

ALL Program Resource Guide

Getting Started for Learners

Thank you for your interest in the Northwestern Network Affinity Leaders and Learners (ALL) Mentorship Program.

This guide is meant to serve as a starting point before your first meeting.

We hope to provide you with additional tools and resources to help you continue to deepen and navigate the connection with your leader. Please contact your liaison or email us at affinitymentorship@northwestern.edu should you have any questions or would like to share your experiences with us.

“Good Mentoring Doesn’t Just Happen”

- [Mentoring’s Broken: Here’s How to Hack It | Roxanne Reeve](#): You’re the driver of this relationship. You’re not just an empty vessel for knowledge to be poured into. You have to put work into this too. This video will hopefully give you some ideas on how to approach this relationship.

Making Contact

Although you will be matched with your leader via an algorithm and can find some reassurance that you’re interested in similar topics with similar expectations, reaching out for the first time can still be intimidating or awkward. [This document](#) from the Northwestern Network Mentorship Program can give you some ideas in crafting your initial message to your leader.

Also remember to check out the First Meeting Resource Guides for Learners and Pairs that can be found on our website before meeting!

Preparing for Your Work with Your Leader

Before your first meeting, take some time to figure out what you want to get out of this relationship. Here are some questions that may help in that process:

- What do you hope to gain from a mentoring relationship?
- What types of topics would you like to discuss in your meetings? (e.g. your development path, navigating workplace culture, how to manage professional relationships, work-life balance, how to navigate NU, etc.)
- What role do you expect your mentor to play?
- Are there any ground rules you would like to set? (e.g. confidentiality, expectations, etc.)
- Where would you like to see yourself in five years personally and professionally?
- What are your greatest strengths? What are your greatest weaknesses?

Mentors vs. Sponsors

Whether this is your first or fifteenth mentoring relationship, it’s important to remember that mentors aren’t sponsors. In short, mentors advise you while sponsors advocate for you. This relationship won’t necessarily mean you’re going to walk away with a job from your leader. But hopefully it results in a relationship that gives you confidence and ideas or suggestions on how to move forward. To learn more about the difference between mentors and sponsors, check out [this article from Forbes](#) or [this diagram from our friends at Stanford University](#).

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