

Mentoring: Relationships and Responsibilities
LAUC-I Professional Development Committee
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DEFINITION

Mentoring is a finite relationship between two people directed towards a specific career goal such as introducing an early career librarian to the profession and the culture of the organization or helping an early or middle career librarian achieve a specific career goal. Examples of the areas where mentoring is valuable include:

- Becoming involved in professional organizations
- Peer mentoring to encourage a sense of loyalty and belonging within the organization
- Disciplinary affiliations
- Fostering networking opportunities both within and outside of the library
- Help with specific aspects of the formal review and evaluation process like putting together one's factual resume.

The benefits of a mentoring relationship include:

For mentees, mentoring helps provide direction in your career and opportunities to connect with colleagues.

For mentors, it provides an opportunity to share your values as a librarian, develop future leaders in the profession, and gain a fresh perspective on library issues.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLE OF THE MENTOR

- Have an interest in investing in the future of academic librarianship
- Set aside part of the week to concentrate on his/her mentee and remain accessible to the mentee.
- Demonstrate and explain effective work methods.
- Initiate contact.
- Identify expectations of the mentee.
- Be honest and professional in interactions with mentee.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLE OF THE MENTEE

- Clearly communicate your goals for this relationship
- Check in with mentor regularly.
- Be honest and professional in interactions with mentor.
- Be open to suggestions given by mentor.
- Keep mentor current on your activities.
- Ask questions.

STARTING THE RELATIONSHIP

Topics for the first meeting:

1. Introduce yourself. Share your resume.
2. What drew you to a career in librarianship.
3. What interests you in a mentoring program.
4. What your future goals are.
5. How you participate in or are interested in participating in professional organizations.
6. Set up preferred method of communication (e-mail, office telephone, etc.).
7. Discuss each others expectations and objectives in participating in the mentoring relationship.

Some initial areas for the mentor to focus on could include:

1. What workplace skills (technological, interpersonal, research, etc.) does the mentee want or need.
2. What teamwork opportunities(library and campus committee work, involvement in other organizations) can you assist them in finding.
3. Helping the mentee define their career focus.
4. Help the mentee understand the relevance of professional involvement and development.

Some initial questions for the mentee to ask could include:

1. What path did the mentor take in their career?
2. What motivates them?
3. How does your mentor make decisions?
4. How can your mentor help you to set your career goals?

DO'S AND DON'TS

1. Don't share private information outside of the mentoring relationship
2. Do be honest and fair in your interactions. Speak from direct knowledge and not hearsay or rumor.
3. Don't fail to respond to each other's queries and contacts.
4. Do keep communication flowing on a regular basis. 5. Be specific about what information can be shared, especially when it involves sharing with a third party.

(Adapted from ACRL New Member Mentoring Program Workbook
<http://www.ala.org/cfapps/archive.cfm?path=acrl/mentorwb.html>)

john sisson
lauc-i pdc
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