Setting Goals

Be sure to discuss your expectations with your mentor or mentee early in the relationship. Your goals should fall within the shared interest categories (tenure, grants, publishing, promotions, and leadership). When a mentee shares his or her goals, the mentor should identify specific objectives and activities to be undertaken during the mentoring relationship.

In discussing goals, be sure they are realistic to accomplish within the three-month relationship period and do not overburden the mentor or mentee. Remember, the mentor is recommended to offer five hours total during the three-month relationship period. When discussing communication preferences, be sure to identify how you would like to communicate with your mentor or mentee. GSA Mentor Match recommends e-mail with a reply from either party within three business days of receiving the e-mail. Other forms of communication may include: phone, skype, online chat, or in-person meetings.

It is recommended that once this important conversation has taken place that the mentee type up these goals and expectations and share with the mentor so that both parties have an informal agreement for reference.

Mentor Tips

What is a mentor? A mentor can assume the role of advocate, coach, teacher, guide, role model, valued friend, door-opener, benevolent authority, available resource, cheerful critic, and career enthusiast. It has also been noted that “super mentors” combine many of these definitions, both generating leadership development for succeeding generations and innately leading change.

In the early stages of the mentoring relationship be sure to share how you can best help your mentee by communicating your background and expertise. Your knowledge of the field will be of great benefit to the mentee. How did you get into the profession? What do your job responsibilities entail? What are your interests?

Do not feel you need to respond to your mentee every time and immediately. GSA Mentor Match guidelines indicate three points of contact during the three month relationship period. Contact that is more frequent is encouraged but not required and must be of mutual interest.

Here are some sample conversation starters;

• What is important to you in your career?
• What skills do you have with which you are confident?
• Which skills do you desire to develop?
• How can I help you develop these skills?
• What attracted you to the GSA Mentor Match Program?
• What is one thing can I do to ensure a positive experience for you in this relationship?
**Scope of Mentoring Relationship**

Defining a clear scope for a mentoring relationship is critical to its success. The purpose of the GSA Mentor Match program is to connect members with shared interests and to provide a communication platform/structure to aid members in developing a meaningful mentoring relationship. The scope and goals of your mentoring relationship should be done within the recommendations outlined below. Both mentors and mentees must respect the minimal recommendations for communication and inform GSA Headquarters if issues or questions arise.

- Mentoring relationships are three months in length.
- A mentor may take on a maximum of two mentees per relationship period. The relationship period begins once the match has been made and accepted by both parties.
- The mentor must communicate with the mentee a minimum of three times during the three month relationship. Recommended: once per month. The first communication will be from the mentor to the mentee within seven days of the match. Communication vehicle should be mutually decided upon in the first communication and may include e-mail, phone, or online chat, etc.
- Mentee replies to the messages from the mentor should take place within three business days of receiving the message.
- The mentor and mentee must complete the exit survey within one month of the relationship period ending.

**Terms**

GSA reserves the right, at our sole discretion, to change, modify, add, or delete guidelines of Mentor Match at any time. Any changes will be announced via the Mentor Match homepage. Participants in the Mentor Match program will agree to the following relationship terms.

- Treat all those in the Mentor Match community with respect.
- Put an honest effort and commit sufficient time towards each mentoring relationship established.
- While the recommended minimum number of hours volunteered during this relationship should be five hours during the three month relationship period, GSA recognizes that mentoring time commitments may go beyond the minimum scope.
- Do not promote any goods or services in which you have a personal interest.
- Represent yourself honestly.
- Maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct.
- Support the goals established within the relationship.
- Maintain confidentiality within the mentoring relationships.
- Refer any questions of issues for which you feel unqualified to GSA Headquarters.