

Mobilizing Mentoring



A Roadmap to Success

For you and your Protégé

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Making a Difference

Putting things into perspective

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five winners of the Miss America contest.
3. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
4. Name the last six Academy Award winners for best actor or actress.
5. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

How did you do?

The point is that none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. They are the best in their field, but the applause dies, awards tarnish, achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

How about this quiz:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel special.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

Easier? What's the lesson?

The people who make a difference in our lives are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards. They are the ones that care. You care enough to devote some of your personal time to be a mentor to a young person as they navigate their career choices. You, and people like you, make the world a better place. This guide will help to prepare you for the journey. May it be a worthwhile one!



Introduction

Mentoring is a highly rewarding experience. Of the many interesting and effective ways to positively impact youth, mentoring is likely the most powerful. When the adult and the young person are both committed to the experience, the relationship can lift both to new heights.

This guide is designed to be a support tool for potential mentors working with a young person under 30 in a career mentoring capacity. Whether you will be working with “the best and the brightest” or a young person who faces some unique challenges in life, you can help them achieve their goals through role modelling, guidance and encouragement.

Many adults who decide to become a mentor have little experience with youth. Perhaps you have no children of your own and have little contact with youth. Perhaps they are all grown up and it feels like a lifetime ago that they were the age of your protégé. In either case, as a kind and caring adult, you have a lot to offer a young person to help them reach their potential. Congratulations on deciding to make a difference by working with a young person....

a) The Landscape...Today's Work Force

Today's world of work is exciting in terms of opportunities but challenging in complexity of choice. Youth often feel overwhelmed in the process of choosing a career path. Working with you will help them to uncover strengths, define their goals, and realize their opportunities.

Remember, there are multiple paths to success in today's world. You may be surprised to learn that sixty-five percent of Ontario youth go directly into the workforce- only thirty-five percent go on to post-secondary education! Many of us assume this is the other way around! Your protégé may be entering the workforce with a grade 12 education. Immediately, you may think they are doomed for failure. While they may not ever have a high paying job or be climbing the corporate ladder, they can still find their place on our society.

Industries such as hospitality, skilled trades and public service, as examples, are competing for workers. The retail industry in Canada is trying to promote themselves as a career path rather than a stepping stone for students. Many sectors are facing tremendous shortfalls in the next ten years and it is important to remember university isn't for everyone. We live in a time where many university grads find themselves enrolling in college, post-degree, to gain workplace based skills. Private training schools offer



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many programs that can lead to successful and rewarding career paths—just look at the demands in the aesthetics industry over the last decade! You can go just about anywhere in the world and find a spa to work in.

While there is no doubt that increasing your education and, therefore, your marketable skills increases your earning potential, the rules aren't quite that simple anymore. Most of us are acutely aware that Bill Gates dropped out of university!!! The path is not linear....it meanders in numerous directions. The trick is to help your protégé figure out which path to take based on their interests and abilities.

As an mentor, you can help them determine what they can do. Help them to discover and explore their options— should it be higher education, apprenticeship or military? Many have left the formal education system and are without the necessary skills and experiences to make themselves marketable. They feel that they end up without a choice, and take whatever is available.

Competition for employment is fierce—not just for youth, but for everyone! As a mentor, you can help your protégé understand that even with the necessary skills, experience and attitude; they will probably have to volunteer to gain experience. Encourage them to participate in charitable organizations and events that are supported and sponsored by companies that could be a source of employment for them down the road. Help them think outside the box; show them that there is always more than one way to achieve their goals.

Having a mentor may be a truly unique experience for them—having someone to guide, not judge. A mentor is someone who listens, shares experiences, common interests and cares about their success and once a protégé has committed to the mentoring partnership, they have taken a positive step towards gaining the outlook, values and skills needed to enter the world of successful employment. We all benefit from their commitment to increasing their marketability.



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b) What is Mentoring?

If you are reading this guide, you likely already have some understanding of what mentoring is. Here is a reminder of what it is and isn't...

- A mentor is a caring, supportive friend and role model. A mentor is NOT expected to be a social worker, a psychiatrist or a career counsellor.
- Mentoring is a special kind of caring, supportive relationship or partnership between two people that is based on trust and respect. Mentors share their knowledge and experience with protégés. They help them define and reach their goals.
- A mentor encourages the protégé to reach their goals, based on a vision that the protégé has shared for the future.
- Being a mentor means being able to read a roadmap—to find the best way to reach the destination without having to make too many wrong turns!
- Mentoring, for some, is going back in time, sharing experiences and providing professional insight that has been learned through years of experience.
- Mentoring is a partnership in which both parties should benefit

c) Potential Benefits of Mentoring

You are likely very aware of the benefits of mentoring for youth but most mentors will tell you that the experience is usually very rewarding from both a personal and professional perspective. Many are not expecting this!

For the Mentor:

- Enhance communication skills
- Develop leadership skills
- Become engaged with a young person; gain new perspectives
- Sense of accomplishment
- Sense of contribution to society by facilitating skill development in youth
- Positively influence another individual by imparting effective values, attitudes and skills



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- Provide a better understanding of the problems faced by others, and an opportunity to articulate and re-evaluate the benefits
- Develop new skills, along with an opportunity to update existing skills and abilities
- Increased recognition from peers and the community at large
- Increased awareness, become a solution provider, both in terms of dealing with your protégé and with the issues or barriers they may face

For the Protégé:

Many of the benefits of career mentoring for youth are obvious:

- Access to an adult who cares
- Participating in a professional relationship with a role model
- Gain workplace based skills and knowledge
- Explore career opportunities
- Develop networking and employability skills
- Develop positive communication skills
- Develop a personalized approach to problem solving in a non-threatening environment
- Acquire technical and ethical knowledge gained from the experiences of another
- Confront problems in a supportive environment
- Develop a helpful network of protégées and mentors
- Access to an experienced “sounding board”

Because the cultures of the school and work environments are so different, any contact youth have with a role model from the workforce will be of value. Even though you may not “see” or “feel” your impact in the way that you’d like, never doubt you will be making a difference!



d) Life Skills Mentoring vs. Career Mentoring

It is assumed, for the purposes of this guide, that you have committed to working with a young person to help them with the transition from school to work. Although the development of life skills, (i.e. organizational skills) may be a part of this process, the focus of your relationship is to help them with the development of employability skills (ie. communication skills, ability to work as a team, technology skills, ability to think and learn, etc.) and to assist them in gaining awareness about what it takes to be successful in today's competitive world of work.

The specific goals of your relationship, then, should be to assist your protégé with one or more of the following:

- Identify a career path
- Identify skills gaps
- Explore career options
- Discover post-secondary options for continued education and training
- Creating good personal marketing materials for the workforce (resume, cover letters)
- Develop and implement Job search strategies
- Develop interviewing skills



Preparing for Success

a) Qualities That Make a Good Mentor

1. Commitment: A mentor must make a personal commitment to be involved with a young person for an extended period of time. They must have a genuine desire to be part of another person's life, to help with difficult decisions, to guide them to become the best they can be.
2. Respect: A mentor has respect for individuals, for their difference, their abilities and their right to make their own choices in life. They can't come with the attitude that their way is better or that a protégé needs to be "rescued". A mentor must convey a sense of respect and equal dignity in the relationship in order to win the trust of the protégé and the privilege of being their advisor.
3. Good communication skills: A mentor has the ability to listen and to accept different points of view. Most people can find someone who will give advice or express an opinion. It is much harder to find someone who will *suspend his or her own judgement* and really listen. Mentors often help simply by listening, asking thoughtful questions and giving their protégé an opportunity to explore their own thoughts with a minimum of interference. When people feel accepted, they are more likely to ask for and respond to good ideas. Mentors offer suggestions in a non-threatening manner. They communicate ideas with ease to illustrate the possibilities.
4. Non - judgemental: A mentor has the ability to empathize with a young person's struggles without judging them. Good mentors can feel the need, without pitying their protégé. Even without having had the same life experiences, they can empathize and help work through the problems and offer possible solutions.
5. Positive: A mentor can see solutions and opportunities as well as barriers. Good mentors balance a realistic respect for the real issues faced by their protégés with optimism about finding equally realistic solutions. Mentors are able to make sense of issues of concern and point out sensible alternatives. They see the glass as half full—not half empty.
6. Patient: A mentor understands the need for flexibility and openness. Good mentors recognize that relationships take time to develop and that communication is a two-way street. They are willing to take the time to get to know their protégé and to learn new things that are important to them—their hobbies, talents, special



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interests and philosophies. A good mentor will recognize that their own philosophy may be changed by the relationship.

Will you be a good Mentor? If you can answer “yes” to this list of attributes, you are someone that has a lot to offer a young person. In addition to the qualities you already possess that will make you a good mentor, you can also consciously focus on a variety of things that will make you highly effective in the role:

11 Tips to “BE” an effective mentor

- 1. Be there:** Commit to mentally “being there” when you are together or when you are communicating with your protégé. Don’t think about other things when you are with your protégé. (Avoid the tendency to think about work, family or personal pressures) This above all else will “make or break” the way your relationship unfolds.
- 2. Be open:** Share “yourself” with your protégé—the personal you, not just the professional you. Tell your protégé about your career path, personal attributes, dreams, personal goals, strengths, include areas of improvement you are working on.
- 3. Be genuine:** Early in the relationship, share information about who you are, family background, how you got to where you are, and what is important to you. Be sure to let your protégé know about your challenges as well as your successes. *Be real.* If they know that you aren’t perfect either, they may be able to relate to you better. Try to break down barriers and bridge gaps early in your relationship by being real. You are a role model, not a superwoman.
- 4. Be supportive:** Remember that you are not expected to be a social worker. You are a supportive, encouraging friend.
- 5. Be professional:** Establish a professional tone to your phone calls, email and personal communication. Avoid inappropriate conversations on topics such as sex, religion and politics.
- 6. Be timely:** Respond promptly. Nothing disheartens a young person more than a non-response. You should discuss with your protégé what to expect in terms of response times. Convey that you will respond within a given time period. This will give your protégé a benchmark and will provide a level of confidence when it comes to communicating. Ask for the same in return.



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- 7. Be aware:** Model positive behaviour and attitudes. You are a role model for your protégé. Let your protégé know what you feel are the essential skills for success in life.
- 8. Be adaptive:** Be prepared to switch roles—be open to learning from your protégé.
- 9. Be collaborative:** Connect with others who mentor, collaborate with them, share resources and sources of information. You can learn from each other.
- 10. Be responsive:** Resolve problems immediately, follow through on what you say you will do (remember you are role modelling!) and don't let communications break down.
- 11. Be happy and have fun!** Giving back warms the heart. Make the best of whatever situation you are presented with. There is always more than one way to enjoy life!

b) Know Your Audience—What Are Adolescents Like?

Adolescents are a “special breed” with characteristics and needs unique to their age group. They may lack emotional maturity, judgment and experience in personal and professional issues.

There is no such thing as a typical teenager as the changes that go along with adolescence and the maturing process make each and every one of them a unique entity. However, if you were to observe them for any length of time, you would notice that they might...

- lack the ability to think in the future and tend to think in the “now”
- be enthusiastic and eager to please
- enjoy interacting with their peers and rely on them for social acceptance
- believe they “know it all”
- prefer active over passive learning
- display negative or neutral body language due to lack of awareness
- respond best to a variety of shorter activities rather than one long activity
- be curious and eager to explore areas of interest to them
- lack co-ordination due to accelerated physical growth



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- be competitive
- be impulsive and act before considering the consequences

*list adapted from Workplace Guide 2002, The Learning Partnership.

“Ah to be young again...with so many opportunities and experiences ahead of you!”

This is a statement that young people often hear—even from some of us, as we move forward in our own chosen careers. We look with interest at the young people coming up through the educational system and think how lucky they are....

Well, think again! Many of today’s youth don’t see what we see. They see only obstacles—they haven’t had the chance to be mentored, to have a role model, a coach, or a guide to help them navigate through the choices they have. Today, young people need guidance to help make the right decision towards their career choice. Whether they are gifted or facing significant barriers, they all deserve a chance to realize their dreams—and they likely need guidance as they work towards a rewarding future for themselves.

Your protégé may have more problems to deal with; they may be facing issues that you are not aware of. There may be abuse in their background, they may have had an unsuccessful school experience, come from single-parent families or have a substance abuse problem. Or they may be an overachiever. They may experience a great deal of pressure to succeed from parents. They might just be a normal adolescent dealing with the challenges and changes of maturing. Your role as a mentor is to be a source of encouragement and support, yet be non-judgmental about their lifestyle. Be patient...it will take some time to get to know each other and develop a mutual sense of trust and respect.

c) Personal Reflection

Life is busy these days. We often get little personal time to reflect on our own journey, the choices we were faced with and the roads we chose to follow. As a mentor, you take on many roles: coach, assistant, active listener, supporter and friend. We are often better mentors when we have spent some time reflecting and this can be part of the positive experience of being a mentor—assessing and understanding how you have arrived where you are.

Now is the time to take a few moments to think about your own journey...where have you been, what did you learn, what are you willing to share that could be valuable to that young person who wants to be just like you?



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Think about what becoming a mentor means to you. What do you hope to gain from the experience? Spend some time reflecting on the time it will take, the resources you will need and the responsibility you are assuming. Think about the various components of your life and how they may relate to your role as a mentor. You have had many positive, and perhaps some not so positive, experiences that will serve you well in your role as a mentor.

To be a really effective mentor, ask yourself a few questions:

- Who has been my role model?
- What motivates me?
- Who encouraged me, and who discouraged me?
- What was the most positive experience I had in my journey to achieve my career choice?
- What was the hardest lesson I learned?
- What am I most proud of?
- What is important to you?
- What are your guiding values or principles?
- How do you attain balance in your life?
- What foundation is your life built on? How do you handle challenges?

Think about that role model, that person who inspired you—perhaps it was a teacher, a coach, a family member, a friend or an employer...take a few minutes and make a list of those people who provided the inspiration and note the ways in which they impacted your life and your career.

Use the form below to write the names of the influential people in your life that inspired you. List their positive qualities, the advice they gave and personality traits that helped guide you on your professional journey. By analyzing what worked for you, you can determine what skills/talents and traits you have to offer to that young person who will look to you for directions as they travel along their career path. Your reflections may provide your protégé with a roadmap, providing some of the shortcuts and alternative routes that will make the road they travel less hazardous based on some of your experiences.



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| Name | Positive Qualities | Advice Given | Personality Traits |
|------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
|------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|

In your role as a mentor you will share with, inspire and guide your protégé. Reflect on your own major accomplishments:

| Major Goal Accomplished | When Achieved | Feelings to Share |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|

Who do I know? What contacts do I have that would be valuable to my protégé? What associations, organizations or clubs might be helpful for my protégé on their journey of discovery? Make a list



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| Who | Organization | How they may be able to help |
|-----|--------------|------------------------------|
|-----|--------------|------------------------------|

It might be helpful to think about what you want to share with your protégé—information, materials, resources etc... You may have read a good book or article or seen a website that might be of interest. This these also:

| Resource | How it may be useful |
|----------|----------------------|
|----------|----------------------|

Also, taking time to think about what you were like at a similar age is a good start, or what your niece or nephew, son or daughter is or was like—the creative juices may begin to flow and often you remember stories and incidents that will enable you to relate more to your protégé. Think about “success strategies” that you can share with your protégé. Sharing some of the stories, experiences and resources from your own life will strengthen the foundation and provide a strong base for your relationship.

Don't be surprised if you find that your own personal and professional path takes a new twist, perhaps in step with the journey of discovery your protégé is taking. Sometimes, in helping others, we help ourselves. Mentoring is a positive learning experience that benefits both mentor and protégé.



c) The Need for Structure

One of the most important elements of a successful mentoring relationship is structure. If you are not part of a formalized program, it is very important that you create a structure that supports the goal of the relationship and facilitates relationship building. Answer the following questions to define the structure of your relationship:

- How long will the relationship last? (6 months is the recommended minimum)
- How often will you communicate?
- How will you communicate regularly? (email/phone)
- Who will initiate the communication?
- How often will you meet in person?
- What will you do or talk about when you meet?
- What will you (or your protégé) work on in between meetings?
- Will you engage in any social activities?
- What topics will you focus on? Avoid?
- What will you do together to end the relationship?

The more clearly you can define the structure, the better positioned for success you will be!



The Journey Begins...

a) First Contact

A positive initial contact with your protégé is crucial to the success of the relationship. Will you connect by phone? In person? Via email? Make sure this first contact is positive, non-threatening, friendly and inviting. Convey interest and enthusiasm. Indicate you are looking forward to the experience. Let them know that *you* hope to learn a lot from the experience!

With both parties potentially coming from different backgrounds, cultures and/or ages, it is important to find common ground as quickly as possible. Your goal is to “break the ice” and make a good first impression.

Try to convey enthusiasm through your phone or email message. Let your protégé know that you...

- are excited and delighted with the opportunity to mentor
- are looking forward to getting to know them
- wish you had an opportunity like this when you were young
- believe it will be a learning experience for both of you
- want to arrange for a time to meet face to face (schedule this if it isn't scheduled for you by a program co-ordinator)

If you don't have experience with youth, this initial contact can be a challenge for you as a mentor. If you impart a friendly, supportive, non-judgemental attitude it should lay a positive foundation for future interactions

After your first personal contact by phone or email, you will need to meet face to face for the first time. If you are not part of a program that facilitates this first meeting, follow the suggestions listed below to make sure that the first meeting is a positive experience



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1. **Choose a public, mutually convenient location** such as a coffee shop, library or shopping mall. Some protégés will have very few positive experiences dealing with adults and can be intimidated or reluctant to get to know you
2. **Be friendly, positive and patient** especially in the first stages of relationship building. Young people take some time to feel comfortable. For some, it may be the first time they have had a “professional” relationship with an adult
3. **Be acutely aware of your body language.** Be sure it is positive. Lean forward, face them directly, and use positive facial expressions (smile!). Do not cross your arms
4. As the mentor and lead conversationalist in this first meeting, **tell a story, share an experience**, show your protégé that you are human. Be real and sensitive to the differences between you. Try to find common denominators to talk about. It is wise to compare special interests, hobbies, music, sports—find a way to bridge the gap between you and your protégé. People like people who are like themselves
5. It may be a good idea to **have an activity planned** for your first meeting For suggestions, see the section at the end of this guide titled “ Suggested Activities to do with your Protégé
6. **Develop the framework** at the first meeting that will be part of every meeting in the future. This way, your protégé will know what to expect and will begin to plan their responses and reactions in advance. It may sound stilted, but small talk can only take you so far. You need a framework, an outline, an agenda that will get the conversation and the positive attitude flowing!

b) Establishing a Foundation

A relationship will flourish when there is an established rapport. Staying true and committed to the relationship is the best way to ensure that your protégé knows you are genuinely interested in them. In the beginning the relationship may feel one sided. It will take time for trust to develop. As a mentor, you need to be patient.

A good strategy that helps to build the foundation is to determine the protégé’s primary learning style:

- Are they visually orientated? If so, they will use words like “I see what you mean.”



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- Are they kinaesthetic? Then, they will use words that indicate how they feel...“You must have felt exhausted!”
- Are they auditory? They will communicate using words like—“that’s as clear as a bell—that sounds good to me.”

In order to identify their style, ask open ended questions. Ask them to share their experiences, how they spend their time or what kind of TV shows or movies they like. The words they use in their description will help you identify their communication and learning style. When there is an opportunity to respond in a long verbal or written message, their style will usually show through. Once you’ve determined their style, mirror it. This will help you to “connect” with them.

c) Mentor Responsibilities

Nothing speaks more highly of you and your company than service above and beyond the call, but nothing disappoints a young person more than promises that are not kept. Your protégé can be vulnerable—take your responsibilities seriously! Here are some suggestions:

- Stay committed to the mentor/protégé relationship
- Regular communication—keep the relationship alive!
- Share contact information. email addresses and appropriate methods of using the electronic communication.
- Determine expectations for cancelling meeting times and dates.
- Avoid discussions about religion, politics or sex.
- Set expectations for preparedness for both parties. Bring what you said you would bring—both sides need to be accountable.
- It is recommended that you keep an electronic file or journal of all your communications documenting interactions, progress, accomplishments and challenges in the relationship for future reference.
- Exchange emergency contact information with your protégé, include home phone number and cell phone.
- Establish a process for an emergency cancellation.



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- Report any suspected cases of abuse. You are **legally required to do so** if you are working with a minor even if information has been disclosed to you in confidence.
- Report on your progress to program co-ordinators if you are in a formalized program.
- If applicable, provide feedback to the organization that connected you with a protégé. They will want to hear about your successes and your challenges.

The roles of mentor and protégé are equally responsible, with each partner being aware that mentoring is a two way street. Be sure to help your protégé understand that they have responsibilities in this relationship—sometimes youth expect or think that the mentor is responsible for initiating conversation. Let them know they get out of the relationship what they put into it!

d) Goal Setting — We're on the Journey...What's the Destination?

The destination, while important, is not nearly as important as the journey and the values and lessons learned as you travel. You do, however, need to have a clear goal in mind for the mentoring relationship. It is a proven fact that most successful people engage in goal setting. Role model this for your protégé. Establishing the goal will also help to focus your meetings, conversations and interactions.

Remember your commitment to this mentorship relationship is short term. You are supporting your protégé as they develop their roadmap for their journey to career success. Early in the relationship, you will need to spend some time on goal setting. Some of these jumping off points may help as you plan for the mentorship journey:

- What does your protégé envision for their career development in one year? In five years?
- What are the barriers that could prevent them from accomplishing this?
- What are your protégé's strengths?
- What training, skill development, materials, and/or experiences will your protégé need in order to achieve the goal?

Your protégé may have a variety of goals that they think they want to accomplish. Have them identify one long term goal (it may be to enrol in college as an example or to get a job). Then your challenge is to help them identify 3 related short term



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goals. You should have no more than 3 achievable goals for each 6 months you are working together.

Once the goals have been established, you need to identify the landmarks. These are the measurements or milestones that will let you both know that you are on track and moving forward towards their goals. Write these down so that you can refer to them continually as you move through the mentoring experience. Use the following template:

Long-term objective:

3 short-term achievable goals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Landmarks for Success:

Begin the journey with the end in mind—you know where you want to go and all you need is to chart the best course, taking into consideration some of the hazards and demographic problems that might be encountered as you travel. Between you, you are developing a template, a model for the protégé that sets up a process for goal setting not just for now, but for the future.



e) Creating a Mentoring Contract

Although it appears somewhat “stuffy” and “formal”, some sort of agreement and understanding of both parties roles will facilitate you attaining the goals of the relationship. This prevents misunderstandings, frustrations, and enables you both to maintain focus. You can set this up in various ways but here are some suggestions on the parameters that should be addressed:

1. Goal—Agree to what the purpose of your interaction is. (see Goal Setting)
2. Structure—Outline the structure you have both agreed to (see Structure).
3. How we will interact—mutually agree on the guidelines that will “shape” your interactions. Articulate your individual responsibilities (see Mentor Responsibilities)

You should both sign this and each retain a copy so that you can use it for future reference. If your protégé deviates from their commitment, it can be a useful tool to get them back on track.

f) Developing Trust

You will be able to help your protégé feel comfortable with you if you focus on the following:

- Show your commitment.
- Don't be judgemental.
- Under promise and over deliver! Follow through on what you say you will do.
- Always be honest.
- Show interest in their activities.
- Be authentic and real—let them see that you are human too (you are a role model but not perfect)!
- Mirror their communication style.



Effective Communications—The Key to Success in Mentoring!

a) Experiencing Difficulty Communicating At First?

It is not unusual to find your protégé somewhat difficult to communicate with at first. *You must be patient.* This may be the first time this young person has had a professional relationship with an adult in the work force and your relationship will be different than existing ones they have with parents, teachers, counsellors or relatives. Even if the relationship feels one sided for the first few weeks, commit to continued work on developing a rapport through exploring and connecting to common interests and activities. It will happen...perhaps just not as quickly as you'd like.

It may help you to find out if they are right brained or left brained. Through this discovery, you may be more successful in employing communication strategies that will enable you to “connect”. Through a process of creative self-discovery you can also find out who you are as a mentor and what you can do that complements your right or left brained skills and talents.

Over the years, experts have discovered that the brain has two distinct hemispheres and each works in a different way. With its own special role in dealing with current situations, one side of the brain usually dominates the other in what we do and how we communicate.

Are you a right-brain or left-brain communicator?

Left-brained people are:

- Logical
- Verbalize their ideas
- Have facility with numbers
- Use analysis of all information to formulate new ideas
- Draw rational conclusions from information
- Tend to break things into segments to analyze
- Abstract specific information bits from the whole
- Generally have a good sense of humour



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- Possess a poor sense of spatial relationships
- Think linearly, with one idea following another

Right-brained people are:

- Intuitive
- Use gestures or pictures in descriptions
- Put parts together to form a whole
- See things as they are
 - Make analogies and see likenesses
 - Often have a poor sense of time
 - Rely on intuitions and instincts
 - Have a poor sense of numbers
 - Have a good sense of spatial relationships
 - Think holistically
 - See patterns linking ideas as a whole
 - Act emotionally
 - Develop spiritually
 - Act playfully

Studies have shown that when a person is being creative, both sides of the brain are involved. In most people the right and left-brain characteristics combine to contribute to the whole, however, sometimes the separation is quite evident. Knowing where your tendencies lie as well as those of your protégé will help you find methods to communicate more effectively.

Determine if you are right-brain or left-brain dominant—then recognize that not everyone thinks like you do. A good mentor learns to adapt and become like their protégé. Learn to “speak their language”.



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If you find that the relationship is not progressing and you feel you have been very patient, it may be time to engage a program co-ordinator. Perhaps your protégé is not ready for this experience. They will inform you of the next steps.

b) The Importance of Effective Listening

If you commit to doing one thing well in this relationship, listen well. Not just for what is being said, but for what ISN'T being said. Listening is crucial for rapport building. Often youth don't say exactly what they mean so you have to engage your listening skills and good questioning skills to understand exactly what is being said. Here are helpful hints on how to use and improve your listening skills.

Keys to Effective Listening

- Create an atmosphere that will be safe and caring, where your protégé will feel able to share ideas and feelings and express them freely
- Concentrate on what is being said, rather than on what you will say when it is your turn. Listen to understand—not to respond
- Avoid distractions, ignore what is going on beside you or in close proximity to your conversation
- Make your mental list at some other time—pay attention to your protégé
- Demonstrate your attentiveness—nod, smile and make eye contact to let your protégé know you are really hearing what they are saying
- Show respect for their right to speak and be heard, refrain from talking until they have completed their message
- Listen for the tone of voice and what it conveys to you.
- Watch for uncomfortable or negative body language that will cue you to something that is NOT being said
- Take notes AFTER you meet to capture some of your impressions, ideas and concerns. Refrain from note taking during the meeting unless you feel you have developed a rapport that will support this. Ask your protégé if they mind
- Always avoid looking at your watch!
- Don't jump to conclusions



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- React to the ideas you hear professionally, not personally
- Be careful not to impose your own paradigms
- Check for your understanding—ask clarifying questions if you are not certain you understand

Climb the LADDER to becoming a better listener!

Look at the person speaking to you.

Ask intelligent questions.

Don't interrupt when someone else is speaking.

Don't change the subject, just because it doesn't interest you.

Empathize with the speaker, they appreciate your interest.

Respond verbally and non-verbally, it shows you are paying attention.

c) Giving Advice

- Before you attempt to offer suggestions or solutions, be sure you clarify the protégé's feelings or perspective by using different words to reiterate the situation or issue.

Say: "I think what you are saying is that your real passion is animal welfare and would like to concentrate on careers that are connected to this sector."

- It is very important that you remain non-judgemental, offer alternatives, and suggest a range of possibilities. Do not offer only one option as the only answer. Your protégé will have difficulty responding if he or she has a different option or perspective.

Say: "Have you considered careers such as veterinarian,, animal health technician, guide dog trainer, pet store owner, zoo keeper, dog groomer, salesperson for animal products (food, toys, grooming products), etc..."

Don't Say: "You should be an animal health technician."

- Be honest, but try not to preach, lecture or be "parental". Stay neutral. Talk and communicate as a friend. Try to be supportive. If you are concerned about their



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judgement, a good technique is to ask questions that will lead them to “see” another perspective.

- Use examples, show how other similar situations were handled and share the outcome.

d) Effective Email Communications

Both mentors and protégés will have different levels of comfort and experience with email communication. This may, in fact, be the first time that your protégé will have entered into an electronic relationship with an adult. It can be a challenge to communicate effectively as email eliminates voice, intonation, gestures and facial expressions, yet you are responsible for the direct and indirect impressions you make as you communicate. What you say, how you say it, when you choose to say it, what you focus on and what you ignore all have significance to the receiver of the email.

Think about these statistics...

Words account for only 8% of our communications

Voice tones and inflections are 54%

Gestures, expressions, other body language are 38%

Therefore, 92% of the components of effective communications are *eliminated* with email! It becomes very important to choose words wisely and to make sure that your words have a positive impact, while maintaining professionalism and congeniality.

When communicating by email, always put something in the subject line that is relevant to your message, i.e. our mentor meeting on Tuesday. This helps the receiver know whom the email is from and that it shouldn't be deleted. Make sure that you include your protégés name several times in the body of the message—this is good email etiquette and provides a comfort level that the message hasn't gone out to everyone you know!

Want to have fun and show a little emotion online? Learn to use Emoticons!

There are some creative ways to convey expressions, feelings and thoughts in email that you might want to explore with your protégé. The following are some you may wish to use. Exploring “emoticons” with your protégé makes a fun icebreaker. You may even want to create your own email language. This way, you are creating a secret code and your protégé may feel that together you have your own “private space.”

Symbols can convey special meanings

:—) happy



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; -) winking or joking

:-(unhappy :-

:-/ embarrassed by your own mistake (think “urk”)

%-) confused

B-) proud (sunglasses)

You can also abbreviate common sayings—it’s like having a secret code!

BTW by the way

TTYs talk to you soon

BRB be right back

LOL laughing out loud

TTFN ta ta for now!

C&G chuckle and grin

CY see ya

CYL8R see ya later

FAQ frequently asked questions

GTG got to go

GTSY glad to see you

H&K hug and kiss

IMO in my opinion

JK just kidding

L8R later

LTNS long time no see

OIC oh, I see

PM private message



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| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| QT | cutie |
| SO | significant other |
| SYS | see you soon |
| TA | thanks again |

Another means of communicating your feelings or actions is to surround a word with asterisks such as the following *sigh* *laughing* *joking*. You might want to ask your protégé for their ideas and create your own secret language.



Job Shadowing and Volunteering

Job Shadowing and volunteering are excellent experience for youth. School and work cultures are very different so any exposure to the “professional” world will be of great benefit.

Job Shadowing

To get the most out of this experience, be sure to:

- a) **Suggest your protégé go online and research your company before the day.** Encourage them to come with 3 questions about the company.
- b) **Convey important information** in advance to your protégé such as
 - Specific directions
 - Expected time of arrival and time day will end
 - Dress code
 - Lunch arrangements (should they bring one?)
 - Items to bring—pen/paper/etc.
 - Health and safety concerns
- c) **Consider arranging a tour** of your company
- d) **Be sure to spend some time during the day explaining** how your company works. Most young people have no idea how the different departments in a company are interdependent.
- e) **Consider having them spend time with different colleagues** in different departments.
- f) **If there are other mentors in your company,** consider arranging the job shadow on the same day so that more than one young can benefit without increasing your time commitment.
- g) **Consider arranging it on a day** in which you are doing something special (i.e. attending a workshop or conference that might interest the young person).



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- h) **Under no circumstances should you permit your protégé to operate any kind of equipment.**
- i) **Do not meet with your protégé one-on-one behind closed doors without others around.**
- j) **If your workplace is not appropriate** for a job shadow, consider accompanying your protégé to another place of work that you have pre-arranged a job shadow experience with.

The following list of questions can be an effective tool in a job shadowing experience. It will guide your discussions to cover many aspects of your work with your protégé. It is written from the protégé's perspective and can be photocopied for discussion purposes.

Job Shadow Questionnaire

Date of my job shadow:

Location:

Time:

Special information:

You have an exciting opportunity of spending a day with your mentor in the workplace. Please take the following questions with you and discuss them with your mentor.

1. Does your mentor work for a large corporation, a small corporation or are they self-employed?
2. What are the advantages/disadvantages of this?
3. Does your mentor have benefits associated with the job? (i.e. health, dental, pension)
4. Describe the standard duties and responsibilities of their position.
5. Outline the "work network" for this job? Who does your mentor work with, supervise and report to?
6. What does your mentor find fulfilling about the job/career field?
7. List the skills that are needed to be successful in the specific role.
8. How did they obtain this position and what jobs have they had before this?
9. Suggest type of personality or temperament someone in this work would need to be successful.



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10. What job experience/education is required?
11. Is the future outlook for this occupation increasing, stable or declining?
12. How has the job been impacted by technology and what technology skills does your mentor use on the job?
13. Does you mentor participate in any kind of training?
14. Does you mentor participate in volunteer work? Why?
15. Outline what you learned from this job shadow experience.

16. In one or two sentences, state what you enjoyed most about your day with your mentor. Please share this information with him/her.

Volunteering

If you are mentoring a young person who has never had a job or has limited experience, you should encourage them to volunteer. It is one of the best ways to develop employability skills and to get a reference for future employment.

Ensure that your protégé knows that volunteering should be treated as a job. They should dress and conduct themselves professionally and take the commitment very seriously. After all, they are demonstrating their talents and potential to someone who may someday be providing an employment reference for them. They want to put their “best foot forward”.

Be sure they ask for a reference letter when they complete the experience to use when applying for jobs.



Networking – Use it in Mentoring!

There's no avoiding the "N" word—it's critical for both mentor and protégé.

Responsible mentoring is all about using your contacts wisely. It's about linking your protégé to your resources. Think of mentoring as a chain and each link you add gives your protégé another connection—and that connection can provide another and another and so on. By becoming part of that chain, you provide a networking resource that can help your protégé reach anyone that they may need to know. But your protégé needs to know the rules of good networking!

Rules of Good Networking in a Mentor/Protégé relationship

Make sure your protégé is prepared to connect. Young people need business cards with their name and email address. They need to do their homework and find out about the company or the person you will introduce them to. Networking is about building a relationship, not about finding a job, or that perfect career. Your protégé needs to be articulate and knowledgeable. He or she needs to be comfortable with the meeting. Your help may be needed to find the tools that will facilitate success.

Help them by practicing their introduction – with smile and eye contact! Encourage your protégé to start every introduction with a smile, to look their contact in the eye and introduce themselves with a brief overview of why they are there. Body language is important make sure theirs says something positive. Stress the importance of listening carefully, taking notes where possible and following up promptly. Encourage them to practice their introduction—help them find their comfort level.

Don't be afraid to ask for help, but offer services in return. Quite often a protégé finds it difficult to know where their value is, encourage them to think laterally. What do they have to offer? Perhaps they can volunteer time. Networking is a two way street, with both sides benefiting from the introduction. Find a positive benefit.

Follow up. Make sure that your protégé understands his or her responsibility. If you introduce him or her to someone or a company that will help them reach their goals, if they have provided a tour or a job shadow, he or she must respond with a letter of appreciation either sent by email, fax or post. The letter must identify to the recipient how much value he or she received from the meeting. You can help draft the letter, but it is their responsibility to follow up.



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Be committed and determined to succeed. Networking requires commitment and patience. It is an ongoing process. Set realistic and achievable goals that can be reached by your protégé. Don't expect him or her to be comfortable in the beginning—he or she will be frightened of meeting strangers, uncomfortable wearing “dress up” clothes and find it difficult to find common interests with potential employers. Plenty of encouragement and personal support will be needed from his or her mentor.

Develop a plan. Refer to the employment goals you have set for your mentoring relationship. Make a list of the organizations and associations that may relate to your protégé's career goals. Research those people you may wish to contact within the organization and develop a method of record keeping to note the results of each contact made by your protégé. Make sure that each contact is followed up with a note both from you and your protégé.

Research the people you hope to contact. Find out who to contact and what their area of expertise might be. Find out what you can about them so that your protégé has prior knowledge of possible common interests. Encourage your protégé to use the Internet—there may be a bio on the person or on the company. It pays to know something about the contact in advance. Work together with your protégé—this is a joint venture, one where both you and he or she can benefit from the exercise. If the contact is an old friend, or a business associate, send a note in advance sharing information on your protégé and his or her needs.

Use lateral thinking. Sometimes you have to become a detective—look into your past. Who do you know that might be a positive connection for your protégé? You and your protégé have to think laterally. Lateral thinking stretches your imagination—this will allow you and your protégé to begin to see a win/win scenario in every situation.

Use a checklist to help maximize the networking opportunities for your protégé. Have a good, workable database and share appropriate names with your protégé.

- Work on your handshake, it says a great deal about you and is an example for your protégé.
- Perfect your personal infomercial.
- Arm your protégé with several “good” icebreaking questions that they are comfortable with.
- Use a journal; invest in one for yourself and one for your protégé. Make notes, and follow up on your promises.



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- Ask for a list of other mentors and protégés if you are in a program.

Who makes up your network that could be valuable to your protégé?

Everyone in your life! Take the time to learn a little more about the people you know. Find out about their skills, experiences, talents and needs.

Family. Look at each family member as a well-rounded individual with skills and backgrounds. You can tap into their knowledge and their networks. Don't forget that retired people like to share their insight and their experiences!

Friends. Your friends have skills you may not be aware of. Ask. They have their own networks. Tell them about your protégé—share some of his or her dreams. Ask to be introduced to their network—there may be someone who is exactly what he or she is looking for.

Neighbours. Your physical proximity gives you a unique chance to develop closer ties. You already have something in common with them—your choice of location.

Professionals in your field. You may not work directly with them, but you share the same career choice. Perhaps your professional association is willing to work with you and your protégé or provide contacts.

Suppliers. You do business with them. Find out more about them—they know people that your protégé might benefit from knowing.

Clients. You serve them and you have already built a relationship with them. They trust you and might be an excellent resource for your protégé—ask them to share their knowledge with your protégé where appropriate.

Co-workers. You likely spend more waking hours with these people than you do with your family or friends. How well do you really know them? Find out more about them, and share your experience with your protégé. They may be a great resource for your protégé.

Clubs and Community Organizations. Are you are involved in an organized community group? Do you belong to a service club or attend church? If so, you have a ready-made network, the door is already open for your protégé.

Volunteer Groups. One of the most prevalent reasons people volunteer is to meet others and to feel part of something valuable or important to the common good. Get



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to know your fellow volunteers better, share your new knowledge with your protégé. Take your protégé to some of your meetings.



The Journey's End...

Bringing Closure to the Relationship

Ending the relationship may be something that comes naturally. However, in some cases it may be more challenging. If you are not in a formalized mentoring program, you should have agreed to a beginning and an end date for your relationship. Whether or not the relationship goes beyond this is up to you and your protégé.

A few suggestions on how to bring closure

- Plan a special activity (i.e. lunch outing)
- Summarize the journey you've been on together.
- Mention the things you'll remember after the experience is over.
- Tell them what you gained from the experience and/or what you learned from them.
- Thank them!

What to do if your protégé wants to continue a relationship with you but you are not prepared to commit time beyond your original commitment...

This will be your greatest challenge. How you handle this will depend on the relationship you have established.

Be sure to be personal and real; handle it in a way that you feel comfortable, but be sure to take into consideration you protégé's feelings and expectations.

Gently explain to the protégé that the program (or mentoring experience) has ended and that you wish them well.

Most importantly, do not make a promise you cannot keep. Do not agree to continue connecting if you have no intentions of doing so. You will do a great deal of harm in over promising and under delivering.

Please make sure there is no room for misinterpretation on the protégé's part. They must say goodbye, knowing exactly what, if anything, to expect in the future.



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What to do if the relationship will be continuing on past your agreed upon ending date...

Continue if you wish—but be sure to re-establish the boundaries and relationship goals. If you make a commitment—please stick to it.

Your relationship may end up being somewhere in between the above two situations...you may end your official mentorship experience but may maintain a casual communication link on occasion.



Mentoring Youth with Different Needs

Here are some suggestions for successful mentoring a young person with physical or mental challenges:

- Increase confidence and empower them by focusing on the ability not the disability
- Provide disabled protégés with access and support to professional knowledge and experience
- Increase employer understanding of disability issues
- Set them up for success with providing work experience or job shadowing opportunities that are within their capabilities
- Promote participation and retention of protégés within the local economy
- Mentors should be able to provide special needs protégés with support and access to professional knowledge and experience in such areas as:
 - Building self confidence
 - Job search and networking skills
 - Interview practice
 - Work experience
 - Developing interpersonal communication skills
 - Developing resumes
 - Empowering protégés to recognize their own transferable skills through their mentor relationships
 - Raising awareness of disability issues amongst employers and encouraging employers to view the benefits of diversity in the workforce.



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To be a more valuable and productive mentor, connect with experts who are skilled in working with people with disabilities. If the disability is a learning disability, connect with the Community Living Association in your area. Many of the staff at Community Living have experience mentoring someone with a learning disability and will happily share their insight. If the disability is physical, search out the experts from the organizations that handle that particular disability. Help for the visually impaired is available at <http://www.cnib.ca>.

Other disabilities are covered at

http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/1people_with_disabilities.html

Do a little homework in order to find out what employers have a policy for hiring the disabled. HRDC has yearly events that showcase those employers and encourages people with disabilities to participate or learn more about what is available for them when looking for employment or further education.

Learning Disabilities

A disability affects the manner in which a protégé might perceive, organize, retain and express information. Protégés with learning disabilities may excel in certain areas, but have significant difficulties in at least one academic area. Mentors must have a wide variety of tricks up their sleeve to help overcome the disability and help their protégé benefit from the relationship. One of the tricks is colour coding.

Colour coding is a method where a protégé can learn more easily by organizing everything they need into categories using different coloured markers. When your protégé has been tested for learning disabilities, they discover the way they learn best. Some will learn best visually, others will be auditory, while others learn kinaesthetically. The visual student benefits from the colour coding method or using illustrations. The auditory protégé will gain more from taping and the kinaesthetic protégé will benefit by physically moving with learning. In addition to helping your protégé learn more about their opportunities, you will develop a comfortable social connection. When you mentor someone with a learning disability you may find you become very close and that a strong bond develops along with incredible trust.



Notable examples of people with learning disabilities include Albert Einstein, Woodrow Wilson, and Hans Christian Anderson, all of whom have made significant contributions in their respective fields despite their presumed learning disabilities.

It is very hard to find mentors with the exact job experience relating to the industrial field that most protégés with learning disabilities want to enter. Mentoring from the perspective that learning is open and a two-way process is an important part of this relationship. Protégés may find that the mentor's career may not reflect their specific career aspirations, but the relationship will still offer generic support, guidance, advice and experience.

b) Useful Information for Mentoring Internationally Educated Professional Youth

Research shows that non-recognition of immigrant credentials is costing Canadians over \$2 billion every year. To mentor well-educated new Canadians will mean faster integration into the mainstream of the Canadian economy and will vastly improve the bottom line for the country and for your protégé.

Studies from organizations like the Canadian Advanced Technology Association, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the Conference Board of Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada all point to the need to better utilize the talents of new Canadian professionals and skilled workers, particularly in the skills-short sectors of technology, health care provision and engineering. Mentoring can help to bridge this gap by connecting new talent to the labour market.

Many new Canadians are well educated with degrees from colleges and universities in their country of origin. Their challenge is that they face language and cultural barriers and that they usually have no network that connects them to the labour market. Often, they cannot communicate well enough in English to secure the job interview or to find employment in their field of expertise.

They need mentors who can meet with them on a regular basis to help guide and support their integration into a new community and connect them to people in the labour market. Mentors play a crucial role in helping to improve their English language skills. If you are mentoring a new Canadian of the same cultural background as you, resist the urge to speak in your native tongue. Speak only English in the mentoring relationship to help them develop their language skills!

Mentoring well-educated new Canadians can be challenging. Many of the protégés will have been very successful in their country of origin and find it difficult to accept the fact that until their English is at the level needed to work in their field of expertise, they may have to accept alternative career opportunities. When entering



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into a mentor/protégé relationship with this target group, the following rules will help both mentor and protégé build a relationship that will benefit both sides of this partnership.

Speak slowly—it's difficult enough to try and communicate with someone new, without having to follow a conversation that moves too quickly. Use your pen—write down key phrases, explain idioms and be cognizant that our body language may say something that our words don't.

Understand cultural differences. Do a little homework. Learn about your protégé's country and its history. Use the Canadian government website to find out more details about the country and its citizens - www.infoexport.gc.ca

Communicate effectively. Use praise to celebrate small victories. Develop an action plan to help create steps into new career choices. Help boost morale, share success stories with other protégés.

Care about their feelings and their former status—share what you can about similar agencies and organizations in Canada. Introduce your protégé to others with similar personal and professional interests.

Experience their culture and respect their expertise. Plan events that will involve cross-cultural learning. Tap into the ethnic radio and TV stations, encourage your protégé to share their stories with you. Learn to laugh together, to share experiences.

Set the pace and build the relationship one step at a time. Don't rush—encourage your protégé to share their dreams and their hopes for the future in Canada. Find common interests between you. This will create a stronger bond and will move the mentor/protégé relationship forward.

Support your protégé with information, contacts and commitment. Be aware of what is happening in their career field and encourage them to volunteer with organizations and associations that will help them improve their English and provide valuable work experience for their resume.

Find the best times to meet and communicate. The program you set up between your protégé and yourself should consist of regular meetings—in person, on the telephone and on line. Remember to coach both written and verbal language skills! Use the Internet to research your protégés career field—help your protégé find links that will help with a job search or a career change.

Update your knowledge. Help your protégé understand the value of other mentors and experts. When there is a speaker at an event you and protégé attend, the speaker may provide insight into one of the fields necessary for your protégée to



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find employment. Take notes and help her make the right connections. Encourage your protégé find a volunteer position with a company that will appreciate his or her expertise. This will provide an opportunity for them to showcase their skills while providing a connection into the Canadian workforce.

Check out - www.volunteer.ca

Locate information sites and sources. Share what you find. Monitor, coach and encourage your protégé in his or her career or continuing education search.

www.settlement.org is a website with a great resource called Alone in Canada—A Self Help Guide for New Immigrants that you can download.

c) Useful Information for Mentoring Youth at Risk

The term youth at risk, in this case, refers to a youth who is in danger of not reaching their potential in the labour market. They are unemployed (or significantly underemployed) and not in school. They are dealing with issues that are interfering with their ability to be successful. Some examples include youth that are: high school drop outs, single mothers, living in shelters, on welfare, recovering alcoholics or drug addicts, suffering from eating disorders, recovering from abusive relationships. They are more challenging to mentor into the workforce as they have major issues to deal with and these issues can present challenging situations for their mentors.

Research consistently shows that relationships with other caring adults in addition to one's parents can positively influence a young person. In a recent study of 1,000 young people, researchers found that those engaged in mentoring were significantly more likely than those without mentors, to have developed the attitudes and habits that can help ensure success.

For youth, mentoring has been shown to improve school performance and prevent illicit drug use, underage drinking and violence among young people. The key to success in mentoring, say the experts, is that it enhances a protégé's self-esteem and instills a sense of hope for the future. All of this leads to better readiness for employability skill development.

Compared to the other group, the youth with mentors:

- Were 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- Were 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol
- Were 53 percent less likely to skip school
- Were 33 percent less likely to engage in school violence



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- Had improved school attendance and performance, and better attitudes toward completing school work.
- Had improved peer and family relationships

When Mentoring Youth at Risk, What Works?

A form of mentoring happens naturally between children and their parents and other adult family members, or when a child strikes up a special relationship with a teacher or another adult. Creating a planned mentoring relationship is an entirely different thing. Linking strangers is tougher, especially when there are major issues to deal with. You may think you need to be a social worker to deal with some of these problems. The truth is just the opposite. Actually, many youth at risk feel bombarded by social workers and others who are “assessing and analyzing” them. What they need from you is acceptance, support and friendship in a non-judgemental environment.

Mentoring, first and foremost, is about building trust between mentor and protégé. This is even more important with youth with challenges. It will also take more time as many of these youth have difficulty trusting as they have been let down or abandoned in the past. Without putting in significant time and effort to build a trusting relationship with youth at risk, a mentor cannot expect to develop a positive relationship. Building trust between mentor and protégé is not an easy task. To be successful you need to maintain a steady, positive presence in the young person’s life.

Recognize that the relationship may be fairly one-sided for some time, and may involve silence and unresponsiveness from the young person. You must take the initial responsibility for keeping the relationship alive.

Pay attention to the young person’s need for “fun.” Not only is having fun a key part of relationship-building, it provides young people with valuable opportunities that are often not otherwise available to them.

Beyond the general tips for effective mentoring, the following are very important when dealing with a young person at risk:



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Do's

Be consistent and dependable

Respect their point of view and offer various solutions

Be patient

Involve them in deciding how you will spend your time together

Encourage them to consider change

Show you care without imposing conditions

Expect and insist that they take responsibility for their behaviour

Don'ts

Make promises you can't keep

Be judgemental

Force them to communicate

Be controlling

Push them into action

Place conditions on your support

Make excuses for them, defend or cover problem behaviour

If you need support, get it. You may not be able to solve all the challenges presented to you on your own. Take advantage of help and advice from a variety of sources.

Questions to ask yourself before mentoring a youth at risk.

Can I be trusted to show up when I say I will? It is important that you keep your promises; these youth have had many broken promises in their lives.

Can I listen to a youth at risk? Be sure you can show your interest—that your body language says “I care” and I’m listening. For some of these young people, there hasn’t been anyone listening for a long time.



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Can I let them know I understand their concerns? It's not your job to teach them right from wrong. It is part of your responsibility to be able to relate to their problems and to provide alternative choices for their consideration.

Do I know how to have fun? There hasn't been a great deal of laughter and fun in the lives of these young people. Ask what they like to do, what they do for fun.....if it's compatible to your lifestyle, plan an event you can share.

Has life been good to me? Here's a chance to give something back. Share your contacts, your friends, your family and your special interests. It could make a huge difference in the evolution of your protégé from a youth at risk to a responsible young Canadian.

Take an active role in the mentoring process.

- Find out more about what's happening for youth at risk in your community by contacting local schools, volunteer centers, and organizations.
- Read about what psychologists, teachers, principals and other experts who have experience with youth at risk have to share. Learn from them.
- You may need to coach on some very basic things such as table manners, appropriate language and professional conduct.

d) Useful Information for Mentoring Young Women

Mentoring a young woman allows you the chance to be a role model, to share your chosen career path with her. It is important that she understand that we all begin at the same place, with strengths and weaknesses, skills and talents and that the secret to a successful career choice is to tap into those positive attributes that many of us take for granted.

Make sure you tell your protégé your own personal story, and include your inspiration. Tell her why you decided to pursue your specific career, explain the choices you made as a woman. Include your personal experiences, the support networks you had, role models who impacted you, mentors who supported you and the obstacles you encountered. Many women struggle with balance—how do you deal with family and career demands, health and wellness, and finding time for yourself? It is important that your protégé can relate to you, and giving her a glimpse of yourself before your success will make it easier. Present a balanced and positive view of women in your field. If you are in a non-traditional role, or an extremely technical career, or a field where there is a very low participation of women, offer tips on how to handle male attitudes in the workplace if necessary. Be positive and focus on providing her with success strategies. Explain where you see your



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profession going in the future. List exciting new areas of employment she might want to consider. Highlight opportunities.

Encourage her to learn and upgrade her technology skills, and to stay in math and science. Young women still drop high school math at a higher rate than their male counterparts and female participation in the IT industry is still in the high twenties. Much of this is due to confidence—or lack of—so do whatever you can to build her self-esteem with positive reinforcement. Connect her to the associations that offer strategic information on scholarships/bursaries and encourage her to apply. Introduce her to alternative educational options like RMC—Royal Military College for professional career choices.

Treat your protégé as a critical thinking young person not a child, challenge her to think about her career interests and ask good questions. Be sure to focus on opportunities—not barriers. Encourage her to work collegially with men, not isolate herself. Help her to realize her strengths as a woman. Your protégé will meet and perhaps surpass your expectations with proper encouragement, support and role modeling.

A list of associations and organizations that may be of help:

Canadian Women in Communications
Women in Trades and Technology

Canadian Women in Mathematics - <http://www.cms.math.ca/Women/ORG/Organizations>

Canadian Society of Women Engineers - <http://www.societyofwomenengineers.org>

Canadian Women in Communications - <http://www.cwc-afc.com/>

Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity -
<http://www.caaws.ca>

Canadian Businesswomen in Trade - www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp

Canadian Women in Construction - <http://www.constructionwomen.org>

Canadian Women in Film and Television - <http://www.wift.com>

Canadian Women on the Web — www.digitaleve.com

Canadian Women Inventors — www.inventivewomen.com

Canadian Women in the Trades — <http://www.wittnn.com>



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Canadian Women in Capital Markets – <http://www.wcm.ca>

Canadian Women's Law Association – <http://www.wlao.on.ca>

Collaborative Programs for Immigrant Employment - <http://triec.ca/>

Newcomers to Canada - <http://www.cfee.org>

HAPPEN - <http://www.happen.ca>

Youth challenge International - <http://www.yci.org>

Words on Work - <http://www.wordsonwork.ca>



Suggested Activities to Do with Your Protégé

Some of these can be useful for developing a rapport and getting to know your protégé. They can be particularly useful for the first meeting—an icebreaker always makes it easier!

Dream Job — Ask your protégé to describe their dream job to give you insights into their interests. Share yours as well (if you don't have it already!)

Dream Vacation — Ask your protégé to describe their ideal vacation, share yours as well.

Get to Know You Questionnaire

Use the following questions to identify skills and talents while getting to know each other. Answer the questions verbally, one at a time, so that you both have an opportunity to share information about each topic.

1. What do I like to do in my spare time?
2. What are my hobbies/interests?
3. What associations, clubs or organizations do I belong to?
4. What is my favourite TV show? Movie? Food? Book? Actor?
5. Who is my best friend?
6. What am I good at?
7. What are my strengths?
8. What are my weaknesses?
9. What special skills do I have?
10. Where did I grow up?
11. Where did I go to school?
12. Who do I admire?
13. Am I a volunteer? Do I have a favourite charity or cause that I support?



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14. Do I have a dream and do I believe that it could come true?

15. What do I hope to accomplish in the next year?

Mapping a journey of discovery together

By discussing the questions above as thoroughly as possible, you develop a roadmap of all of your interests, skills, and talents and you may discover some commonalities. If your protégé seems uncomfortable talking, you can each complete the answers to these questions in written form and then exchange for discussion. Protégés will sometimes share more about themselves in writing than they will in person.

Once you have the opportunity to discuss or compare your similarities with each other, a rapport begins to develop. People like people who are like themselves, and often we don't take the time to find those common denominators. Building a rapport between mentor and protégé is the bridge that will make the mentoring process successful.

Mock Interviews—These are a great learning experience for your protégé. You can be the 'interviewer' or, better yet, you can have one of your colleagues play this role. Pretend it is a real interview and, afterwards, coach your protégé on the answers given as well as their body language.

Site visits to different places of work—Taking your protégé to various factories, businesses or other places of work can generate much discussion between the two of you while giving them first-hand experience in the world of work. These are especially great for visual learners!

Dream Boards

Sometimes it is easier to describe what you want—your goals and dreams—through words and pictures. This is also a simple way to get to know each other. First, make sure that you have the tools you need to have fun and generate a picture of what is important to your protégé. You will need Bristol board, a glue stick, scissors and old magazines.

This is an exercise that will help you get to know each other. Create a visual representation of yourself by asking the following question: What's important to you?



List in order of importance

- Family, friends, education, money, status
- In a perfect world, what would you like to do?
- Do you like Music? Animals? Travel? Sports? Kids?
- Do you volunteer—have a charity?
- Who do you admire? Why?
- What are you most proud of?

Go through the magazines together and find words and pictures that express your protégé's interests — the financial security, the opportunity to travel, the family, the friends and the dreams. Together, gather as many pictures and words that seem to relate to their interests and the goals you have determined together. Recognizing that your protégé is either visual, auditory or kinaesthetic, each of you will “see” things differently. You will “hear” what has been said, and create a picture from those words. You will “feel” the emotion expressed by your protégé and be able to create a picture that signifies those feelings. The dream board you create between you will build a stronger rapport, with better understanding of where your protégé wants to go.

Once the overview of their interests is completed, consider where there might be opportunity for their career advancement — using a hobby, a charity or a volunteer position as a step in the right direction. *Dreams can come true, with a little help from a dedicated mentor!*

An exercise in lateral thinking — Lateral thinkers broaden the possibilities by looking beyond the obvious and leaping to unthought-of opportunities. As a mentor, you need to think outside the box when it comes to making the right connections for your protégée.

Ask your protégé and a few of your colleagues if they have ever locked themselves out of their house or apartment. Listen to all of the ways they will use to “get in”. Some of them hide a key, others leave a key with a neighbour or relative. Some of them are more creative and can remove windows, doors and screens in order to “get in”. Others are even more creative and can “jimmy” the lock, use a credit card or simply break in.



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Whatever way we find to “get in”, the message is always the same—there is always more than one wayeven though our way is best for us. By practicing a little lateral thinking, we become more aware of alternatives and more open to “getting in” through a variety of creative suggestions. Often a protégé is stuck, they can’t seem to find what they need... lateral thinking will help them become “unstuck” and find answers that previously seemed impossible.

What would you do?

This is a moral/ethical dilemma that was once used as a part of a job application.

You are driving along in your car on a wild, stormy night. You pass by a bus stop, and you see three people waiting for the bus:

An old lady who looks like she is about to die.

An old friend that once saved your life.

The perfect man (or) woman you have been dreaming about.

Which one would you choose to offer a ride to, knowing that there could only be one passenger in your car?

Think before you continue reading

You could pick up the old lady, because she is going to die, and thus you should save her first; or you could take the old friend because he once saved your life, and this would be the perfect chance to pay him back. However, you may never be able to find your perfect dream lover again.

The candidate who was hired had no trouble coming up with his answer.

Here's what he said:

“I would give the car keys to my old friend, and let him take the lady to the hospital. I would stay behind and wait for the bus with the woman of my dreams.”

Never forget to “Think Outside of the Box.” Lateral thinking is a term developed by Dr. Edward DeBono in 1967 and is now defined in the dictionary as “seeking to solve problems by unorthodox or apparently illogical methods.”

For tools that will help you practice the art of ‘out of the box thinking’ go to <http://www.edwdebono.com/>



Mentoring Stories — Learning from the Experiences of Others

On Mentoring...

Being a mentor can be a very rewarding experience. Each mentoring relationship has its unique joys and challenges. No matter the nature of the mentoring relationship, the role of the mentor is usually consistent. A mentor is a role model, a guide, an advisor and a counsellor. They teach and coach their protégés. They model behaviour. They listen and explain. They open doors. They provide protective environments for protégés to practice behaviours and take risks. They provide feedback and support to enhance the learning process.

Anyone wishing to be a mentor must place a high priority on carrying out the mentor role and spend time fostering a caring and trusting relationship. You must be seen as a prime source of support and counseling to the protégé. To be a successful mentor, you need to let the protégé find their own path. You need to encourage independent thinking. You can point them in the right direction but they need to work things out for themselves.

Monica Frank (mentor)

The Experience...

I joined the Mentoring Program upon the recommendation of a friend, and it has been a worthwhile and fulfilling experience. I am impressed with the character of protégés and their commitment to making Canada their new home by establishing their careers and networks so soon after arriving here. In getting to know my own protégé and seeing the success of others over the course of the program, I am inspired by the spirit of women and what is possible when assisted in navigating the waters of the Canadian workplace.

The program is successful because it works on two levels. First, it provides a critical introduction into the Canadian workplace through the mentors and program content, and secondly it provides a forum for the women to share information, learn from each other, build confidence, improve language and simply create friendships. I am very proud of the progress my protégé has made in the past six months, as well as having been part of this dynamic and important program.

Heather Drinkwalter (mentor)



The importance of listening skills...

“Listen” as defined in the dictionary is “to give attention for the purpose of hearing”, and the importance of listening skills is essential for success.

There is a distinctive difference between hearing what is said and hearing what is wanting to be said. The art of asking probing questions and listening carefully to the responses, is critical in relationship building and problem solving.

Demonstrating good listening-skills is very important in developing a trusting relationship with your protégé. Often protégés just want someone to talk to, a second opinion, someone to share their thoughts, experiences and challenges with and look to their mentor for support and wisdom.

By demonstrating good listening skills, not only are you most likely to develop a positive and healthy relationship with your protégé, as I have, your chances of success in achieving your goals are that much greater.

Good luck in your new venture and I hope you enjoy the experience as much as I have.

Donna Pritchard (Mentor)

Disclosure and communication lead to better understanding...

When I first met my protégé, she told me that she was interested in a particular field, and I set to work on trying to get her moving in that direction. I made suggestions to her as to what types of activities she could be doing to reach her goal. For the job shadow, I even set up meetings for us to sit with two different individuals doing exactly the job my protégé said she wanted to do. Even though I made quite a few suggestions to her, my protégé didn't seem too interested in doing anything to reach her goal. Right after the job shadow, the communication from my protégé stopped and I didn't hear from her for a few weeks. She missed a meeting without so much as a phone call, and at that point, we were sure that she had decided to drop out of the program. Then a few weeks later, she did call me, and confided that the reason she hadn't done anything I had suggested earlier, was because she was pregnant and had been trying to decide what to do. It was then that I finally understood a little better what she was going through...I guess it's hard to think about planning a career, when you have a pregnancy to think about (especially when you're only 18 and this will be your second child). She had decided to change her career goals completely, and was interested in going back to school for her new goal. I'm working closer with her now, and we are able to discuss her goals together now that



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I know the “full picture”. I give her a lot of credit for trying to go to college, with having 2 kids at home, and I really hope she will be able to reach her goals.

Michelle Kammerer (mentor)

Mentoring Youth at Risk..

My protégé has a mind of her own. Who was I to direct her life or her journey. At the beginning I took it easy with slight innuendoes that would be heard but would not impact this young woman. Again she knew what she was doing and where she was going. If your protégé is on this kind of track, what right do mentors have in judging them. They are young and entitled to make their own decisions and mistakes. As long as they take ownership of these decisions, how could we fault them. The best learning is when a child falls down and picks themselves up again. Our role as mentors is to help them up, not push them down. They will learn at their own pace, we cannot save them from themselves. We can only present other opportunities and solutions. These solutions should come from the protégés’ mouth as we help them analyze their current and future decisions.

Do I judge my protégé? Maybe sometimes but I do my best to support her and help her up when she falls.

Will she trust me to love her where she is at? That is the biggest and best job we have to do for these young women.

With trust and the relationship we build, one day she will listen and apply some of our knowledge to her every day journey.

Our hearts need to be open and our support unconditional.

Joanne C. Wilson (mentor)

Establishing Common Ground with a Protégé...

Before a mentor can establish common ground with her protégé, the mentor should understand the goals and objectives of the mentorship program. The mentorship program is to assist new immigrants in overcoming employment barriers in Toronto.

Your role as a mentor is to assist, to help, to guide your protégé in overcoming employment barriers using your own experiences and all resources available in the program.

To establish a healthy relationship with your protégé, the following common grounds are most important:



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- 1. Commitment** - just like any relationship, without commitment the relationship will not last. As a mentor, you commit your time and effort to your protégé.
- 2. Sincerity** - let your protégé know that you are there for them. You want them to learn, to grow, and feel good about themselves, not to compare with other protégés. What they get out the program is to have confidence and feel good about themselves. This is far more important than the success of the program measured by how many protégés found jobs
- 3. Patience** - to nurture a relationship requires patience. Every protégé is learning at a different pace and has their own individuality, therefore as a mentor, you should have a huge amount of patience with your protégé and measure your protégé's success individually.
- 4. Kindness** - to be genuine, kind and supportive to your protégé. To share your experience, to be a good listener, to hear them, help them gain confidence, find value for life, have a positive attitude and have a dream.

Amy Chen (mentor)

Building a trusting relationship...

Trust is an important part in any relationship; the mentor-protégé bond is no different. A mentor and her protégé need to be mindful of the importance of building an open and trusting relationship at the onset.

In order to be successful, the mentor and protégé need to make the most of their limited time together. It's important for the mentor to learn about her protégé, listen to her, and let her know she is a resource that she can count on. Both parties need to be reliable and accountable. In doing so, they will build trust.

Once trust is established, the mentor can be a better resource to the protégé. Her protégé will be more likely to listen to her advice and guidance, and more willing to be open about what she wants to gain from the program.

Beth Corcoran (mentor)

Mentoring Youth at Risk...

Sure, it was frustrating that my protégé didn't show up at some of the monthly luncheons, and didn't return my phone calls. However, these incidents are insignificant compared to what the individual has experienced in her life. What is important is to be there for your protégé, with a non-judgmental attitude. When everyone else deserted her, she reached out to me as she knew she would not be judged.



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It is important to remember why you are entering the mentorship program...it is for the growth of the protégé. The challenge really becomes one of managing your own expectations through the mentor process. Knowing that I made a small difference in the life of my protégé by contributing to her personal development and moving her along the continuum of self-awareness was personally satisfying.

Andrea O'Reilly (mentor)

Challenges...

I guess one of the challenges I faced in the program related to communication. I have found that communication is closely intertwined with a person's culture and background, as well as their language. I found the session on communication to be quite helpful in that it gave me an indication of the influence cultural differences have on our communication habits (visual cues, etc.). I'm not sure that I had given this enough consideration in the past.

My protégé and I agreed to maintain weekly email communication and we tried to reduce activities to a set of 3 or 4 action items so as to maintain clarity. For example, we agreed that my protégé would apply for 5 positions each week and send me an email each Monday to let me know the previous week's progress. I was also fortunate to have my protégé work in my office on a volunteer capacity so that once each week we could meet with each other for a few minutes to discuss next steps and generally chat about how things were going.

Ann Marie Gillingham (mentor)

I want to fly!

This is the story of a young person who had a dream, a secret desire, a possible career choice, but was unable to find a way to make that dream come true.

Several years ago, in a gathering of young people at a high school, a speaker asked for volunteers to share their dream of a possible career choice. A young man raised his hand and told the speaker he wanted to be a pilot, but that he didn't think it was possible because he didn't have the money. The speaker told him to think laterally—that there was always more than one way to get what he wanted.

The speaker asked the youth in the audience who they knew, or what they would do if they were looking at flying as a career choice, suggesting to the crowd that they might help the young man follow his dreams. The suggestions came quickly—how about the military—they teach you to fly! Air cadets—join and learn to fly with them. Someone told the story of a friend who provided excellent customer service at a gas station, always offering the customer a smiling face. One day, a happy customer asked the young



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man how he could help him in return—the man was a flight instructor for a flying club! The boy learned to fly!

By thinking laterally and always encouraging your protégé to be aware of their options, mentors can help protégés achieve their goals.

Learning from the Experts

Sometimes mentoring is for the specific and definable development of a specific skill. A favourite mentoring story is the young pianist who came to Leonard Bernstein and asked to be mentored by him. Bernstein said, “Tell me what you want to do and I will tell you whether or not you’re doing it.”

When you analyze this, you realize Bernstein’s deep understanding of mentoring. The young man initiated the contact, he had a specific request, and he made the request to an authority—not that he might get rich as a concert pianist or become famous like Bernstein, but that he might become a better pianist.

Bernstein essentially said to the young man, “You’re responsible for your playing and your practice. The one thing you can’t do is hear yourself as a great pianist hears you. That I can do and will do for you.”

The study of mentoring can be organized, but not the application. Effective mentoring has no set formula. It’s a living relationship and progresses in fits and starts.

A good mentor uses analogies to help define the vision

So many young people we talk to have a variety of options when it comes to making a career choice and they feel they are not equipped to choose the right one. They hesitate at the thought of giving up any of the other choices.

A young man graduating from a prestigious university with high marks told his mentor that he had been “tested genius in thirteen areas” yet he couldn’t make up his mind which career path to follow. The Mentor used an analogy to help the young man understand his choices. He said, “You will have the chance to go out with many young women in your life before you marry, but you will choose one. Think about how you make that choice.”

With your career, you need to take the first step and get to know the first choice in your career journey. If it’s not the right one, you will know and move on, until you find exactly what you need.



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THE CANADA GOOSE: a new way to be part of a Mentor-Protégé relationship
Next fall, when you see Geese heading South for the winter flying in V formation, you might consider what science has discovered .Why do they fly this way?

As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. This is no longer a pyramid, rather an opportunity to lead with the support of others who can, when needed, take the lead.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily if they travel on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the birds in front. No one has to lead all the time.

If we had as much sense as the goose, we would stay in formation, traveling with those who are headed in the same direction.

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing, taking advantage of the lift from the rest in formation. Another goose takes a turn at leading the way. Sharing the responsibility makes the responsibility of leadership more acceptable.

It makes sense to take turns doing demanding jobs. By sharing the responsibilities, no one gets over-tired.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What do we do when we hear a honk from behind? Perhaps like the goose we should look on the sounds as encouragement and not as criticism. Everyone has an opinion and it counts!

Finally .and this is important .when a goose gets sick, or is wounded and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with the injured goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly and return to formation or until it dies. Only then do the geese launch out on their own, rejoining their flock or looking for another formation to join.

If we had the sense of a goose, we would stand by each other in the same way.



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The Inuksuk

A mentor is a guide and a role model for effective leadership. The Inuksuk is a universal symbol of the importance of friendship, and of our dependence on one another. Small replicas are given to acknowledge or establish a fellowship between people, companies and countries.

For centuries, massive stone figures built in the image of a human have stood silhouetted on the treeless Arctic horizons. They are called Inuksuk and were erected by Inuit people. They were used to show direction. Back to the sea .back to a home. They represent a legacy of a people determined to survive and determined to succeed. They believe “The difference you make today, counts in all our tomorrows”

One of their functions was to serve as guides, giving direction to fellow journeyers, and to all who would follow. They were a practical method of pointing the way to safe passage. In this purpose, they stand today, symbolic of our responsibility to one another and our dependence on one another.

The Inuksuk figure is a meaningful powerful symbol of the importance of making an effort today .doing something, saying something, giving something .that will make the way better and safer for all of us tomorrow.

Being a mentor means truly making a difference, perhaps not today, but in the future and for all our tomorrows...Congratulations on becoming a mentor—we hope you enjoy the journey!!

MENTOR

Make time for your protégé

Expand your professional horizons, share whom you know

Network with your peers and share that knowledge with your protégé

Take care—understand the cultural differences

Offer ways to have fun, as well as to set goals

Respect your protégé and ask for respect in return

PROTÉGÉ

Provide a positive attitude at every meeting

Respect your mentor’s time and expertise

Organize your wants and needs—make them easy to achieve

Take time to get to know your mentor

Expand your career horizons

Get ready to achieve your goals

Elevate your curiosity, ask questions!





Donna Messer

Networking Guru & Business Matchmaker

President, ConnectUs Canada

“Speaker”, “journalist”, “author”, “coach”, “trainer”, “advisor”, “facilitator”, “mentor” and “leader” are all words that describe Donna Messer to a tee. Look closer, however, and you’ll see that a common theme runs through them all – a *love of people*. For more than two decades, Donna has been a renowned expert on and promoter of the often overlooked, *true* currency of business – personal relationships – how to forge, nurture and leverage them to enable those who *properly* cultivate these relationships to put them to mutual benefit.

As President of *ConnectUs Canada*, Donna’s contact network extends well into the tens of thousands – a network that she routinely and freely shares with her clients, associates and acquaintances via the extensive speaking engagements and workshops she holds around the world.

A dynamic, highly sought-after speaker, Donna has spoken throughout North America, the Caribbean, Mexico, Europe and Iceland on a host of topics dealing with the art of networking and the ties that bind. She has spoken before Federal, Provincial, Municipal and State governments, even serving as an advisor to the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) on issues relating to women in business.

Among Donna Messer’s several hundred clients are top tier financial institutions, boards of trade, major accounting and law firms, and leading universities and colleges across Canada. Donna is also a frequent featured speaker at HAPPEN, Canada’s largest executive networking organization.

A sampling of her name clients include: Bell Canada, Honeywell, Certified Management Accountants, Canadian General Accountants, RBC, TD Canada Trust, BMO, CIBC, Scotiabank, Schulich School of Business, Rotman School of Business, Ernst & Young, Industry Canada, HP (Hewlett Packard), IVY School of Business,. Canadian Plastics Association, Women in Food Industry Management, Cushman and Wakefield, Hospice Association of Canada, Laurier University, Markel Insurance, Trade Ortho Bio Tech, Women’s Leadership Foundation – Calgary, CIRI Alberta, Manitoulin Workforce Partnership, Rogers Communications Inc., Big Brothers and Big Sisters Association, Junior Achievement World Conference, Petro Canada and Sun Life Assurance.

A noted author and journalist, Donna’s more than 4,000 articles have graced the pages of newspapers and magazines including *Enterprise Magazine*, *Small Business Canada Magazine*, *Career Options Magazine*, *Canadian Opportunities Magazine*, *Life and Fashion Magazine*, *Pets and Animals*, *Women with Vision Magazine*, *Company of Women Magazine*, *Timeless Woman*. Donna has interviewed various “movers and shakers” including Senator Pamela Wallin, former Liberal Cabinet Minister, Sheila Copps, as well as an exclusive interview with the Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson. Among her five books as a published author is *Effective Networking Strategies*, a Canadian bestseller written in 1993 well before “networking” became the *de rigueur* buzzword of the outplacement and executive search industries, selling over 50,000 copies over the past 15 years.

Donna has directed and advised on numerous boards and committees and has won various awards including Woman of the Year - Women in Pursuit of Excellence WFIM, International Leader’s Award – Women and Diversity, and the Award for Outstanding Achievement – CACEE. She was also Ernst and Young’s nominee for Entrepreneur of the Year.