

This fact sheet provides principles and tools for getting the best out of mentoring. Mentoring relationships have the potential to be extremely beneficial to both parties, but the terms of the relationship need to be made clear and respected for the relationship to be successful.

Principles of Mentoring	Mentee Tools—Self Assessment
<div> To understand what you can do to get the best out of mentoring</div> <div><p>An effective mentoring relationship will take the time to set out the principles (or even a “contract”) of the behaviours of both parties, their relationship and the terms of engagement and how often you will meet. Doing this helps to ensure that expectations are matched and realistic and both parties can approach the mentoring professionally.</p></div> <div><div><div><div>I. Keep your commitments—ensure that you make your appointments and complete any actions between meetings.</div><div>II. Understand what you are looking to get from mentoring. Mentors are a limited resource in demand: first establish if you are good match, and then ensure that you use their time well.</div><div>III. Decide what you want the discussions to be about—what has prompted you to ask for a mentor? Is it a particular area of career development? Understanding more of Aston? Or do you want to learn about their area of expertise or their experiences?</div><div>IV. Decide what you want to find out from your mentor—and in the spirit</div></div><div><div>V. Use your time not just to focus on problems but also work towards solutions—but know your mentor is not going to solve these for you.</div><div>VI. Be open to sincere feedback—take it honestly and work with it. The reflective diary (below) can help with this.</div><div>VII. Likewise, expect to be challenged. A good mentor will challenge your assumptions and encourage you to look at events and issues from different perspectives.</div><div>VIII. Use the tools on the rest of this page to assess where you are now, plan where you want to be and develop in between sessions.</div></div></div></div> <div><div><p>Things to think about: It is important to know as well when the relationship has reached a natural end—you may benefit from a fresh mentor and fresh perspective, and consider mentoring yourself.</p></div></div>	<div> To understand where you are now and build your own profile</div> <div><p>Before you meet your mentor it is good practice to consider what you want to get from the process. You are likely to benefit more from the mentoring experience if you already have an understanding of your strengths, development areas and career goals —these tools can help you in reflecting on where you are now.</p></div> <div><div><div><div>I. The SWOT Analysis is a well-known tool that has many applications:</div><div>II. On a 2x2 grid consider what are your strengths. These can be your qualifications and your experience, as well as your skills and what personal qualities you believe you have.</div><div>III. Next consider the same for your weaknesses. These can also be seen as areas for development, which is a more positive framing. However, don't get too focused on these: one theory of personal development is that we are better focussing on our strengths rather than trying to mitigate our weaknesses as we will never be better than average at these.</div><div>IV. The SWOT then looks at what opportunities you can look to take advantage</div></div><div><div>V. of—this could be a chance for development where you are now, changes in the job markets or even a broad sector changes.</div><div>VI. Finally, what are the threats that are also on the horizon—are your skills still relevant, is your occupation in decline, is your organisation likely to find the future tough?</div><div>VII. After this consider your Goals under two categories:</div><div>VIII. <i>Short-term goals</i> are things you would like to achieve in a time frame up to the next 18 months.</div><div>IX. <i>Long-term goals</i> are the ambitions you have beyond this point.</div><div>X. You may then need to prioritise these as which you want to discuss with your mentor in the first session.</div></div></div></div>
Mentee Tools—Career Scenarios	Mentee Tools— Reflective Diary
<div> To understand where you want to be and how your mentor can help you get there</div> <div><p>Once you understand where you are now, you can work out where you want to go. This tool can be used as one way to describe several visions of your future and then put action plans in place to understand what the knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours you will need to get there and in what timescales.</p></div> <div><div><div><div>I. With your mentor identify your different career scenarios—at least two and as many as you feel you can comfortably work with.</div><div>II. These scenarios should take into account different opportunities that might be available to you—think about your goals, what are your career ambitions and which jobs/sectors would these lead you to?.</div><div>III. Consider how your experience and qualifications might support you to getting to these career objectives.</div><div>IV. Consider what constraints will realistically occur—do you have sufficient experience or knowledge now? Do you need to retrain? Do you have the resources to do so?</div><div>V. Create a realistic timescale for each</div></div><div><div>option—there will likely be many small or large steps that need to be made to progress towards the goals so consider what is a realistic amount of time for each of these steps.</div><div>VI. Some options may now seem less likely and one clear career path may emerge from this process.</div><div>VII. For each step in the career journey identify what you will need to get there, such as:<div><div>◇ What experience will you need?</div><div>◇ What qualifications will you need?</div><div>◇ What skills will you need?</div><div>◇ What behaviours will you need?</div><div>◇ What contacts will you need?</div></div></div><div>VIII. Consider how your mentor can help you make these steps</div></div></div></div>	<div> To ensure that you remember and act on the advice and actions from every session</div> <div><p>We all reflect naturally, but taking the time to do this intentionally can help clarify what happened during an event, what improvements can be made for next time and what you have learned about yourself. Reflection is also an important part of self-awareness and personal growth— effective people understand their own behaviour.</p></div> <div><div><div><div>I. The reflective diary should be in a format that is suitable to you—if this is a notebook or tablet, then get into the habit of taking it with you.</div><div>II. The diary should summarise the main points of discussion with your mentor and particularly any actions that you have both agreed to before the next session.</div><div>III. If you found a particular part of the discussion was particularly interesting, exciting or even challenging then add these as points of reflection. The fact that the discussion provoked an emotional reaction from you means that it is an issue worthy of reflection.</div><div>IV. What was it about the discussion that provoked these feelings from you? Was it something that you feel is particularly important or aligns with your values? Was it about a particular area of work that you would like to develop in?</div></div><div><div>V. Conversely, if you found the discussion difficult reflect on why that was. Is this a new subject for you and so feels unfamiliar? Does it feel out of your comfort zone, and if so, how can you feel more comfortable? Was the topic something that challenged your own beliefs or values? If so, does this change your perception on matters; can you understand this other perspective and why someone would think that? Were your beliefs based on an assumption you have never before questioned?</div><div>VI. Take your diary to your next session as a beginning point for discussion.</div></div></div></div>
<div><p>Things to think about: Career Scenarios can be combined with visioning—imagining in detail what that future would look like, feel like and what you would say about this scenario if it were true.</p></div>	<div><p>Things to think about: The act of writing out our thoughts, even if they are never seen by anyone else, can also be cathartic. If you have emotions that are holding you back, try writing about them.</p></div>