



# MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL FACULTY MENTORING PROGRAM

Center for Faculty Development

## Massachusetts General Hospital Faculty Mentoring Program

# Your Mentoring Relationship: How to Make the Most of Your Time Together

Center for Faculty Development



*Page 4 has tips on  
'S.M.A.R.T. goals setting,  
however, there are other  
helpful tips here.*

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## 1. Introduction

The Center for Faculty Development appreciates your thoughtful feedback on information you would like to receive as part of the MGH Faculty Mentoring Pilot Program. In response to your feedback for concrete things to help create effective mentoring relationships, the content contained in this workbook provides you with some tools and techniques to address various ways you work together. We believe this material will not only help you in managing your relationship with your mentoring partner, but additionally will help you in various aspects of your work with all your colleagues.

## 2. Goal Setting

As part of your action plan, you set goals for your mentoring relationships. As you continue to set new goals and refine existing ones, be sure to begin with the end in mind

- If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up somewhere else.
- Don't look back. The past is no longer an option. Focus on today and tomorrow.

Strategies for setting and achieving goals

- Setting Goals
  - detail specific steps needed
  - establish dates (by when) and person (who's responsible)
  - identify potential barriers and action steps to overcome them
  - identify resources (people, information) needed to accomplish goals
- Achieving Goals
  - visualize the outcome
  - allow for setbacks
  - don't lose sight of the big picture
  - celebrate small successes

As you think about:

- Goal setting
- Tackling challenges
- Creating opportunities

Use the **S.M.A.R.T** process to support you in obtaining smart goals for smart results.

<b><i>Specific</i></b>	<b>Write your goal/idea as detailed as possible.</b>
<b><i>Measurable</i></b>	<b>Identify quantitative targets for tracking your progress and results.</b>
<b><i>Attainable</i></b>	<b>Make certain that it is possible to achieve the desired result.</b>
<b><i>Realistic</i></b>	<b>Acknowledge practical requirements necessary to accomplish the goal.</b>
<b><i>Timed</i></b>	<b>Build in specific deadlines.</b>

Remember, goals should also be:

- ***Your goals for the mentoring relationship***

### 3. Effective Meetings

Meetings are an important part of our daily work as well as an important part of your mentoring relationship. In your meetings with your mentoring partner as well as in other meetings, the following strategies can help set the stage for success.

#### Before The Meeting

1. Define the purpose of the meeting and your goals for it.
2. Develop an agenda. See more detail on the next page on what to include in an agenda. The meeting agenda is a roadmap for the meeting. It lets participants know where they're headed so they don't get off track. Most importantly, the meeting agenda gives a sense of purpose and direction to the meeting. All agendas should list the following:
  - Meeting start time, end time, and location
  - Agenda items
  - Detail for each agenda item
  - Priority of agenda item
3. The length of time anticipated for each topic
4. Distribute the agenda and circulate background material, lengthy documents or articles prior to the meeting.
5. Choose an appropriate meeting time. Set a time limit and stick to it, if possible. Remember, your mentoring partner has other commitments. He/she will be more likely to want to meet if you make it productive.
6. Choose an appropriate location. An office or perhaps the cafeteria, where you can use your card provided by CFD for coffee. .

#### During The Meeting

1. Start on time. End on time.
2. Review the agenda and set priorities for the meeting.
3. Stick to the agenda.
4. Encourage discussion and feedback to get all points of view and ideas. You will have better quality decisions.
5. Keep conversation focused on the topic. Tactfully end discussions if they are getting nowhere or becoming destructive or unproductive.
6. Be an active listener
7. Keep minutes of the meeting for future reference in case a question or problem arises.
8. Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a positive note.
9. Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.

#### After The Meeting

1. Write up and distribute minutes within 3 or 4 days.
2. Follow-up on agreed-upon decisions and action items.
3. Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.

#### 4. Steps to Active Listening

Active listening is an important part of effective meetings as well as effective interactions with all people. We offer these steps to active listening as a way for you to get the most out of your relationship with your mentor as well as everyone else you talk with!

1. Above all, stop talking! Bite your tongue and really hear what the person is saying.
2. Avoid labeling or judging what a person is telling you. It is not important, initially, whether you agree or disagree with what the person is saying. Appropriate responses are:

*"Is that so?"*

*"Tell me more."*

*"Explain that with more detail."*

*"Yes, I see."*

*"Go on, I'm listening."*

3. Show that you are listening by repeating what you just heard the person say. Repeat the person's last feelings. Use your own words.

Example: *"So, you're telling me that you feel isolated in your department."*

This is the most effective way to respond and the hardest one to actually do.

4. Even though the talker seems to be asking a question or seeking advice, the real need is to "get it all out." Resist the temptation to interrupt with a "solution."
5. After the active listening period is over, you can come up with alternatives. Active listening takes time, but not too much time. The first few minutes are simply warm up, feeling the listener out and feeling comfortable in the situation. Next is the heart of the exchange. When the speaker becomes repetitive, you both can go on to alternatives.
6. Focus on the person who is talking. This is true whether the conversation is in person or by phone. We do this with our verbal and non-verbal behaviors. For example, in person, establish eye-contact; on the phone, don't type during the conversation. A lot of energy and mental concentration is required.
7. Respond to feelings rather than intellectual content.
  - Intellectualizing is distancing, feeling is touching.
  - Value the person's feelings as his or hers, not necessarily yours,
  - Trust in the person's capacity to handle his/her feelings, to work through them, and to find solutions. You don't always need to have a "solution."
8. Be patient. Allow plenty of time. Don't interrupt. Tolerate silences. Silence during a conversation is when most thinking is taking place.
9. Be yourself. These skills will come naturally as you work together. Don't force it - - it may sound affected or ungentle. This is not an overnight happening. It requires constant growing and improving.

## 5. Effective Time Management

### Steven R. Covey's "Time Management Matrix"<sup>1</sup>

Stephen Covey provides a time management matrix of how our time is often allocated. The following adaptation summarizes the key points. Everything we do in our work goes into one of these categories or quadrants. It is important to think about what you decide to do with your time so that you can get the most out of it. An understanding of important and urgent is helpful in understanding the four quadrants.

In defining urgent versus non-urgent items, something urgent is an activity that you or others feel requires immediate attention. To help understand important versus non-important items, an important activity is one that you (or others) find valuable and that contributes to your (or their) own values, and high-priority goals.

	<i>Urgent</i>	<i>Not Urgent</i>
<i>Important</i>	<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crises</li> <li>• Pressing problems</li> <li>• Deadline-driven projects</li> </ul>	<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Relationship building</li> <li>• New Opportunities</li> <li>• Planning, recreation</li> </ul>
<i>Not Important</i>	<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interruptions, some calls</li> <li>• Some mail &amp; reports</li> <li>• Some meetings</li> <li>• Proximate, pressing matters</li> <li>• Popular activities</li> </ul>	<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trivia, busy work</li> <li>• Some mail</li> <li>• Some phone calls</li> <li>• Time wasters</li> <li>• Pleasant activities</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> See *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey for more detail.

As Covey notes, activities in the quadrant that are important but not urgent are at the heart of effective personal management. They include things such as building relationships and long-range planning. It is in the area where your relationship with your mentoring partner can be very helpful.

The following provides concrete examples for each of the quadrants.

	<i>Urgent</i>	<i>Not Urgent</i>
<i>Important</i>	<b>Crises or Problems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care for very sick patient</li> <li>• Work on project due today</li> </ul>	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on vita</li> <li>• Work on research paper</li> <li>• Meet with mentoring partner</li> </ul>
<i>Not Important</i>	<b>Interruptions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to all e-mails</li> <li>• Respond to all phone calls</li> </ul>	<b>Trivia</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend time on trivial questions</li> <li>• Engage in time wasters or procrastination</li> </ul>

We offer this time management matrix as a way to help frame mentoring as an opportunity for you. We hope you focus on mentoring as an opportunity as well as the opportunities within your mentoring relationship.

The following page presents additional tips on effective time management.

## Effective Time Management Tips

### Spend time in Planning and Organizing:

- Think and plan
- Organize in a way that makes sense to you

### Set Goals:

- Decide what you want to do
- Take a “SMART” approach
- Goals give you required direction

### Prioritize:

- Prioritize and identify what you value
- Flagging/Highlighting can be very helpful
- Once prioritized, concentrate on those that would add value

### Use a to do list:

- Find out what is urgent and important
- Put them in order of preferences
- Once completed delete them from list

### Be Flexible:

- Allow time for interruptions and distractions
- Save larger blocks of time for priorities
- Ask yourself questions and get back to your goal

### Consider your Biological Time:

- Find out which is the best time for you to do your best work
- Are you a morning person?
- A night owl?
- Late afternoon?

### Do Right Things Right:

- Doing things right is effectiveness
- Doing things right is efficiency
- Focus first for effectiveness
- Concentrate on efficiency

### Eliminate the Urgent (if possible):

- Urgent tasks have short term consequences
- Important tasks are long term and goal related
- Attach a deadline to each of the item

### Conquer Procrastination:

- Learn to say “NO”
- Reward yourself

## 6. Summary

As you consider the tools and techniques provided in this workbook to help you address various ways you work together, we hope you find this material helpful in your mentoring relationships and beyond. We encourage you to focus on the opportunities in your mentoring relationship and apply this material in a useful way.

We wish you all the best as you continue working with your mentoring partner. As always, please feel free to reach out to us at XXXXX and let us know how we can further help you.

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