

Frequently Asked Questions for Mentors

Q: What benefits do I get from being a mentor?

A: Mentors receive many benefits from a mentoring relationship, offering the mentor a distinct opportunity to enhance their people development and leadership skills while being a positive influence in the development of another professional. Mentors may also gain knowledge and skills from their mentees, who may have new information or technology that they can share with their mentors.



**Boston Area
Chapter**

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Q: Why is the suggested duration for the relationship one year?

A: A common guideline for formal mentoring relationships is that the relationship occurs over a finite time period. Based on experience, one year has been suggested to ensure sufficient time to set and achieve goals. If there is a need to extend the relationship beyond one year, (e.g., additional or longer term goals have been identified), you are encouraged to openly discuss extending the relationship with your mentee while being sensitive to their needs.

Q: Should I have goals as a mentor?

A. Absolutely. Mentoring is a two-way developmental experience, and the mentor can and should experience it as an enriching relationship. While the main purpose of the relationship is to assist with the mentee's specified goal(s), there is an opportunity for mentors to identify areas they would like to improve through the mentoring relationship. For example, a mentor can set a goal of improving his or her "Grows Others" competency as they consider advancement into a management role. Or, more specifically, the mentor could seek to improve skills in providing constructive feedback and using straight talk as a primary goal for the relationship.

Q: Can I be a mentor to more than one person at one time?

A: You are welcome to enter into more than one mentoring relationship. However, if you are new to mentoring, we suggest caution by starting with one relationship and seeing how things work out. Build slowly and take care not to enter into too many relationships, as the *quality* of each relationship may diminish as the *quantity* increases.

Q: How do I respond if my mentee(s) wants to discuss personal problems or other sensitive issues?

A: ISPE's online matching tool is intended to support colleagues in finding mentors that will help with their professional development in the context of an office environment. At times, personal challenges may interfere with professional contributions and work. When initially meeting with your mentee, it is important to establish mutually agreeable boundaries for the relationship. In the event the mentee's problems are outside your realm of expertise and/or comfort, genuinely share that with your mentee and if you are uncomfortable proceeding with the relationship, the relationship may be terminated and you may elect to pursue another mentoring relationship.

Q: What happens if my mentoring relationship isn't working out?

A: The Boston Chapter will make every effort to match you with a mentee who will benefit from your experience and expertise, but sometimes these relationship may not work out as you envision them. During the relationship, it is important that both mentor and mentee communicate openly and honestly to give each other feedback. If things are not going well, the partners should discuss the issues and try to find a resolution. However, if this is not possible, the relationship can be terminated and new relationships can be sought.