the session as far as possible. As a mentor, it’s your role to steer the session and try to open up the conversation.

Try to ask ‘open’ questions throughout the session to keep the conversation moving and get your mentee to do most of the talking.

#### Conversation prompts

##### Career history and ambitions

Encourage your mentee to set out what they currently do, what they’ve done before, and to explain their long term ambitions. Describe your own career history and journey through the Civil Service too.

You could ask questions like:

* What do you do for your current role?
* Tell me about your career so far. What have you done?
* Why did you join the Civil Service?
* What did you do before joining the Civil Service?
* What motivates you to go to work in the morning?
* Where do you see yourself in 1 year, 3 years, and 10 years?

##### Strengths and weaknesses

Ask your mentee to tell you what they feel they are good at and what they want to develop. Discuss with your mentee how they think a mentor can help them to plug those gaps.

You could ask questions like:

* What is your greatest strength and your greatest weakness?
* What do you struggle with at work?
* How would your colleagues describe you to someone else?
* What upcoming learning or development have you have planned?
* What do you enjoy most and least about your current job?
* Why did you sign up to get a mentor?
* What’s the most important think you want a mentor to help you with?

##### The issue

If they have prepared a specific topic or ‘issue’ they want to discuss with you, try to help them think around the issue. If you’ve been in a similar situation before, explain how you approached it or how you would do things differently if you did it again.

Your goal is not necessarily to give your mentee “the answer” but to help them think more widely about the issue and how they have agency to address it.

You could ask questions like:

* Why do you want to address issue? Why is it important to you?
* What is the impact of this issue at the moment?
* What have you tried so far? Did it work, and if not why not?
* What other options have you considered or tried?

### After the session

Mentees get matched with multiple mentors. We’ve done this so that both mentors and mentees can get a broad sense of their options, and whether they are a good match for each other.

After all of their speed mentoring sessions have taken place, one or more of your mentees might contact you to ask you to be their mentor long-term. If you didn’t cover it in your speed mentoring, ask them questions about what they want to get out of a mentoring relationship with you, so that you can decide if you can help them.

Think carefully about whether you have the time available to properly commit to supporting a mentee, and whether your skills, experience, expertise and networks are a good fit to help them. We would anticipate you meeting with your chosen mentee once every 4 to 8 weeks for up to 12 months.

We hope that each mentor will agree to support at least one mentee long term.

## Your long term mentoring

If you agree to act as a mentor for someone long term, then it is for you and your mentee to agree how you want your mentoring relationship to work.

The amount of time mentors and mentees spend together will depend on what the mentee wants to get out of the relationship. In general, we recommend that you meet your mentee:

* once every 4 to 8 weeks
* for up to an hour
* for up to a year

You should agree how you want to work together either during or before your first full mentoring session.

If you find that the time commitment is getting too much, then be honest with your mentee about the other commitments you have and negotiate a change to your relationship.

We will contact you throughout the next year to see how your relationship with your mentee is progressing.

## Techniques for mentoring

We’ve compiled a list of resources that you might find helpful to for your mentoring sessions. These resources are sourced from third parties and we did not produce these resources.

### Prompting your mentee to prepare

The best mentoring sessions are ones that both mentees and mentors have prepared for. You might want to get your mentee to write down what topics they want to explore in advance of each of your meetings.

#### Conversation prompts

##### Questions to ask

You could ask questions like:

* What issues would you like to discuss in the session?
* What are the key challenges you are currently facing?
* What outcomes would you like to achieve?
* What would make it a successful session?
* Please can you e-mail the key challenges you would like to discuss during our (next) mentoring session?

### “GROW” model

The GROW model is a simple framework that can be applied to goal setting and problem solving. The technique helps mentees to identify their ‘Goal’, establish the ‘Reality’ of their current situation, the ‘Options’ to consider or ‘Obstacles’ to overcome, and then plan a ‘Way forward’.

#### Conversation prompts

##### Goal

Start by helping your mentee to establish an appropriate objective.

You could ask questions like:

* What do you want to talk about?
* What do you want to get out of this conversation?
* What do you want to achieve (short and longer-term)?
* How will you know when you have achieved it?
* What might be the steps along the way?

##### Reality

Ask your mentee to think about what their goal would look like in practical terms.

You could ask questions like:

* What is happening now that makes this an issue/makes you want to change?
* Who is involved or affected? Directly? Indirectly?
* What are the underlying causes ?
* What have you tried so far? What are the obstacles?
* What is holding you back?

##### Options

Ask your mentee to think of a few things they could do to reach their goal. Help them to assess each option and to weigh up the options available.

You could ask questions like:

* What can you do to change the situation?
* What are the options to tackle this?
* What else might you try?
* What one thing would make a real difference
* Who might be able to help?
* Which option seems the best? Why?

##### Way forward

Establish how committed your mentee is to each of the options they have identified, and which one they will pursue.

You could ask questions like:

* What are the next steps?
* What are you going to do?
* When/how are your going to do it?
* How will this meet your goal?
* Who do you need to tell, or consult?
* What could get in the way? How can we stop this?
* What support do you need? How can you get this?

#### Resources

The GROW Model of coaching and mentoring: a simple process for developing your people

Blog post by MindTools

[Visit this website (external site)](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_89.htm)

The GROW Model

Video by MindTools Videos

[Watch this video (external site)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fbooiSh_bA)

### “Five Cs” model

The Five Cs model can be useful to help your mentee to consider all the options that are available to them when considering a complex problem. The framework helps mentees to think about the “Challenges” they face, the “Choices” they have, the “Consequences” of those choice, how they might find “Creative solutions” to the issues and to subsequently draw “Conclusions” about next steps.

#### Resources

The Five Cs Model of Mentoring

Document by Keele University

[Download this document (Microsoft Word format)](https://www.keele.ac.uk/media/keeleuniversity/lpdc/The%20Five%20Cs%20Model%20of%20Mentoring.docx)

### Other resources

These are some other resources that you might find helpful when thinking about your mentoring relationship.

#### Resources

How to conduct a productive mentoring meeting

Video by Chronus

[Watch this video (external site)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6Z5dpvPQvU&list=PLJVSo4yG943WSkuJur5Csp0X3PLLQQPJL)

Sharing constructive feedback with your mentor or mentee

Video by Chronus

[Watch this Video (external site)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHvbvR85xL8&list=PLJVSo4yG943WSkuJur5Csp0X3PLLQQPJL)

75 things to do with your mentees

Document by Linda Phillips-Jones, Ph.D.

[Download this document (PDF)](http://my.lerner.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/75-Things-To-Do-With-Your-Mentees.pdf)

## Code of conduct

We expect all our mentors and mentees to conduct themselves professionally and in line with the Civil Service Code – just like any other workplace activity.

We’ve created a Code of Conduct that explains the behaviours and standards you should be able to expect of your mentees, and what they expect of you as mentors.

# Sources

All sources were accessed during June 2021. Publication dates and links are provided where they were available.

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**Phillips-Jones, L.** (2003), [“Skills for successful mentoring: Competencies of outstanding mentors and mentees”](https://my.lerner.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/Skills_for_Sucessful_Mentoring.pdf)

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