Overview & Expectations

What is mentoring?
Mentoring is a collaborative, at-will relationship in which an experienced person provides advice, support and encouragement to a less experienced person or a colleague looking to further develop new skills. The role of a mentor is that of an advisor, who leads through discussion, guidance, and example; the mentee is the person who is being mentored. Mentoring is helpful in any situation where you would benefit from neutral support and guidance to build a specific skill or assist in meeting a development goal. It can be helpful at any stage in your career.

How can mentoring benefit me?
In addition to supporting the development and growth of another person ("paying it forward"), research has shown that employees who act as mentors (compared to those who do not) report greater job satisfaction, greater career success, and increased work-related fulfilment. Additionally, you may benefit from:

- Greater understanding of Cornell
- Improved coaching and communication skills
- Satisfaction from helping to develop others
- Personal growth, development, and enhanced credibility
- Exposure to new ideas
- Building of new relationships and increasing professional network
Am I qualified to be a mentor?

There is not a 'qualification' for mentoring, but there are a few attributes (personal and professional) that make a good mentor. Attributes that contribute to being a good mentor include:

- Being able to spot opportunities for development
- Fostering a supportive relationship; sharing and providing feedback
- Having a strong network and good organizational knowledge
- Being patient, open, encouraging, supportive and non-judgmental
- Being good at questioning and listening
- Able to share knowledge and experiences appropriately
- Skilled in offering ideas as well as encouraging decision making and action

What is the time commitment?

This mentoring program is focused on skill development. The initial commitment is approximately four hours, two meetings a month (typically an hour long) for two months or four meetings. You can choose to lengthen the commitment as you wish, it is up to you.

Every mentoring relationship is different. Work with your mentor to determine how often you will be meeting and for how long, based on availability and the focus of the conversations.

Getting Started

How do I become a mentor?

While we are in the pilot phase of this program, we ask that you ‘sign-up’ via the Workday Homepage. Click on the link, ‘Yes, I’m Interested in Being a Mentor. We will then invite you to a brief orientation session.

What are mentoring types?

Mentoring types refer to the skills/expertise that you as a Mentor can offer. As a mentor, you select the mentoring type that best aligns with what you feel you can offer.

How do I get matched to a mentee?

A mentee will use Workday to search for a mentor. They can filter on different attributes such as skills, mentor types, etc. to narrow down the best match for them. Workday will also be able to provide the most suitable match using machine learning to match skills on a mentee profile, with the skills on your profile.

What should I do when I receive a mentorship request?
Review the requests from your Workday inbox. You will have the option to “accept” or “decline” a mentorship request. Review the mentee’s profile (skills, development needs, etc.) and decide if you would be a good fit to mentor based on your skills/expertise and the needs of the mentee. If you choose to decline, please provide a reason for doing so. If you accept, the mentee will be responsible for getting in touch and scheduling the first meeting.

When would it be appropriate to decline a mentor request?

You may decide to decline a mentorship request for a few reasons. For example, you already have a mentee, you do not feel your skills / experiences are a good match for the mentee’s needs, etc. If you choose to decline, please provide a reason (in Workday) for doing so.

Where should we meet?

We recommend virtual meetings due to our current working environment. However, after your first meeting you can determine what works best for you both.

Other Notes

The relationship with my Mentee is not working – what should I do?

Use the first few meetings with your mentee to build rapport and establish trust. The best mentors can be those who challenge thinking and bring experiences, ideas and perspectives that are unique; that may feel a little uncomfortable for both, at first!

If you are still feeling that you do not have the experiences or skills to effectively mentor the individual and/or the mentee is not demonstrating the effort necessary to continue the relationship, share feedback with your mentee about what is and is not working – that may be enough to reset the relationship.

If it is not, be candid about your desire to conclude the relationship, thank them for the time and effort so far, and share any insights/recommendations that you have for them to continue their development.

What if I need to take a break from being a mentor?

At any time, you can update your mentor availability and preferences in Workday. If you have an active mentorship relationship, be sure to inform your mentee(s) of your status and work together on a plan to cancel and/or phase out your meetings.