

Frequently Asked Questions – finding a mentor

How would a mentor help me to progress my career?

Your mentor could help you with your career goals with practical advice on job applications and interview preparation. They could help you to come across as professional and confident at work. They will support you on any areas you feel you struggle with at work.

Mentors will be able to give you insights into the skills, behaviours and types of experience recruiters will be looking for in strong candidates for your next role. They may also introduce you to information and professional networks which will help you raise your profile and learn about management and policy trends.

How do I know that what I discuss with my mentor will not be shared elsewhere?

The mentoring space is confidential to you and your mentor. Your mentor will not be reporting back to your manager.

What sort of things can I discuss with my mentor?

You can choose what to discuss with your mentor but the following areas may come up.

Work-life balance: Mentors are great sounding boards for getting perspective on balancing personal and professional commitments. Time management, organisation systems, and how to manage other areas like family, friends, and volunteering are all good topics of conversation.

Resources for growth: A mentor can recommend current publications and books that will keep you on top of your game, as well as any professional associations or qualifications you might want to consider.

Innovating new ideas: Mentors will be able to help you come up with new ideas even when they're not an expert in the field.

Preparing for an Interview, conversation, or presentation: Rehearsing an interview, conversation, or presentation with your mentor is another good way to get honest and constructive feedback from an experienced colleague.

Refining emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence is a key component of succeeding in the workplace. A mentor can help you polish these skills, assist you in refining your

approach to contentious situations, or assist you in reflecting on some of the non-verbal and body language signals you give off.

What will my mentor expect from me?

Your mentor will expect you to be open to the potential of mentoring and to contribute to conversations honestly and openly. You will be expected to stay committed to the process, which means attending sessions, taking your own notes, and keeping any agreements you make during the sessions.

What if the mentoring relationship doesn't work out?

Not all mentoring relationships – just like relationships in real life – work out. This is normal and we can provide you with profiles of other coaches if this happens. Knowing when to wind-down and end a mentoring relationship can often be tricky. Often what happens is that one or both parties simply stop meeting and arranging catch-up sessions. This is far from ideal.

Instead, it is best to have an upfront conversation and decide either to end the relationship there and then, or to have a set end time. If you had a successful introductory mentoring meeting, then you should have already discussed the length of time the mentoring should last, so do use this as a guide. At the end, discuss the things you have covered during the relationship and use it as a time to reflect on where you were at the beginning and where you have got to now.

How is the scheme being evaluated?

We will ask you to complete an evaluation during and toward towards the end of the mentoring arrangement. We will use your feedback to identify any improvements to the scheme.

How do I request a mentor?

Think about what you want to gain from mentoring, then complete the mentoring request form and send it to the NCL ICB Communications and Engagement team to register your interest on nclibc.communications@nhs.net

We will send you a link to profiles of mentors currently available and you can get in touch with a mentor directly and send them your request. We advise having a chemistry meeting before starting a mentoring arrangement as it's important you and your mentor feel comfortable working with each other.

To request mentoring profiles, contact nclibc.communications@nhs.net

Finally, please let us know when you have found a mentor.