

NEW YORK WOMEN IN COMMUNICATIONS MENTORING PROGRAM

Guidelines for Mentors

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool through which one person facilitates the development of another by sharing known resources, expertise, values, skills, perspectives, attitudes and proficiencies. It allows the mentee to build skills and knowledge while working toward attaining career goals. At the same time, it provides an opportunity for the mentor to further enhance his/her skills and knowledge areas through exposure to fresh perspectives.

BENEFITS OF MENTORING

Mentoring brings value to everyone involved in its practice: mentees, mentors and in our case, New York Women in Communications (NYWICI), the sponsoring organization. Mentees have an opportunity to gain wisdom from an experienced professional. Mentors have an opportunity to invest in someone who can benefit from their skilled guidance. Both mentors and mentees can learn from one another. There is much potential to transform lives. NYWICI has the opportunity to share and spread this acquired learning and know-how throughout its membership.

THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Great relationships can empower great careers at all levels. Wherever you are in your career, mentoring can provide an opportunity to learn and grow, whether you are a mentor or a mentee. There needs to be a collaborative effort and joint accountability about what is being learned, how learning can be best communicated and evaluated to create a successful learning outcome. Development in a mentoring relationship means identifying and encouraging growth. In your role as a mentor, please remember to keep your mentees professional and personal development goals at the center of your conversations and shared activities.

During the course of the year, we hope to facilitate a mentoring program gathering, which you will be encouraged to attend together. It would also be beneficial for you to arrange to meet your mentee at other, regularly scheduled NYWICI events or industry programs outside of the organization. It may also be appropriate (but definitely not

required) that you “treat” your mentee to their admission to an event from time to time. This will be particularly helpful if your mentee is on a limited budget.

INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP MENTORING

You can ask to mentor an individual mentee or ask to mentor a small group of mentees. Our NYWICI members suggested that some of you might be interested in serving as a small group mentor. You can tell us your preference for mentoring an individual mentee or a small group of mentees in your application.

WORKING WITH YOUR MENTEE

- Communicate consistently with your mentee. Encourage the importance of maintaining and adhering to the schedule you agreed upon. Communicate immediately if there is a change to the schedule.
- You may choose to have a working agenda for the topics during your meetings, phone calls or emails.
- Please remember that the relationship between you and your mentee is professional and that communications should remain confidential.
- Please use your discretion regarding sharing personal contact information with your mentee.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

- Remember that you are there to be a guide
- Please make sure that your comments are constructive. Consider using the “sandwich approach”: first praise then constructive criticism, then praise.
- Encourage your mentee to seek out other people’s opinions and advice, not solely yours. Your mentee should appreciate different insights.

BRINGING THE RELATIONSHIP TO A CLOSE

- Your role as a mentor is voluntary. The NYWICI Mentoring Program is a yearly program. You and your mentee should set expectations at the start as to the cadence of the scheduled interactions. Once the official pairing has come to a close, you may choose to continue the relationship.
- Take the initiative. If the mentee fails to respond to emails, texts, phone calls or show up on time to meetings, please notify us of the situation so that issues can be resolved, and sessions can begin again.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINE TIPS FOR MENTORS

It's not possible to anticipate every situation and the appropriate behavior to apply when one is mentoring. However, here are a few tips to use as general guidelines:

- Get to know your mentee. Try to understand the challenges they face.
- Be positive, patient, and dependable.
- Be consistent, but flexible. Expect changes in plans.
- Encourage, praise and compliment – even the smallest of accomplishments.
- Be an active listener. Use language that's easy to understand.
- Give concrete explanations.
- Be straight, honest and sincere (people pick up on falseness and shallowness).
- Ask for opinions and participation in decision-making.
- Work with your mentee. Share your knowledge rather than just giving advice.
- Be enthusiastic – it's contagious.
- Be firm. Have your mentee assume responsibilities and hold them accountable.
- Help your mentee use mistakes as learning experiences.
- Be fair – they'll notice if you're not.
- Help identify your mentee's talents, strengths and assets.
- Tell your mentee about yourself, especially what you remember from your school years and early career experiences.
- Help them identify the significance for their own lives of the information you are sharing (e.g., possible future profession, similar experiences, etc.) – tell them how they can use the information.
- Have activities planned in advance.
- Be open to what your mentee can teach you or share with you.
- Honor your commitment – This is extremely important!
- HAVE FUN!

If for any reason you feel you need to discuss your mentee relationship or the mentoring program, please contact Donna-Jean Plante (donna-jean.plante@nywici.org). We are here to help enhance your mentor-mentee relationship experience. Please note, it is imperative that you communicate to us if you do not hear from your mentee(s) after 2 attempts of reaching out.