Working at Cornell gives you the opportunity to network with a world-class community of thriving and passionate colleagues - many of whom are ready and happy to help you! But how do you know where or who to ask for guidance?

Organizational Development & Talent Management (ODTM), in partnership with Cornell Information Technology (CIT), has established the Colleague Connections Program to help you take advantage of our vast colleague network! Staff can participate in the mentoring program in a variety of ways. See below for details about how mentoring works. Or if you’re ready to get involved, click the button below to get started!

Watch this quick “how to register” video

About the Program

- **Networking**
  - Connect with colleagues to gain information about their career path, current job or career field.

- **Job Shadowing**
  - Travel to a colleague’s place of work and shadow them to get a feel for their organization, role and field.

Program Snapshot

- Colleague Connections is open year-round for staff in all pay bands in any department/unit.
- You are able to self-select colleague connections based on career interest, affiliation or job family.
- You are responsible for connecting with your colleague connection to set up the specific details of your networking or mentoring experience.
- When you request a specific connection, you are committing to connecting with that colleague.

Mentoring Matters at Cornell

Mentoring is an extremely beneficial career development tool that you can leverage by participating in the Colleague Connections Staff Mentoring Program. Studies have shown that having a mentor is a top factor affecting an employee’s success, career satisfaction, and whether they stay with an organization. With your participation as either a mentor or a
mentee, Cornell University can be stronger professionally.

What is Colleague Connections?

A Staff Mentoring Program that supports career development and fosters collaborative relationships between staff at all levels. It creates the opportunity for staff to learn from each other by sharing knowledge, expertise and skills while building diverse networks across campus.

Program Roles

- **Mentors** are typically seasoned colleagues who can provide insight and direction to staff members looking to advance their careers, engagement, and understanding of larger university processes. Mentors will share their professional and organizational knowledge, experience and contacts while serving as a resource and guide for career-focused conversations.
  - Coach/advisor
  - Source of encouragement/support
  - Resource person
  - Champion
- **Mentees** provide the general framework for the relationship, and together, the pair develops the relationship. Mentees share their professional skills, career, and network goals along with their individual development plans to direct the conversations and learning.
  - Driver of the relationship
  - Development planner
  - Resource partner
  - Continuous learner

The frequency of meeting and the scope of development are unique to and developed by each pair.

Questions?

Contact Deb Billups (dav5@cornell.edu) in Organizational Development and Talent Management for more details.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a personal enhancement strategy that encourages the sharing of known resources, expertise, values, skills, perspectives and experiences.

It involves a mentor (experienced individual) and a mentee (learner) and is based upon encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to share and learn from expertise and experiences.

The mentee is able to build skills and knowledge, and develop goals for their professional development.

The mentor also benefits from being able to share expertise and continuously reassess how to improve and build upon their skills and knowledge.

What does research show?

Research shows mentoring can have a positive influence on mentees, mentors and organizations in areas of professional development, productivity, promotion and retention.

Professional development

- A 2012 Career Development Survey reported “Leadership development” (49.5%) and “skill development” (47.1%) are the top two most frequently reported objectives of mentoring programs. *(Source: Insala)*
- In a further 2017 survey, 69% identified mentoring and coaching as the most effective career development offerings.* *(Source: Insala)*
- More than 60% of students listed mentoring as a criterion for selecting an employer after graduation *(Source: MMHA)*

Productivity

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71% of Fortune 500 companies use mentoring to ensure learning occurs in their organizations (Source: ASTD)

95% of mentoring participants said the experience motivated them to do their very best (Source: The War for Talent by Ed Michaels, Helen Handfield-Jones & Beth Axelrod)

Promotion

- 75% of senior officers attribute mentoring to playing a key role in their careers (Source: ASTD)
- CEOs attribute mentoring as one of the top three factors affecting career growth (Source: AccountTemps survey of Fortune 500 companies)

Retention

- 77% of companies say mentoring programs increase staff retention (Source: The Center for Creative Leadership)
- 62% of employees who receive mentoring said they are very likely to stay with their current employer (Source: Yellowbrick)

Benefits

Mentoring benefits everyone involved - mentees, mentors and the organizations for which they work.

- Mentees are able to learn from someone who has travelled the path before them.
- Mentors have an opportunity to invest themselves in someone who seeks what they can offer.
- Mentoring also helps the Cornell community by encouraging an environment where people motivate each other and work together to improve skills and knowledge.

Benefits to Mentors

- Satisfaction in enhancing skills in helping someone else to grow
- Gain fresh perspectives through interaction
- Further develops leadership skills including providing feedback, communication and interpersonal skills
- Investing in the future of staff development
- Expand professional development network
- Staying in touch with emerging issues
- Opportunity to reflect on own practices
- Cement role as subject matter experts and leaders

Benefits to Mentees

- Provides a personalized development opportunity to address individual learning needs
- Provides an opportunity to develop new skills and expertise
- Provides access to independent and objective perspectives
- Enhances confidence in dealing with challenges and issues
- Enhances networking opportunities
- Drives the mentee to set goals and to strive towards them
- Refines organizational awareness and insight
- Increases individual visibility and recognition in the organization
- Helps to clarify and enhance career direction and advancement
- Provides support during times of change and transition

How To Get Started

Who can be involved?

Colleague Connections is tailored to non-academic staff, at any pay band, working in any department/unit at any Cornell University campus.
Eligibility for Mentors

- Have support from your supervisor/manager
- Demonstrate effective communication skills
- Be prepared to enter into a partnership agreement and to honor the work plan established with the mentee
- Commitment to upholding the confidentiality of the mentee
- Be available and prepared to actively participate in a mentorship

Eligibility for Mentees

- Have support from your supervisor/manager
- Be prepared to enter into a partnership agreement and to honor the work plan established with the mentor
- Commitment to upholding the confidentiality of the mentor
- Be available and prepared to actively participate in a mentorship

How to participate:

- Join as a Mentor or Mentee at: https://cuelinks.cornell.edu/
- Watch this quick "how to register" video