



Troubleshooting Guide for Mentors and Mentees

| QUESTION | ANSWER |
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| We don't seem to have anything to talk about. | <p>Is the purpose of the relationship clear? Are you both agreed on the expected outcome?</p> <p>Mentees often feel they have to bring problems to you, when there is often more value in focusing on opportunities.</p> |
| We don't have much rapport. | <p>Did you take time at the beginning?</p> <p>You may have skipped the rapport-building stage by getting into discussions on goals too early. Go back and get to know one another.</p> |
| We've run out of steam/our discussions are shallow. | <p>Has the relationship already delivered what the mentee needed?</p> <p>If not, the most common cause of this problem is that the mentee doesn't know how to challenge him/herself. Ask lots of questions to open up and deepen the conversation.</p> |
| My mentee/mentor doesn't respond to my emails or phone calls. | <p>They may just be busy.</p> <p>If you are a mentee, remember that your mentor wants to hear from you, so don't be shy!</p> <p>We recommend that mentees do most of the chasing and setting up of meetings.</p> <p>If too many meetings are missed or re-scheduled, have a full and frank conversation about the relationship and check on commitment.</p> |



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| My mentee is unrealistic in his/her ambitions. | <p>What would help them see different possibilities?</p> <p>Some of our most successful leaders are people who were written off as having little leadership potential at some point in their careers. It's important to maintain a balance between encouraging them to pursue their ambitions and helping them to be realistic. You can work through all the steps with them - from where they are now to where they'd like to be - this shows that a dream is possible to achieve, or not.</p> |
| My mentee ignores my advice. | <p>Might that be appropriate?</p> <p>Mentors may give advice but mentees need support in making their own decisions. As long as you can help them think through the consequences of their choices, you are fulfilling your role as a mentor.</p> |
| My mentee wants me to sort out his/her problems. | <p>Have you settled into a pattern of rescuing?</p> <p>The mentee may be under stress and looking for a rescuer. Only in very exceptional cases should you sort out a problem for the mentee. Help them instead think through and act upon their own solutions.</p> |
| My mentor keeps giving me advice when I just want to brainstorm ideas. | <p>Have you agreed how you will work together and what mentoring style you prefer?</p> <p>It helps to establish right at the beginning, how you prefer to work/your learning style. Have a discussion with your mentor about how you each prefer to work. If you are not getting what you need, speak up and be clear about what you want instead.</p> |
| My mentor cancelled the last meeting and now I feel embarrassed to request a replacement time. | <p>Your mentor more than likely volunteered to be your mentor, so they want to spend time with you. Mentees, especially when they are several roles 'lower' than their mentor, or much less experienced, can sometimes feel in awe of their mentors.</p> <p>Remember, your mentor not only agreed to be in a mentoring relationship with you but is most likely getting as much out of the relationship as you are.</p> |