



## **Student mentoring by Management Department Advisory Board**

### **Best practices and expectations for student mentees**

#### **Focus on achieving learning goals**

- Own the opportunity and identify initial development and career goals.
- Learning is the purpose and the payoff of mentoring. It's easy to get sidetracked and lose focus. After three cups of coffee and little work on leadership development, mentoring fizzles out. Goals help you stay focused, moving in a positive direction, and benchmark your progress.

#### **2. Expect to drive the mentoring relationship**

- Decide on a mutually beneficial meeting schedule with mentor
- Create a clear agenda for each meeting
- Mentors are not mind readers. Be prepared to ask for what you need, when you need it. They won't know what you need unless you tell them.

#### **3. Create SMART goals that will contribute to your development**

- What are the skill(s) and competencies you want to develop?
- How will you know when you have successfully enhanced a skill or competency?
- What developmental activities would help you to develop the most?
- Of all the ways you might develop, which are most feasible?
- How will you apply your learning at college and on-the-job in your first business role?
- Fuzzy goals result in fuzzy outcomes. Make sure your goals are crystal clear to you and your mentor. Goals need to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.

#### **4. Be authentic, open, and honest**

- Seek and be open to feedback
- Be willing to talk about how it's going
- Your willingness to be vulnerable makes a significant difference in your growth and development. If you pretend that all is perfect, your mentor will never get to know the real you, and you will miss out on real learning opportunities.

## **5. Prepare for all mentoring meetings**

- Advance preparation for mentoring sessions will save time, make meetings more efficient and result in more meaningful learning.
- Utilize multiple ways to stay connected to your mentor. Regular and consistent communication is the name of the game, whether it's face-to-face, email, Skype or telephone calls, the operative word is "and."

## **6. Be willing to stretch and step out of your comfort zone**

- Expect your mentor to challenge you with questions and learning opportunities that might take you outside your comfort zone. They may initially make you uncomfortable, but the stretch is what will maximize your learning.
- Be open to mentor suggestions and actively practice what you learn.

## **7. Ask for specific feedback**

- Your mentor's honest and candid feedback will contribute to your self-awareness and get you to the next level. Practice asking for specific feedback and be prepared to receive it without being defensive.
- Share feedback with your mentor and act on what you hear.

## **8. Maintain confidentiality of all topics discussed**

## **9. Focus on the future**

- It's easy to get bogged down in day-to-day issues instead of focusing on your future. Keep in mind that mentoring creates momentum towards your future development. Be prepared to articulate your vision for yourself so that you and your mentor can create strategies for your future success.

## **10. Keep a journal**

- You will want to make notes of conversations that reflect your learning, and also track your mentoring progress. A journal is a great place to record insights and questions in preparation for mentoring meetings. Although keeping a journal requires discipline and practice, it's well worth the effort.