

# Mentoring

## The 'Andy Guide to Being a Mentor

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Connecting is not enough

### Step 1 What Kind of Mentor Do You Want to Be?



1. Who has had the biggest impact on your career as a formal or informal mentor?
2. How would you say they impacted your career? What have you achieved that otherwise may have been much harder or beyond your reach?
3. What was it about the way they engaged with you that meant you listened and learned?
4. How important it is for a mentee to be held responsible for following up on agreed actions? What can you do to provide that accountability for them?
5. What do you want your mentee to say about you in 5-10 years?

### Step 2 What Does Your Mentee Need from You?



1. Go into your mentoring relationship with an open mind – just be committed to the success of your mentee. Bring your **curiosity, full attention** and **no preconceptions**.
2. Encourage your mentee and seek to understand rather than to judge. Don't be frightened to challenge them, but always do so in a supportive way
3. Act as a mirror, helping your mentee to see their blind spots and encouraging them to appraise their own progress objectively.
4. Mentees need to go away with answers and ideas but there is a balance to be struck and you should aim to help them to explore and find it for themselves.
5. Mentees need to know they can trust your **objectivity, discretion** and **honesty**.

### Step 3 Creating the Right Mentoring Environment



1. Ensure you are in a space with no distractions. Phones are off, email is off, social media is off. If necessary, find a private space outside the office.
2. Allow sufficient time for your conversation, particularly if you are exploring a tough challenge. Leave both of your diaries free immediately after your session, so that you're not watching the clock.
3. Agree in advance a clear agenda for your meetings. This should ideally be provided by the mentee so that it focuses on their pressing needs, but feel free to challenge it.
4. Have measurable objectives to help you to measure progress – it might help to build them around your mentee's development objectives or business plan.
5. If you're meeting virtually close all other windows on your computer, turn cameras on if using video conferencing and have the image of your mentee as close to your camera as possible to maximise eye contact.

### Step 4 Building Rapport & Being Heard



1. Get to know the individual, not just their role. Find out about them personally and look for interests and experiences in common.
2. Listen. While you're there to share your experiences, you need to understand the real issues first. So: be curious, ask questions, listen to the responses and dig deep before it's your turn to talk.
3. Be vulnerable. Share where you made mistakes and what you learned from them. Don't worry about looking perfect to your mentee, they need to know that they can overcome the obstacles facing them in the same way that you did.
4. Tell stories – we remember and learn from stories and examples more than from theory and data.
5. Challenge their assumptions, ask difficult questions and get your mentee to dig deep to find the answer for themselves.

### Step 5 Knowing When the Relationship Isn't Working



1. Set up a clear review process to look at whether both parties feel the relationship is working. Agree a review date, so neither party faces the discomfort of suggesting it.
2. You can agree a date for the mentoring relationship to end (many corporate programmes will run for a defined period) but be open to continuing if both parties would like to.
3. Ask for your mentee's feedback on how they think the relationship is working and review expectations regularly. Be clear - not just whether their original objectives are being met but whether your mentee's needs or aspirations may have changed.
4. Leave your ego at the door – focus on what is best for the mentee. Refer them on if someone else is now better placed to support the next step on their journey.
5. Keep in touch with your mentee even after the formal relationship is over. Let them know that you are still invested in their success – and enjoy seeing them progress in their career and celebrate your role in that journey.

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