



# MENTORING

## Toolkit for VCH Leaders

A practical guide to help leaders build a successful mentoring relationship to support development and/or long-term career goals.  
(adapted from PHSA's guide)



# Mentoring

Mentoring is a professional development activity, a trusted relationships, and a meaningful commitment for both the mentor and the mentee. The key to a great mentorship experience is **connection**.

Mentoring focuses on the development of a person and a good mentor should not only have knowledge but also be able to impart that knowledge in an effective and authentic manner.

<i>Mentoring is...</i>	<i>Mentoring is not...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Developmental</b> that grows knowledge, networks, and careers. The process is for more experienced leaders to support and develop other leaders to grow their specific talent.</li> <li>❖ <b>Knowledge sharing</b> to improve sharing and the flow of information and ideas.</li> <li>❖ <b>Being a trusted advisor</b> to increase perspective and knowledge of the interplay of functions, culture, connections, and contexts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Guarantee of career advancement</b>, but about building competencies to improve overall job performance and engagement.</li> <li>❖ <b>Replacement for formal or on-the-job development</b>, but should rather support the planning of those activities.</li> <li>❖ <b>Management replacement</b>, where the mentor takes on the responsibilities of the mentee’s supervisor.</li> <li>❖ <b>Wellness support</b>, as mentees have access to EFAP for professional counselling support.</li> </ul>

## Successful mentoring experiences typically go through four phases



This guide provides the mentee **resources** to help manage the mentorship experience through each phase including:



**TIPS**



**CONSIDERATIONS**



**CHECKLISTS**



**TEMPLATES**



Before you initiate contact with a potential mentor, reflect on what you want and have clarity on your strategy for the mentor relationship.



### CONSIDERATIONS:

- ✓ What are you looking forward to in a mentor relationship?
- ✓ What are your strengths? What motivates you?
- ✓ What are your current challenges? What stresses you? What do you see as areas for improvement?
- ✓ What would a successful mentoring relationship look like?

Choosing the right mentor is critical for your success. Here are some **reflective questions** to consider to support your decision.

- ✓ Is there someone who has the title, position, leadership skills and experience that you aspire to within the next couple of years?
- ✓ Do they model values-based leadership?
- ✓ Do you think they will be available to support you?
- ✓ Will they be open and honest with you, and be a confidante?

Do you already have a connection with them?



When you have clarity on what you are looking for, here are some **TIPS** to ask someone to mentor you.

- Always ask someone to be your mentor in person
- Tell them why you want to be mentored by them specifically
- Share what you are hoping to achieve
- Describe how often you would like to meet
- Explain that you will prepare for each meeting by providing agendas and discussion points
- Request them to consider and give time for them to get back to you if needed



Use a **PLANNING TEMPLATE**, like the one below, to clarify your expectations of the relationship prior to meeting with your mentor. Bring this information with you to your initial meeting with your new mentor.



## Mentee/Mentor Planning

Clarify your expectations of the relationship prior to meeting with your mentor. Bring this information with you to your initial meeting with your new mentor.

<i>Questions to consider</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Where do you hope to be in 3 years? 5 years?	
What do you hope to gain from this relationship?	
What role do you expect your mentor to play?	
What are your strengths?	
What are your areas of growth & development needs?	
What would I like to discuss in our meetings?	
Are there any urgent topics?	
What are you needing for confidentiality, openness, and candor?	
Are there any topics off limits?	
What do you think may be challenging about this mentoring relationship?	
What length, time, frequency would you like scheduled?	
How will you evaluate the success of the relationship?	



Mentoring pairs work on getting to know one another, set goals for the relationship, and agree on commitments and expectations.

At your initial meeting, take some time to get to know each other. Here are some suggested topics for discussion:

- Discuss your backgrounds and histories
- Use what you learn about each other to aid completion of the Mentoring Agreement



Use an **AGREEMENT TEMPLATE**, like the one below, to:

- ✓ Document expectations around the relationship between the Mentor and Mentee
- ✓ Establish ground rules regarding meeting confidentiality, format, and cadence
- ✓ Form commitments with respect to action planning and follow-up conversations



Mentee **TIPS**:

- Be prepared and on time
- Be accountable for the mentorship process
- Do the necessary pre-work
- Follow-up and follow through on action items
- Track development and progress



## The Mentor/Mentee Agreement

### Notes

**Establish the development and/or long-term career goals and mentorship goals** (*State goals in simple, but specific terms; keep to a maximum of 3*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Discuss how much time can be committed to the mentorship on a regular basis** (*What is a realistic amount of time that can be committed to?*)

**Agree on discussion format** (*How will the agendas be set? What will a check-in conversations look like?*)

**Confirm meeting cadence** (*How often will you meet? Bi-weekly? Monthly? How long will a meeting be? Where/How will you meet? Zoom? In person?*)

**Set any ground rules** (*How will you respect confidentiality – both ways? What topics are off-limits? What boundaries do you want set?*)

**Articulate criteria for success** (*What does success look like?*)

**Process for action planning and follow-up** (*What are the expectations of the Mentor? What are the expectations of the Mentee?*)

Preparation

Mentor Agreement

Mentorship Discussions

Closure



**CONSIDERATIONS for Conversation Kick-starters** - Asking thought provoking questions and sharing is critical to the success of the learning process.

All discussions should be centered on specific goals, and the following are example suggestions for kick-starting the dialogue.

If someone was writing the story of your career, what would it be?  
What's your educational and experiential journey?  
What do you see as the next logical step for your career?  
What doubts do you have in being able to achieve that?  
What were some challenges along the way?  
What led you to this path – and did you plan it or did it happen organically?  
What's your long term aspirations?

**Career Journey**

What are your short-term goals/long-term goals?  
What areas do you want to grow?  
What interested you in wanting a mentor?  
What skills or knowledge are you looking to develop?  
What skills do you think are beneficial for me to work on?  
Why is this important to you?  
Where do you think I can improve?

**Defining Goals**

What do you want to achieve?  
What would be the benefits be if you achieve this goal?  
What have you already tried? What can you learn from that?  
What obstacles do you see that might get in your way from achieving that goal?  
What could be your first step?  
What do you think you need to do right now? What resources can help you?  
What do you consider to be your strengths? How do you know this?

**Action Review**

What areas do you think you need to improve?  
Does your current role leverage your strengths?  
What parts of your job hinders your development?  
How do you mitigate areas that need improvement?  
What do you consider to be your strengths? How do you know this?

**Strengths and Improvements**

What could I have done differently that may have improved the outcome?  
Who is someone you are grateful for – what has that given you?  
What was a period in your career where you felt you had the most growth?  
What are you most grateful for?

**Reflection and Gratitude**

What relationships are particularly difficult, and why?  
What do you do to mitigate or resolve conflict?  
What networking groups should I look at?  
How do you build your network?  
What's some networking advice?

**Relationships**

What values are most important to you?  
What do you love to do outside of work?  
What inspires you? How are you staying motivated?  
Do you have any role models you've looked up to – and why?

**Personal Development**

What are your recommendations for on-the-job learning or formal

**Professional Development**



## Action Planning Journal

Mentorship Starting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Task</b>		<b>Notes</b>
<i>Number 1</i>	Goal alignment	
	Mentee's action steps and target dates	
	Mentor's action steps and target dates	
	Support network and/or resources needed/available	
	Potential barriers	
	Success measures	
<i>Number 2</i>	Goal alignment	
	Mentee's action steps and target dates	
	Mentor's action steps and target dates	



	Support network and/or resources needed/available	
	Potential barriers	
	Success measures	
<i>Number 3</i>	Goal alignment	
	Mentee's action steps and target dates	
	Mentor's action steps and target dates	
	Support network and/or resources needed/available	
	Potential barriers	
	Success measures	



### Reflection 3-2-1

It's important to take time after a meeting to reflect on what you learned from your discussion. Consider doing this after each meeting.

<i>Notes</i>	
What are 3 things you learned today?	
What are 2 actions or changes you will make?	
What is 1 thing that you will never forget?	



Throughout the mentorship experience, it is important to check-in on the parameters and how effective the process is.



### **CHECKLIST** to check in mid-way:

- ✓ Are we meeting the appropriate frequency and for the right length of time?
- ✓ Are both you and I following up on action items coming out of each meeting?
- ✓ What might we do differently?
- ✓ Are we on track to meet the development goals?
- ✓ Are there changes that need to be made to the goals?

Be sensitive to when the mentorship relationship should end, whether due to changes or where the goals have been achieved and it's time to 'move on'.



### **TIPS** for mentees:

- Find a personal way to express your feelings about the experience
- Thank the mentor for their knowledge and time provided
- Offer to mentor others using what you have learned from this experience
- Celebrate!