



ALL Program Resource Guide

First Meeting Guide for Learners

Getting started in a new mentor mentee relationship can be awkward and uncomfortable. The following guide includes tips, suggestions, and questions to use to get your first meeting started on the right foot.

What we've articulated here are some ways to nurture the ecosystem of trust and empowerment necessary for that to be effective. As you start your relationship with your mentor, we recommend being explicit about the ideas we've discussed. Use it to set shared expectations about your collaboration and to promote and monitor the health of your relationship.

Topics to Cover in Your First Meeting

Be sure to plan ahead for your first meeting with your mentor. Below are a list of topics you may want to cover in your first meeting. For more resources on the very beginning of your relationship please visit the "Getting Started" document that can be found on the website.

- General information about yourself
- Ask for general information about your mentor
- Quick overview of what you are looking for in your mentor relationship
- Information about where you are in your life and career now
- Your goals for personal and career development
- Mentor/mentee relationship expectations
- Ground rules (more on this below)

Speed Mentoring Questions

If you do not have time or energy to think of an extensive list of questions or don't know what to ask, here is a very quick list of questions to ask your mentor to get started.

- What is one thing you wish you knew prior to graduating from Northwestern?
- If I'm looking to get into your industry, what things can I do know to help me get there?
- What experiences, whether at Northwestern or after, were most helpful in pursuing your role? What experiences most influenced your personal development?
- Did you target your current career path/role or was it something you fell into?
- What's your leadership style? How did you develop it? What are the pros and cons of it?
- What do you do on a day-to-day basis?

More questions on page 2



Speed Mentoring Questions Continued

- What challenges do you face today?
- What kind of mentorship have you had during your life and career? What's the best piece of advice you have received?
- What do you do to feel fulfilled outside of work?
- What's your recommendation if I want to pursue that career path?
- What has been your biggest obstacle in becoming a leader?
- What has been your biggest success as a leader?

Other Questions to Ask Your Mentor

It is important to be prepared for a conversation with your mentor. We understand it can be difficult to know what to ask. Below you will find a link to an extensive list (organized by topic) of potential career-related questions to ask your mentor. Remember, you are also free to ask your mentor questions about your personal development.

- [Link to full list of questions.](#)

Setting Ground Rules

Mentor/mentee relationships are so important but can also be a new dynamic to navigate for both parties. To help both parties feel comfortable and optimize the relationship you should be sure to set clear ground rules at the first meeting.

- **Be explicit about confidentiality** - be clear about what the two of you will and won't share outside the relationship.
- If you know people in your mentor's life, professional or personal, **disclose that up front.**
- **Set expectations** about how and how often you both want to communicate to avoid people feeling abandoned or intruded upon.

Concepts in this document are adapted from materials created by Adam Neaman and Colin Schiller at [Everwise](#)