



District 42

"The Mentoring Guide" Series

How to Build a Successful Club Mentoring Program

Module 4

Building the B.E.S.T. Mentoring Relationships



Developing Leaders through Shared Experience

INTRODUCTION

“*The Mentoring Guide*” series is a step-by-step guide in four modules for clubs that wish to implement a mentoring program or strengthen an existing one.

“*The Mentoring Guide*” takes the reader on the journey through the entire promotion, implementation, training and mentoring partnership process and provides useful templates and forms to assist the club in developing a mentoring program that fits your members’ unique goals and needs. It is designed to quick-start your ability to develop leaders through shared experience.

There are four modules in *The Mentoring Guide Series*:

- 1) Promoting the vision of a club mentoring program
- 2) Implementing the club mentoring program
- 3) Training the mentors and mentees
- 4) Building the B.E.S.T mentoring relationships

The Vice-President, Education is responsible for implementing and maintaining the mentoring program, although he/she may appoint a member of the Education Committee to be the mentoring program coordinator.

The Mentoring Guide provides practical tips and tools to help the club implement and manage the mentoring program and is intended to complement *The Successful Club Series: Mentoring* module and the *Club Mentor Program kit*, both available from Toastmasters International. These two resources offer valuable information, which we have not duplicated in this guide and can be used in conjunction with *The Mentoring Guide*.

The Successful Club Series: Mentoring module defines mentoring, discusses benefits, describes roles and responsibilities, and advocates mentoring programs in clubs (Catalogue No. 296).

The Club Mentor Program kit includes: a brief outline -- How to Administer Your Club’s Mentor Program, 20 Mentor Assignment Notices, 20 Mentee Assignment Notices, 20 Member Interest Surveys and a sample Mentor Certificate, all of which are useful tools in starting a mentoring program. (Catalogue No. 1165)

PURPOSE

Part of the Mentoring Guide Series, this module describes how understanding and working through the four stages of mentoring relationships will bring out the B.E.S.T. in you. The module includes templates to aid discussion at each stage.

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OVERVIEW

How can you build outstanding mentoring relationships? Both the mentee and the mentor have a role in helping to define how their partnership will work and what it can accomplish.

The mentee is the “driver of the bus”, the person that decides the priorities, the timing and the ultimate goals. The mentor provides guidance, shares experience and encourages the mentee. Together they form a partnership to achieve mutually agreed goals within a defined period of time.

Understanding and working through the four stages of a mentoring relationship will bring out the B.E.S.T. in you both.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

The tools and tips in this module will help you to build an outstanding mentoring relationship that meets the needs of both partners.

- Get started by getting to know each other and building trust
- Establish some clear objectives and targets.
- Assess progress and problem-solve to get back on track where needed.
- Recognize and celebrate successes.

SUMMARY

This module is a guide that you can use to develop your mentoring relationship. Here you will find:

- Explanation of the four stages of a mentoring relationship
- Sample templates to aid in working through each stage

DEFINITIONS

Foundation Mentor: helps the mentee set goals, build confidence and develop skills to achieve his/her dreams.

Mentee: any member who wishes to benefit from the experience of a mentor

Mentor Coach: Coaches and provides support to mentors

How To Build The B.E.S.T. Mentoring Relationships

To avoid continually using mentor/mentee, this module has been written from the perspective of the mentor reader. If you are the mentee, everything mentioned here is equally relevant to you.

BUILD:

Building an outstanding relationship takes time – time to develop the relationship, build rapport and trust, and share dreams. It's a good investment of time because you set a strong foundation from which the mentee will achieve his/her dreams.

In building a relationship, the foundation is a shared vision, mutual trust, and common expectations. Set up a meeting with your mentee as soon as possible after you have been matched in a mentoring partnership.

In your first meeting, lead the mentee through a discussion that will define the ground-rules about how you will work together and when you plan to conclude your partnership. Sample questions are attached in the appendices (template # 1).

During the first meeting, ask what the mentee would like to accomplish during the contract period. Share some of your experiences with Toastmasters, what you are working on or what you have accomplished during your journey with Toastmasters.

Ask questions that will help you understand the mentee's preferred way of learning. Talking, reading, writing things down, drawing pictures and physical movement are all valid ways to process information. Tailoring your feedback to the needs of your mentee will build confidence and enthusiasm.

Fill in the partnership agreement (template #2) and sign it. Make a copy for each of you and for the Mentoring Program Coordinator.

Setting a clear ending date can help you avoid falling victim to the “hanging-on” phenomenon. When the end is not clear, the mentee does not know whether he/she is free to partner with a new mentor with different skills and the mentor cannot accept an assignment with a new mentee. Not only is this confusing to the two partners, but the mentoring program suffers as well. A clear start and ending date encourages the pair to set clear objectives and manage the time they have together wisely – and to celebrate together when they are finished.

Encourage the mentee to be in charge of the speed and direction of his/her development. The mentor's role is not to direct or dictate, but to guide, explain, encourage, listen and respond and share what you have learned from your experiences.

TEMPLATE # 1

BUILD: DEVELOPING COMMON EXPECTATIONS

A. The first meeting discussion

For your first meeting, schedule a block of uninterrupted time to get to know each other at lunch or after work, or on a weekend or evening. The following is a tool to help you walk through the discussion in your first meeting.

1. Introduce yourselves. Provide a little background information that will help your partner get of your interests and approach, your major life achievements and skills.
2. How long have you have been in Toastmasters? What have you achieved so far?
3. Why did you join Toastmasters? What do you hope to accomplish while you are in Toastmasters? Why? (for career, personal growth etc.)
4. Describe what you want to accomplish with this current mentor/mentee partnership.

B. The partnership contract

5. Describe how you plan to communicate with each other:
 - Face-to-face meetings How often _____
 - Email Mentee Email _____
Mentor Email _____
 - Telephone Best times to phone _____
Mentee Phone # _____
Mentor Phone # _____
6. Decide when the partnership will start and when it will end so that you are both clear about what you have committed to each other.
Term of Partnership: 1-3 months 3-6 months 6 – 12 months

Partnership begins on _____ (date) Ends on _____ (date)

Mentee Signature _____ Mentee Name (print) _____

Mentor Signature _____ Mentor Name (print) _____

Today's Date _____

Note: Please make a copy of Part B for you and the Mentoring Program Coordinator.

ESTABLISH

In the establishing stage, the mentee and mentor identify and clarify the mentee's key goals for the period of the partnership and for the next year or two. Then, work together to define the mentee's objectives: the smaller tasks and activities that will work towards achieving the mentee's goals. They make a plan to achieve the objectives and establish regular mentoring sessions to begin to work towards achieving them.

SMART Objectives

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-based

IDENTIFY THE OBJECTIVES AND MAKE A PLAN

Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based).

When you work through this process, you will have a clear picture of what the mentee wants to accomplish and why; how it will be done and when; and what success will look like when it is completed.

A form has been designed to help you work through the process (template # 3).

Encourage the mentee to complete a personal assessment of his/her personal communication and leadership skills that describes where the mentee is now and where he/she would like to be. Help the mentee to describe what success will look like at the end of the contracted time (expected outcome).

Encourage the mentee to work towards those objectives and make a plan that will outline the steps to achieve them.

ESTABLISH REGULAR MENTORING SESSIONS

Depending on what is agreed to in writing in the contract, the mentoring pair will meet regularly either in person, by phone, by email or any combination of these methods. Weekly or bi-weekly meetings are recommended for the first several weeks.

The Mentoring Session Form (template # 3) included in this module can be used as a guide. A "Notes" area is included to help you remember from one week to the next what was discussed. You may choose to photocopy a number of these pages and keep them in a binder that you can have handy when you call or meet with your mentee.

Acknowledge and celebrate progress.

TIP: If your club has a Club Handbook in which the Club vision, structure, success plan, meeting roles and member responsibilities are clearly described, this can be a very valuable resource for new members. If not, the roles are described generically in the Communication & Leadership manual under "About Your Club."

When new members join, explain where they will find information about the meeting roles and responsibilities and let them know that an experienced member will be happy to guide them when they do a role for the first time.

TEMPLATE # 2

ESTABLISH: IDENTIFYING THE OBJECTIVES

The mentee, with the help of the mentor, should identify the objectives to be accomplished during the partnership--the smaller tasks and activities that will be done to move towards the goals. Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-defined).

The following is a tool to help you in your discussions.

A. Personal Assessment

1. What do you want to accomplish in the next year or two in Toastmasters?

2. Describe where you are now in your communication skills (assess your current situation).
 - a. Strengths

 - b. Areas for Improvement

B. Objectives and Action Plan

(What do you need to do to get from where you are now to where you want to go?)

1. Objectives & Challenges: Describe what you would like to achieve in this partnership timeframe. What are the most important areas to address?

2. Action Plan: List your objectives and beside each one, describe how you will know when you are successful and the date that you plan to complete it.

Specific Objective	Measure of Success/Target	Completion Date
a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		

TEMPLATE # 3

ESTABLISH: KEEPING TRACK OF PROGRESS, THE MENTORING SESSION FORM

Whether you meet face-to-face or over the telephone, it is helpful to keep a record of your mentoring sessions so that you and the mentee can keep track of progress. This tool is provided as an example of the type of record you might want to keep. You can use it or adapt it to your own needs.

MENTORING SESSION		
Mentee:		Date:
	Sample questions & discussion ideas	Notes & Comments
REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The last time we met, you committed to ... - How is that coming? - How did you feel about your meeting role at the last Toastmasters Club meeting? - What did you learn? - What will you do differently? 	
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PROGRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What projects have you completed in the CC Manual? - What projects have you partially completed in the CL Manual? - What projects have you completed in the CL Manual? 	
LOOKING FORWARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What project are you working on next in the CC Manual? - What project are you working on next in the CL Manual? - What will you have done by our next mentoring session? - How can I help you? 	
	Confirm our next session	Meet by: Telephone? Face to Face? Email? Date: Time: Location:

SUPPORT

In this support stage, you provide encouragement, assess progress and take corrective action if needed.

Your regular meetings have been established and the mentee has begun to take on roles and schedule speeches.

Offer support and encouragement for prepared speeches and ask the mentee to let you know what would work best for him/her, explain meeting role assignments and offer tips that have worked from your own experiences. Offer to show the mentee how to use the evaluation feedback received to improve the next speech.

Make every effort to be at the meeting when the mentee presents a speech to encourage and provide support.

Invite your mentee to go to other Toastmaster events with you. Attending speech contests, conferences or other clubs' meetings together will strengthen your relationship and spark learning, fellowship and participation. It is also a good way to for the mentee to see where your club fits in the bigger Toastmaster picture.

Some mentoring pairs take the time to assess progress each week and some like to do it periodically perhaps every 4 – 6 weeks. Whichever process your mentee prefers; your partnership will be stronger if you regularly identify what is working well and take corrective action when needed. Remember that it is both healthy and productive to be honest and open about successes and challenges related to the action plan.

If there are issues with the health of the relationship, determine what the underlying issues are using the step-by-step problem solving form (template # 4).

If the club has a Mentor Coach or Mentoring Program Coordinator, he/she can be a good resource if you need more information or if the mentor and mentee would like an additional viewpoint.

Both of you will benefit from knowing where you need to improve and where you are really making a positive difference.

Support, encourage, listen and assess progress. Celebrate each objective as it is completed.

TEMPLATE #4

SUPPORT: STEP-BY-STEP PROBLEM-SOLVING

When there are challenges or problems in achieving a goal or in a relationship, you can follow the following steps to methodically review your options and agree on a course of action.

1. Define the problem

What is the problem and why is it a problem? Is there an issue that lies underneath?

2. How can you get back on track? List your options.

Do a brainstorming together about all the things you could possibly do to get back on track. Think of all the options without critiquing them.

Select 3 options that are most acceptable.

3. Analyze the options

At this stage, you will take a good hard look at the 3 options you have selected. Are they doable? Some things to consider are:

- Time required
- Resources needed (for example, do we need the assistance of others?)
- Inconvenience/risk
- Attractiveness/benefit

4. Determine the preferred action

Select the option that makes the most sense and agree on a course of action. Be specific about who, what, when, and where.

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5. Set up a time to assess how the course of action is working.

If the problem is to be solved, you will need to ensure that there is a mechanism to follow through with action. Set up a time with your mentor/mentee to assess progress and take corrective action when needed.

TTRANSFORM

In the transform stage, you will end the mentoring partnership at the agreed upon time and transform it.

Transforming can be many things:

- End the partnership and look for a new partnership with someone else.
- Decide to continue with the same mentor/mentee partnership but with new time commitment and new goals.
- End the partnership and maintain a “keep in touch” relationship where the mentor is called upon only for specialty experience on occasion.

In each case, the ground-rules must be renegotiated.

When you reach the transform stage, plan to celebrate. Whether the relationship has been ideal or has had challenges, there will always be some successes to celebrate.

Consider a ritual rite of passage to make the end clear and recognize the transformation. It can be a formal ceremony at the club or an informal sharing between the mentor and mentee.

A formal ceremony at the club might be held at the meeting and led by the VP Education and the Mentoring Program Coordinator. The club might consider awarding mentor pins and certificates, available online at Toastmasters International, to recognize the contributions of the volunteer mentors. One club made special name tags to honour the mentees at the ceremony.

An informal sharing between the mentor and mentee can be a small token of appreciation (a flower, chocolate, certificate, or a card) or simply going out for lunch or a drink together.

Understanding the four stages of the mentoring relationship will help you bring out the B.E.S.T. in you and your mentoring partner.