

# WHAT IS A MENTOR?



Office for Diversity  
and Inclusion

**A mentor is a professional source of wisdom, teaching, and encouragement who supports the growth and development of their mentee.**

## **Benefits of Having a Mentor:**

*Increase development as a professional and ability to express expectations and goals*

*Receive honest feedback on ideas and goals*

*Expand professional network*

# TIPS FOR FINDING A MENTOR

## **1. MAKE A CONNECTION**

Potential mentors are all around you. Do not limit your search to influential people – look closely at those in your department or with whom you interact regularly. Research people you admire, their journey, and their expertise. Having a previous relationship will make it easier to connect.

## **2. PLAN YOUR APPROACH**

Those who are successful in their industry usually have a passion for their craft. Make sure to display a similar intensity and passion for your work. Be able to concisely articulate how you believe their mentorship may help you. If you are contacting someone for the first time, keep it short and to the point.

## **3. ADD VALUE**

Think about how you may be of value to your potential mentor. Research them and their company. Offer them help or share your ideas – be proactive.

## **4. BE MINDFUL OF YOUR MENTOR'S TIME**

When requesting a meeting with your mentor, make yourself available for whenever they have time. Being flexible will demonstrate your dedication to learning and improving yourself.

## **5. STAY IN TOUCH**

Check in with your mentor and provide updates every 2-3 months. Unless you have the opportunity to work together on a frequent basis, you do not need to meet your mentor every week. Take time to execute the advice they have given you.

In **informal mentoring**, the goals are not specified and outcomes are not measured. Mentors and mentees usually self-select based on chemistry. **Formal mentoring**, on the other hand, is structured, goals are established from the beginning, and outcomes are measured.

mentors