

# WISE MENTORING

## MENTOR READINESS CHECKLIST



### 1. HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR?

- You have so many great things to offer! Review the information to learn how you can identify what that is to help become an effective mentor: ([EAP Mentor Resource](#))

### 2. REVIEW THE APPLICATION/AGREEMENT

- Ensure you have a clear understanding of mentor responsibilities by reviewing the agreement. Reference back to it as questions come up throughout your engagement. You will revisit this when you onboard your mentee: ([Agreement/Application](#))
- ❖ Please do not complete new application. Use the link to review the agreement for understanding.

### 3. REVIEW AND SIGN DISCLOSURE

- It is important that Kansas WISE mentoring engagements are safe and productive for both the mentor and mentee. To ensure everyone understands their responsibilities to the program and one another review the disclosure here: ([Disclosure of Information](#))

### 4. MENTEE ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

- This sets you up for success by walking you through onboarding your mentee. Here you will find a checklist to help you engage and properly onboard your new mentee: ([Mentee Onboarding](#))

### 5. GUIDED QUESTIONS AND CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Maybe you are new to mentoring and need help getting started or maybe you are a seasoned mentor that just needs ideas to get a great conversation going with your mentee. Here is a tool to help you with that: ([Guided Questions](#))

### 6. COACHING GUIDE

- Need help keeping a conversation going and self-directing your mentee to problem solve and decision make on their own? Pull questions from this guide to help empower your mentee: ([Coaching Guide](#))

### 7. MENTEE GUIDE

- Set your mentee up for success by sharing this helpful guide: Preparing for Your Mentoring Session: ([Mentee Guide](#))

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# BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

A mentor is when experienced or knowledgeable individual guides and advises another person, often referred to as the “mentee”. In order to effectively guide a mentee, a mentor needs to build a trustworthy relationship with him or her and be a positive role model. The mentor needs to be reliable, responsible, and enthusiastic about assisting the person. He or she must also have the ability to accurately assess the mentee’s needs and respond to them accordingly.

Becoming an effective mentor takes dedication and passion. Consider the following information to learn how you can become an effective mentor.

## WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE BECOMING A MENTOR

You may find that in your life, there are people who naturally admire you, aspire to be like you or look to you for guidance. He or she may be a family member, friend, or coworker. Or there may be a professional mentoring program within your company, organization or community in which people can formally sign-up to act as mentors for others.

Regardless of the nature of the mentorship, consider the following information before stepping into one:

- **Mentoring is a two-way street.** Although as a mentor your goal is to provide guidance to the mentee, he or she also has to be willing to listen and consider your advice. Think about whether the person you wish to mentor will be receptive, willing to ask questions and share his or her experiences with you.
- **Mentoring takes time:** Making a real difference in someone’s life requires a lot of time. If you are planning to be a mentor for someone, you must understand that it may take a long time. Avoid filling this role if you do not have enough time in your schedule to help the mentee or if you will not be able to continue doing so for very long.
- **Mentoring requires optimism:** Optimism is crucial for effective mentorship. If you are planning to be a mentor to someone, it is important to have a positive outlook in order to keep him or her on the right track. If the mentee feels that you are pessimistic and unenthusiastic about the future, he or she will feel less inspired and motivated.
- **Mentoring requires mutual trust:** As a mentor, you must be able to trust the mentee and he or she must be able to trust you. Mutual trust is required in order for any mentorship to be helpful and effective.
- **Mentoring requires chemistry:** If you and the potential mentee are unable to get along or have differences that you absolutely cannot put aside, it may be best to avoid stepping into a mentorship with him or her.

## WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR?

Mentoring is not just giving someone else advice. It is a leadership skill that involves motivating and guiding another person. A mentor helps someone else to learn more, grow and become more confident.

In order to achieve this, a mentor should strive to do the following:

- **Teach through storytelling:** Share personal anecdotes with your mentee. Telling your mentee about your own journey to achieve your goals will let him or her know that he or she is not alone.
- **Share your own mistakes:** As a mentor, it is important to be relatable to your mentee. Share the mistakes you have made in the past. Explain how you recovered from them and how they helped you grow as a person. This will show the mentee that mistakes and obstacles are a normal and integral part of the journey to success.
- **Be a good listener:** Although you are guiding and providing advice to the mentee, getting his or her feedback is crucial to the process. Find out what your mentee's goals and concerns are. Only then can you effectively tailor your advice to his or her needs. If your mentee is having trouble sharing his or her thoughts and feelings, ask questions to get him or her thinking.
- **Be accessible:** Of course, you are likely very busy and have a set routine and schedule. However, an effective mentor should be available to answer any questions and listen to any concerns the mentee may have. Let them know what times you are available to talk or respond to questions. Be sure to follow through and give him or her your full attention during these times.
- **Provide helpful feedback:** As a mentor, you must provide effective feedback and constructive criticism to your mentee. Do not be harsh. Tell him or her nicely and politely in which areas you feel they are struggling. Then, have an open and fluid conversation in which you both brainstorm and share ideas for improvement.
- **Celebrate achievements:** You will be proud anytime your mentee succeeds and should let them know this. Sometimes, he or she may fail to appreciate their smaller successes and you should make it a point to celebrate each and every one of them. Remind them that any progress at all, no matter how large or small, brings them a step closer to their ultimate goal and thus deserves to be celebrated.
- **Avoid offering unsolicited advice:** Sometimes, we all need to struggle through something on our own in order to learn and build our confidence. If you step in as soon as you see your mentee struggling, this will prevent him or her from being able to solve problems on their own. As a result, he or she may feel frustrated or become increasingly reliant on you. One of your goals as a mentor is to help the mentee overcome obstacles and think of solutions by themselves. In some cases, staying quiet until asked for assistance is the best way to do this.
- **Consider your actions:** Remember to be a good role model in all aspects of your life. You never know which of your actions your mentee may choose to emulate, so remember to always consider your actions and words very carefully.
- **Maintain confidentiality:** Let your mentee know that you will not be sharing the details of his or her life and progress with anyone else. This will allow the mentee to maintain an open and honest relationship with you at all times.

## RESOURCES

- National Society of Leadership and Success: [www.societyleadership.org](http://www.societyleadership.org)

## HERE WHEN YOU NEED US.

Call: 888-275-1205

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[guidanceresources.co](https://guidanceresources.com)

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# WISE MENTORING

## MENTEE ONBOARDING CHECKLIST



### 1. SCHEDULE A MEET 'N GREET

Taking the time for introduction is essential in building an effective mentor/mentee relationship.

- Connect with your mentee(s) and schedule a meet 'n greet.
- Provide them with the mentee guide: ([Mentee Guide](#))
- Get to know your mentee(s) by sharing, at a minimum, name, agency, position, and high-level goals and expectations for the mentorship program.
- Set expectations for what to expect for the first mentoring session.
- Schedule date/time/duration (30 – 60 min) for the first mentoring session.

### 2. FIRST SESSION – SETTING EXPECTATIONS

It is important to set clear, concise, and specific expectations of the mentoring relationship. The following areas should be determined during your first meeting.

- Review Application and Acknowledgement: ([Agreement/Application](#))
- Review and sign Mentee's Disclosure document: ([Disclosure of Information](#))
- Commitment – How often will you meet? For how long?
- Roles/responsibilities
- Communication methods

### 3. FIRST SESSION – BUILDING RAPPORT

It is extremely important to spend time at the beginning of your relationship to build the rapport and trust. Be prepared to dedicate most of the time in your first session getting to know each other.

- Share each other's professional and personal background.
- Share each other's expectations for career and life in general.
- Share experiences.
- Share motivations and interests.

# WISE MENTORING

## MENTOR GUIDED QUESTIONS AND CONVERSATION STARTERS



Asking your mentee(s) thought-provoking questions is vital to the learning process for both of you. It can help you gain insight into their background, goals, and ways of thinking. But questions can also be used to help your mentee(s) see truths about themselves, such as their strengths and weaknesses. You can also encourage them to find their own answers to a challenge if you know the right questions to ask. Use this tool to help jumpstart conversations with your mentee(s).

- Share your stories.
- Have you ever had a mentor before? What was the experience like?
- Why did they decide to join the program? What are their expectations and goals for participating in the program?
- What would success look like?
- What do you want to achieve for yourself, your team, your program? How will achieving your goals make a difference in your life?
- What is the most pressing for the mentee at this moment?
- What are you passionate about?
- What do you think are your strengths?
- How do we leverage our strengths?
- Are there any moments to celebrate or acknowledge since the last meeting?
- What are the current challenges experienced?
- What supports may need to be in place for you to reach your goals?
- Are there any actions you should be taking to bring you closer to your goals?

## Coaching Skills:

### *Sample Topics that Lend Themselves to a Coaching Conversation in a Management Context*

Teresa Schwab, LMSW, PCC

2021

Employee may need help...

- Getting off to a great start in a new job
- Designing a difficult conversation
- Freeing up time to take on a new project
- Dealing with overwhelm and busyness
- Being a more effective supervisor
- Improving relationships with a co-worker
- Improving relationships with a supervisor
- Completing a project in less time than forecasted
- Improving team meetings
- Organizing and getting started on a new project
- Becoming a better listener
- Clarifying expectations between team members and/or with management
- Being a team player
- Staying focused and relaxed while managing a large project
- Time management
- Balancing work and family

- Getting unstuck
- Releasing more creative, innovative thinking
- Adjusting to a new role
- Making the transition to supervising others
- Working through conflict
- Managing oneself through conflict
- Becoming proactive and getting out of a crisis mode
- Improving the effectiveness of a leadership team
- Exploring career options
- Increasing ability to speak more effectively in group settings
- Repairing broken working relationships
- Understanding and working through cultural differences
- Cleaning up clutter to get organized
- Getting a handle on priorities and to use time more effectively
- Creating a powerful team

## Coaching Skills:

### *Powerful Questions*

Teresa Schwab, LMSW, PCC

2021

#### Appreciative Inquiry

- What changes have you made recently that have positively impacted your life/work?
- What is working really well for you right now?
- What are the best things happening in your life/work right now?
- If things were working at their best, what would be happening?
- If this employee (other person) were working at his/her best, what would be happening?

#### Solution Focused

- If all the challenges you have related to this issue were suddenly resolved, what would be happening?

- If you had a magic wand, what would you ask for to make this situation ideal?
- When does the outcome you're looking for happen for you already? Even a little bit?
- When things are working well, what is different about those time?
- When in the past have you dealt with a similar situation where you were successful? What strengths did you draw on then that could help you now?
- If someone came to you with this same issue, what advice would you give to them?
- How will people around you know that you've reached your goal?
- If you knew you couldn't fail, what would you do?

### **Perspective Taking**

- What is the story that others are telling about you?
- If you were a fly on the wall watching this happen, how would it describe the situation?
- What are you doing that is contributing to this situation?
- What impact do you want to have?
- What do you want your legacy to be?
- What does this situation need from you right now?
- What noble story does the other person/people involved in this situation tell themselves when they go home at night?
- What will you think about this situation 5 years from now?
- What would leadership look like in this situation?

### **Assumptions**

- What is happening or being said? What are the facts of the situation, and what are you making up?
- What assumptions are you making?
- What other possible ways are there to view this situation?
- When you hear your client express something they want or don't want to be, i.e. "I don't want to be pushy." Ask them: Would you translate that for me? When someone is pushy, I believe that means...?

### **Change the Story: Three Lenses**

- Reverse: What would the other person in this conflict say and in what ways might that be true?
- Long: How will you most likely view this situation in 6 months? 1 year? 5 years?
- Wide: Regardless of the outcome of this situation, how can you grow and learn from it?

### **Purpose/Values/Competing Values**

- How does this fit with your larger purpose?
- What values does this situation touch for you?
- What values are competing in this situation?

### **Stopped/Blocked Client**

- What would you like to be different?
- What would you like instead?
- What concerns you the most about this situation?



- What is your biggest worry (or fear)?
- What are you tolerating?
- When do you give your power away? To whom? When?
- What are you resisting?
- What are you unwilling to do?
- What would it be like for you to step outside of your comfort zone?
- What are you unwilling to risk?
- What decision have you been avoiding?
- It sounds like you've already done a lot of work on this challenge and yet it persists, what would you like instead?
- How are you holding yourself back right now?
- What question do you not want me to ask you right now?
- What would happen if you did nothing?
- What resources are available to you?
- How ready are you to move forward (scale 1-10)? What would it take to move you to a higher number on the scale?

#### **RESOURCES:**

- *Change Your Questions, Change Your Life: 10 Powerful Tools for Life and Work* by Marilee Adams, PhD
- *Coaching Questions: A Coach's Guide to Powerful Asking Skills* by Tony Stoltzfus
- *Co-Active Coaching: New Skills for Coaching People Toward Success in Work and Life* by Laura Whitworth, Karen Kimsey-House, Henry Kimsey-House & Phillip Sandahl
- *Coach the Person Not the Problem: A Guide to Using Reflective Inquiry* by Marcia Reynolds
- *The Discomfort Zone: How Leaders Turn Difficult Conversations into Breakthroughs* by Marcia Reynolds
- *Making Questions Work: A Guide to What and How to Ask for Facilitators, Consultants, Managers, Coaches and Educators* by Dorothy Strachan

# WISE MENTORING

## PREPARING FOR YOUR MENTORING SESSION



Once you are paired with a mentor or mentor group, take some time to prepare before your meetings, whether they are your first or subsequent encounters. Establishing goals ahead of your meetings, consistently driving engagement and holding yourself accountable will help you get the most out of your mentoring relationship. To make the best use of your mentor's (and your) time, you should be well prepared. The tips below can help with your preparation.

### 1. ESTABLISH GOALS

First ask yourself why you are looking for a mentor in the first place. Is it because you are looking for career guidance in your current role? Or perhaps you would like to be promoted to manager soon and need help developing your leadership qualities? Or maybe you would like to develop a certain skill?

Whatever it is that you want out of your mentoring relationship, establishing short- and long-term goals will help you determine what you aim to accomplish from your time together. Answering these questions for yourself will help you devise proper questions to ask your mentor in the future.

### 2. DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

It is expected of you to be the driver in this relationship, which includes scheduling your meetings and organizing an agenda for each meeting. You also need to think about how often you want to meet, and for how long you want to commit to each of your mentoring sessions. Communicate this with your mentor during your first session so that you establish reasonable, transparent expectations for your relationship.

### 3. HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

After each meeting, it is a good idea to send bullet points on next steps. Being clear about what you heard and what is expected will help you both be accountable to your promises to each other. Be sure you are setting aside time in between each meeting to complete the tasks you have promised so that you can be prepared for the next time you meet. If things arise that will delay your tasks or commitments, simply communicate that with your mentoring partner.

### 4. QUESTIONS TO ASK

Need help keeping a conversation going? Here are few questions you can ask your mentor during your time together.

- What were some challenges you faced in your current or previous position?
- What professional experiences did you have that led you to your current position?
- What skills have been most beneficial for you?

- Are there certain things I should be doing so that I can learn skills that will help me prepare for my own career?
- What do you enjoy doing during non-work hours? How did you get interested in those activities?
- What is your strongest character trait? What is the character trait you would like to improve on?
- What can I do for you in this mentoring relationship?
- Which leadership skills were the most difficult for you to develop?
- Where or what do you turn to for continuous learning or skill development?
- What habits have you found help you to be more productive?
- How do I become more strategic in my work?
- Where do you think I can improve that would be most beneficial to the goals that I have shared with you?
- What could I have done differently in this specific situation that may have improved the outcome?
- What do you see as my weaknesses? How might I turn them into strengths?
- What advice would you give me to help me improve my communication?