



PROFESSIONAL MENTORING HANDBOOK

Prepared by: Office of Career & Professional Development



Welcome

Professional Mentoring is a key success factor that will help students reach their career development goals. The focus of Professional Mentoring is to provide opportunities for students to interact with alumni and other industry professionals to learn more about career paths they want to explore and what skills need to be developed to be successful in their area of interest. The Career and Professional Development (CPD) staff will support students with a variety of resources and programming to help students explore, reflect and reach their career and professional development goals. Students will begin to learn what skills employers want and need from recent graduates.

Research has linked meaningful mentoring relationships during college with positive long-term outcomes for alumni after college — including higher well-being, employee engagement and more positive perceptions of their alma mater. We are hoping that mentors role model the giving of their time and talents as engaged alumni.

Building a mutually beneficial, open and trusting relationship with your mentor/mentee will take time, effort and a degree of patience. This handbook is intended to assist you with this process by explaining your responsibilities, providing suggestions on how to prepare for and conduct successful mentor meetings, and offering a plethora of suggested activities to complete with your mentor/mentee.

Of course, this handbook cannot cover everything. In working with your mentor/mentee, you must rely on your good sense and instincts while maintaining the highest level of personal and professional integrity. This handbook will not only provide resources for establishing and building a relationship, but will also provide many resources and programs available to you.

We trust that your mentoring experience will prove rewarding and inspiring. Please contact us directly with questions, concerns, suggestions and/or feedback.

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Table of Contents

Mentor Role & Professional Mentoring Goals	4
Mentor Responsibilities	5
Mentee Responsibilities	6
Meeting Your Mentor/Mentee	7
Maintaining Momentum	8
Distance Mentoring	10
DU Career Network Mentoring Platform	11
Appendix	12

Mentor Role Description

A collection of stakeholders met to discuss the description for mentoring roles that incorporated the 4D experience. That collection of stakeholders agreed that mentors will:

- Support lifelong growth and development through nurturing mentee's passions/interests, discussing experiences, and/or helping mentee connect the dots
- Share own experience and expertise to provide insight and guidance to mentees related to personal, academic, and/or professional development
- Facilitate reflection, offering empathetic, active listening and building trust
- Suggest resources and information to mentees to encourage self-development and exploration

Mentor Goals

The Professional Mentoring staff will help facilitate meaningful connections between experienced alumni, recent graduates and current students across a wide variety of industries and fields of study. Professional Mentoring provides the mentor and mentee the flexibility to decide mutually on both the timing and the content of meetings. Specific program goals:

- **Equip** the mentee with skills and tools needed to make sound career decisions;
- **Assist** the mentee with establishing and accomplishing short and long-term goals, both personal and professional;
- **Improve** the mentee's leadership, teamwork, creative thinking, decision making, and interpersonal skills;
- **Explore** and discuss with the mentee different career paths, companies and industries;
- **Facilitate** community building, character development and career advancement for both mentors and mentees.

Mentor Responsibilities

Community Building

As a mentor, your first responsibility is to help foster a mentorship community based on trust and mutual respect. Lead by example in all things:

- Attend and be social at university events and featured activities
- Be punctual and come prepared to mentor meetings
- Be an active member on the mentoring platform (DU Career Network)
- Have your own mentor(s) and professional network

Character Development

The Career & Professional Development vision statement, “All University of Denver students and alumni engage with an inclusive, global community of support to pursue careers and lives of purpose” speaks to your responsibility to help your mentee become a whole person and professional.

- Be a positive role model (both online and in person)
- Be genuinely interested in your mentee as an individual
- Acknowledge achievements and offer positive reinforcement
- Help your mentee to maintain a positive attitude and an open mind

Career Advancement

Your third and main responsibility will be to help prepare your mentee for the “world of work.” How you go about doing this will depend on the individual personality, skills and interests of your mentee. Here are some tried and true ways to support your mentee’s career growth:

- Be responsive to your mentee when they reach out for help or advice
- Be open and generous in sharing your ideas, experiences, resources and network
- If possible, invite your mentee to meet your colleagues and peers
- Encourage your mentee to take risks and seize opportunities

Mentee Responsibilities

Mentoring is an equal partnership between two individuals and DU mentees are expected to put forth as much effort as their mentors.

Your mentor will help you make progress towards both your personal and professional goals, but only if you keep an open mind and adhere to these basic recommendations:

- With your mentor, **decide on preferred method and frequency of contact**; listen and respect the opportunities, limitations and format of the relationship.
- **Be proactive** in reaching out to and scheduling 1:1 meetings with your mentor.
- **Create an agenda** for each mentor meeting (e.g., prepare questions; suggest discussion topics).
- **Establish and continuously review your goals** (see p. 16), assess progress and determine next steps with your mentor.
- **Respect your mentor's time** as you do your own; respond to messages or calls within two business days and notify your mentor no fewer than 24 hours in advance if you expect to miss a scheduled meeting.
- **Seriously consider all advice or suggestions** you receive; demonstrate when you have followed advice at every opportunity and express appreciation for every form of assistance you receive.
- **Engage in reverse mentoring**; share information and ideas that may help your mentor with his/her own personal or professional development.
- **Ask for honest feedback**; don't respond defensively.
- **Provide positive feedback** to your mentor and do not disparage your mentor to others.
- **Assume the mentoring relationship will be strictly professional**; be friendly, but do discuss, agree on and respect personal boundaries.
- If you are a current student, **keep your mentor informed** of academic progress, achievements or difficulties.
- Be active on LinkedIn and other professional networking sites.

Meeting Your Mentor/Mentee

You are expected to connect with your mentor/mentee on a consistent base – though how frequently is up to you. Getting off to a strong start is critical, so here are a few things to consider when preparing for your first mentor meeting:

- Decide on the date, time, length and location of your first meeting at least one week in advance.
- The first 1:1 meeting should be casual and relaxed, so consider going for coffee or lunch, meeting on campus, or attending one of the small group sessions. (Be prepared to pay your own way at all times. You're not expected to pay for your mentor/mentee.)
- Share personal and professional interests with each other.
- Review each other's job search documents like your resume and cover letter.
- Write/review 3-5 goals (see p. 16) for the mentee to accomplish/work towards.

KICK-START THE CONVERSATION!

What was your childhood like? What were your dreams and schemes?

Where did you go to high school? What is/was your favorite class at DU?

What are your hobbies and interests? What are you passionate about?

Where in the world have you been? What have you learned from your travels?

Who do you admire and respect? Why?

Maintaining Momentum

Getting connected is easy, but staying connected is hard. Like all relationships worth pursuing, mentoring relationships demand time and energy.

Mentoring best practices requires that you meet with your mentor/mentee consistently over the two months you are matched together. To ensure that happens, we encourage you to be flexible with your schedule, be honest about other commitments, and respect each other's time.

**People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing.
That's why we recommend it daily.**
—Zig Ziglar

DU helps facilitate regular communication between mentors and mentees by having resources available chock full of timely content, reminders and *suggested* activities, including:

Community Building

- **Attend** DU-sponsored events such as basketball games, guest lectures, career fairs.
- **Invite** fellow mentors and mentees to an informal group lunch or dinner.
- **Engage** in community projects together such as volunteering.

Character Development

- **Enroll** in soft-skill enhancing programs (e.g., Toastmasters International).
- **Select** a book to read and discuss together over the course of the program.
- **Compete** in a team activity together (e.g., pickup game of basketball; trivia).
- **Help** one another achieve personal goals (e.g., maintaining a healthy lifestyle).
- **Attend** Mass or other religious/spiritual services (as appropriate).

Career Advancement

- With the mentee, **decide** on 3-5 SMART goals (see p. 16) for them to work towards.
- **Help** polish the mentee's resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile and elevator pitch.
- **Ask** your mentee to shadow you (or a close and trusted associate) at work for a few hours or an entire day.
- **Invite** your mentee to join you in a social activity where other professionals or clients are involved.
- **Research** and join professional and/or student organizations; subscribe to appropriate magazines and trade journals.
- **Arrange** informational interviews for your mentee so he/she can hear multiple perspectives on different career paths

and companies.

- **Give** your mentee an assignment (e.g., researching a specific industry or company; reading a certain magazine or newspaper article).
- **Go** shopping! If your mentee is open to the idea, help them to select “business professional” and “business casual” outfits.

**Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the
courage to continue that counts.**

–Winston Churchill

Distance Mentoring

Professional mentoring is not limited to the Denver Metro Area. Alumni living/working outside the Metro Area are encouraged to join the program.

Distance mentoring is a mentoring relationship in which the mentor and mentee are in different geographic locations. Distance mentoring relies almost exclusively on email, video conferencing, and online meeting software and platforms.

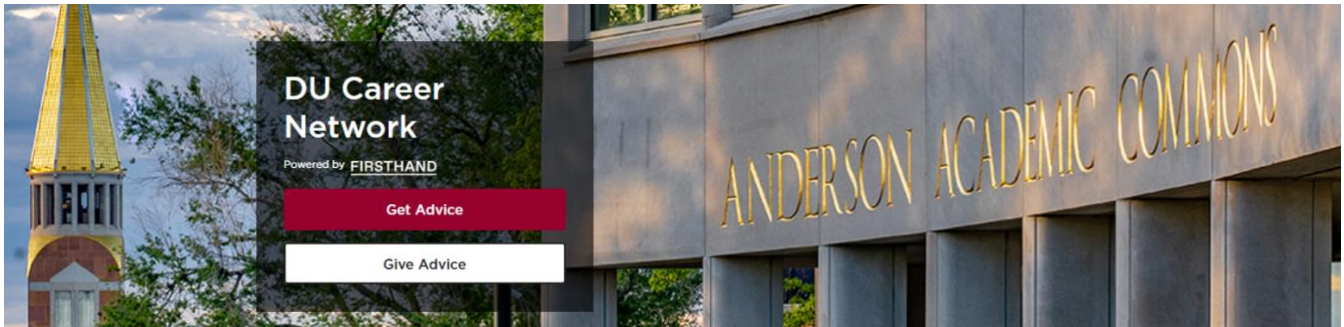
Of course, this type of mentoring relationship is not without its challenges. To ensure a successful mentoring experience, keep these suggestions in mind:

- **Use videoconferencing software** (e.g., Zoom), especially for your first meeting. This will help you pick up nonverbal cues and get a better sense of your mentor/mentee. Yes, you still have to dress professionally!
- **Get personal.** Consider sharing photos of your family members, friends, favorite places, etc. This will go a long way towards building a trusting relationship.
- **Email sparingly.** Email is best for scheduling meetings, sharing resources, and asking non-urgent questions. Avoid using email to give critical feedback.
- **Stick to your word.** Distance mentoring sometimes makes it seem easy to postpone or cancel a mentor meeting. This is a quick way to corrode trust. Instead, show up to each session fully prepared for a productive conversation.
- **Listen for nonverbal cues.** Sometimes you can tell how people feel not by what they say but how they say it. Keep your ear tuned for a raising or lowering of voice; a change in tone; silence; a quickening or slowing of speaking pace; sighs, pauses, and similar expressions.

DU Career Network

The **DU Career Network** allows you to connect with DU students and alumni for mentoring and career networking. Share your expertise with those coming up behind you by joining du.firsthand.co

If you want to share your time and talent in any way besides mentoring and networking, check out **Volunteer DU** at volunteering.du.edu. Choose from a variety of discreet and ongoing projects that will help you give back to DU including _____ . (list projects below and their affinity)



Professional Mentoring Handbook: Appendix

Personal Respect & Harassment _____ 13

Meet Your Match _____ 14

Ground Rules _____ 15

Setting Objectives _____ 16

Plan Effective Meetings _____ 17

Suggested Itineraries _____ 18

Program Staff _____ 20

If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.
–Booker T. Washington

Personal Respect & Harassment

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT POLICY

The University is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which people are treated with dignity, decency, and respect. The environment of the University should be characterized by mutual trust, freedom of inquiry and expression, and the absence of intimidation, oppression, and exploitation. People in this community should be able to work and learn in a safe atmosphere. The accomplishment of this goal is essential to the academic mission of the University.

Consistent with this commitment, the University will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination, harassment, or gender-based violence of any kind. When the University becomes aware that a member of the University community may have been subjected to or affected by discrimination, harassment, gender-based violence, the University will take prompt, appropriate action to enforce this policy. The University's Office of Equal Opportunity & Title IX (EOIX) is responsible for enforcing this policy pursuant to the University's Comprehensive Discrimination and Harassment Procedures and Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures, which offer options for informal and formal resolution.

This policy and the Comprehensive Discrimination and Harassment Procedures and Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures are intended to comply with the prohibitions of all applicable federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws.

Individuals who know of harassment, or believe that they have been harassed, in violation of this policy are encouraged to contact the DU Career & Professional Development staff immediately.

To read the full policy, visit: <https://www.du.edu/equalopportunity/policies-procedures>

Meet Your Match

These questions will help you and your mentor/mentee learn about each other.

- What is important to you? (E.g., social justice, a healthy lifestyle, volunteering, money...)
- What is your background and professional experience? (I.e., what internships/jobs have you held?)
- What skills do you have and are proud of? (E.g., public speaking, math, writing)
- What training or courses have you taken recently, or plan to take?
- Which professional journals do you subscribe to, or want to subscribe to?
- Which skills do you desire to develop?
- How will a mentoring partnership help develop those skills?
- What attracted you to this program?
- What one thing can I do to ensure a positive experience for you in this partnership?
- What should I expect from you in this mentoring partnership?
- Would you rather be a celebrity for 1 week in modern times, or a king or queen for 1 year in olden times?
- Star Wars or The Lord of the Rings?
- Summer or winter?
- Dogs or cats?
- Tell me about your most recent vacation.
- If money weren't an object, where in the world would you buy property?
- What is your favorite restaurant in Denver?

Ground Rules

Use this handout to set ground rules, agree on limits, and develop a plan for your mentoring partnership.

Items to consider as you set your ground rules:

- Who will take responsibility for setting up meetings?
- Should the person who breaks a meeting appointment be responsible for rescheduling?
- Are meeting reminders necessary?
- If one of us is unhappy with the relationship, what is the best way to deal with it?
- How will we handle confidentiality?
- How will we proceed if one of us needs to withdraw from the relationship?
- How will we meet? In person, by phone, via Skype/Hangouts?
- Should we meet during the workweek or on weekends and evenings?
- Are there any other norms/expectations we need to clarify?

OUR GROUND RULES
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Setting Objectives

During the first mentor meeting, we recommend establishing 2-3 objectives that you hope to accomplish/work towards over the course of the program. Your objectives are more likely to be met if you have clear action steps designed to meet them.

You should already have an idea of what your objectives are for the program. Work with your mentor to develop realistic action steps that together you can work on to achieve each of your objectives. An example is provided below.

Remember, action steps demonstrate how you will reach each of your goals.

Objectives	Action Steps
EXAMPLE: <input type="checkbox"/> I want to build self-confidence when delivering presentations.	EXAMPLE: <input type="checkbox"/> I will volunteer to present my project at the next division meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> I will practice my presentation with my mentor one week before I'm due to present.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Plan Effective Meetings

Student Mentees should complete this meeting planner prior to their mentoring meeting, and share with their mentor so the meeting is organized and the focus is clear. Including the objectives the mentee is working on is a reminder to discuss the progress being made, and to make adjustments as needed to your action steps.

MENTORING MEETING PLANNER
Date: Time: Place:
Mentoring Objectives:
Recap of Last Meeting:
Focus for this Meeting:
Outcomes:

Suggested Itineraries

After the initial meeting, it's important that you connect with each other regularly and consistently. How you spend your time is completely up to you, and we encourage you to approach mentorship in whatever style works best for you and your mentor/mentee.

For those who need help getting started, here are seven suggested itineraries that can be done in or out of order:

I. Initial Meeting – Set Goals (2 hours)

- Meet your mentor/mentee for the first time
- Establish 1-2 initial goals and ground rules for your mentoring relationship

II. Resume Review (1 hour)

- Review, discuss and critique each other's resumes and LinkedIn profiles
- Research together 2-3 ideal careers – look at job descriptions and discuss the steps necessary to land those jobs

III. Job Shadow (1-4 hours)

- Arrange a morning or afternoon for the mentee to visit the mentor at work
- Give a tour of the workspace
- Arrange sit-down introductions to colleagues and bosses
- If possible, include the mentee in a business meeting, client call, or team lunch
- Mentees: write a 1-page summary of what you observed, learned or questions you have
- Mentors: debrief with your colleagues – *what was their impression of your mentee?* Share feedback with your mentee

IV. Small Group Mentoring Sessions (1-2 hours)

- Attend a Small Group Mentoring Session for an opportunity to network with fellow mentors and mentees
- When available, sessions include company tours, happy hours, and industry Q&As
- New sessions announced at the beginning of each month via email

V. Attend an On-Campus DU Event (1-2 hours)

- Attend one of the many on-campus DU events for an opportunity to network with fellow students and alumni
- Events include public lectures, sports games, career fairs and workshops
- Visit <https://career.du.edu/> for a full list of publicly listed events

VI. Volunteer Together (1-4 hours)

- Both the university and the greater Denver Metro Area offer a plethora of opportunities to volunteer
- Choose an activity that promotes teambuilding and conversation, and is aligned with the university's mission, vision and values.
- Visit <https://volunteering.du.edu/> for a robust list of volunteer opportunities

VII. Conduct a Mock Interview (1-2 hours)

- Record yourselves doing a mock interview (mentors should play the role of the interviewer/employer)
- Base the interview on a real and current job posting
- Review the recording – what does the mentee need to improve or focus on?

Contact

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