# Mentoring – how to

## The role of the mentee

As a mentee, you actively define the topics you want to work on, continuously evaluate the status of your aims and approach your mentor.

* Be professional: come to meetings always prepared, be on time, don’t skip meetings, reply to mails and requests within an appropriate amount of time, communicate respectful and with appropriate language
* Define your goals and needs.
* Be open to new ideas and perspectives
* Think critically about your mentors advice: does it fit to you? Put their advice always into perspective. Keep in mind that your mentor shares their own opinion rather than truths or universal facts. Don’t give responsibility for your decisions and actions to your mentor.
* Find the balance: Make use the mentoring relationship but respect your mentor’s boundaries.
* Constant evaluation: Reflect your own actions and decisions. Also evaluate if the mentor –mentee relationship works for you.
* Let your mentor know what does (not) work for you. Give your mentor constructive feedback.
* Keep confidentiality. Some of what your mentor tells you might be confidential. When in doubt, ask her if you are allowed to share the information with others.
* In case of serious problems (health, mental health, legal, …) please consult a specialist.

## The role of the mentor

As a mentor, you share your knowledge, skills, and information with a (yet) less senior scientist to foster their personal and professional growth.

* Be professional: be attentive during meetings, be on time, don’t skip meetings, reply to mails and requests in appropriate time frame, communicate respectfully and with appropriate language.
* Together with the mentee, evaluate if her aims are realistic.
* Encourage your mentee, don’t blame her. Although you might greatly contribute to your mentee’s growth, her (lack of) success is not your responsibility.
* Failure is normal. Share your failure and the struggle you experience(d) in your career. Be honest and realistic.
* Share and offer your own opinions. Sometimes it might be necessary to stress that some advice is based on your personal opinion and others might not agree with it.
* Pay attention to the situation of the mentee and be flexible. What works for you might not work for your mentee.
* Keep in mind that you support your mentee to reach the next step.
* Give constructive feedback.
* Keep confidentiality. Some of what your mentee tells you might be confidential. When in doubt, ask her if you are allowed to share the information with others.
* Serious problems of a mentee (health, mental heal, legal, …) are beyond your responsibility. Help your mentee in finding appropriate help (see the list of contact points). You can ask the organizers for help, all while keeping confidentiality.

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