

HOW TO BE A SUPERMENTEE

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Be strategic when choosing a mentor

Don't just pick someone. Find a person who will have time, who recognizes the importance mentoring plays in your development, and who ideally is not your immediate supervisor. Be sure you have informal mentors, too.



Know your short-term (1-3 years) and long-term (5-10 years) goals

This will focus your needs and help the mentor understand where you are headed. Then, work on your goals with your mentor to finalize them into your current plan.



Define your mentoring relationship

In your first meeting, sign an agreement that defines frequency and length of meetings, opportunities for interactions between scheduled meetings, confidentiality, expectations, etc. Consider setting boundaries for meeting location or topics of discussion.



Prepare an agenda for each mentoring session

Sessions will be more focused and you will be respectful of your mentor's time. Deliver it to your mentor in advance of the meeting.



Maintain mentor-mentee trust

Failing to arrive for scheduled meetings, showing up late, discussing confidential mentoring interactions with others, and failing to follow-up on recommendations you receive break the trust you're trying to establish with your mentor. Also, be enthusiastic and honest.



Don't be afraid to shift mentors

There is no need to waste everyone's time. If you feel things are not going well or your relationship has run its course, let them know—but end on a positive note. Thank them for the time and ideas or the doors they have opened. Then, find a new mentor.



Additional Resources

Zerzan, J.T., Hess, R., Schur, E., Phillips, R.S., Rigotti N. (2009). Making the most of mentors: a guide for mentees. *Academic Medicine*, 84, 140-144.
Carey, E.C., Weissman, D.E. (2010). Understanding and finding mentorship: a review for junior faculty. *J Palliative Care*, 13, 1373-1379.
Chopra, V., Arora, V.M., Saint, S. (2018). Will you be my mentor? Four archetypes to help mentees succeed in academic medicine. *JAMA Int Med*, 178, 175-176.



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