

Women  
In  
Technology  
(WIT)

# Mentorship Toolkit

UNM's Women in Technology (WIT) Mentorship Program toolkits are based largely on existing resources of high quality. We appreciate that these organizations are willing to share their materials for others' use and reference.

*Mentor training 2023.pptx* and *Mentee training 2023.pptx*. UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC), Marcia Sletten.

*Six Critical Practices for Leading High Performing Teams*. Franklin Covey

*How to Build a Mentoring Program: A mentoring program toolkit*. USPTO,  
<https://www.uspto.gov/initiatives/equity/mentoring-programs>

*Templates and Forms: Additional mentoring program resources*. USPTO,  
<https://www.uspto.gov/initiatives/equity/mentoring-programs>

*Professional Mentoring*. Kansas State University, College of Health and Human Services,  
<https://hhs.k-state.edu/mentoring>

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# Welcome to the Toolkit!

Mentoring is a special partnership between two people based on commitment to the mentoring process, common goals/expectations of the partnership, and mutual trust and respect. It is a “get and give” experience with the goal of providing a rich and rewarding experience for both partners.

**The mission of the UNM WIT Mentorship Program is to empower our members through a transformative mentorship program that fosters meaningful connections, provides valuable resources, and creates a safe space for curiosity and growth. By connecting Mentees with accomplished tech professionals from diverse industries throughout New Mexico, we aim to cultivate a thriving community of learners and equip them with the knowledge, networks, and confidence to excel in their careers and beyond.**

## What is mentoring?

A professional mentoring relationship is a developmental partnership where a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. This relationship is generally focused on advancing the professional growth and career goals of the mentee. Here are key elements of a professional mentoring relationship:

- **Learning and Development:** The primary purpose is to facilitate the personal and professional growth of the mentee. The mentor provides guidance, knowledge, and support, and helps the mentee navigate the complexities of their career field.
- **Goal-Oriented:** Both parties work together to define and achieve specific career goals. These might include skill development, networking, or career advancement.
- **Communication:** Effective mentoring requires open, honest, and respectful communication. Regular meetings and interactions are important to establish trust and mutual understanding.
- **Mutual Benefit:** While the mentee gains from the mentor's experience and advice, mentors also benefit from the relationship. They often gain fresh perspectives, expand their network, and enhance their leadership skills.
- **Confidentiality:** Trust is crucial, and maintaining confidentiality about what is shared in mentoring sessions helps to build and preserve this trust.
- **Voluntary and Personalized:** Effective mentoring relationships are generally voluntary and not mandated. They should

be tailored to the specific needs and personalities of the mentor and mentee.

Overall, professional mentoring can be a valuable resource for career development, providing the mentee with insights and advice that are difficult to obtain through formal educational channels or regular workplace interactions.



Photo Courtesy of Shutterstock

Mentoring pairs will:

- Commit to a trustful, respectful, and confidential relationship.
- Commit to the further development of each other.
- Support one another by creating a safe and welcoming environment.
- Value each other's time.
- Actively engage in the Mentoring Program activities.

## **Mentorship program tools & resources**

- This toolkit
- <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-amazing-mentor-12-ways-make-positive-impact-others-barlow/>

- *Mentoring Toolkit for Mentee Success*
- *Building a Mentee-Mentor Partnership*
- *6 Tips to Be a Better Mentor*

## **Mentor Toolkit**

### **Mentor benefits**

Mentoring is a key tool for developing our most important asset: our people. It relies on shared goals, a commitment to the process, and mutual trust and respect between mentor and mentee.

As a mentor, you reflect on your achievements and challenges, sharing your expertise and guiding another's career. This not only helps you leave a legacy but also reinvigorates your own career goals.

Benefits of mentoring include:

- Personal satisfaction from aiding professional growth.
- Learning from the mentee.
- Building new relationships.
- Developing teaching skills by clarifying career goals.
- Enhancing guidance skills by helping navigate organizational waters.
- Improving advisory skills by identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Consider what you hope to offer as a mentor. Think about the kind of mentee you seek—someone on a similar career path, someone with complementary skills, or perhaps someone motivated by advancement. This partnership is an opportunity for both growth and reflection.

### **Mentor roles and responsibilities**

Development of your mentee depends on exploring career aspirations, strengths, and weaknesses. Collaborating means working together to understanding the established goals, implementing strategies, applying resources and experience for learning and practical application (when applicable), and evaluating along the way. You, as the

mentor, provide the “light” for the mentee to follow. Sharing your wisdom and past experiences is what the mentee looks for from you.

Here are a few roles and responsibilities to help you in the process:

- Support mentee development of professional and interpersonal competencies through strategic questioning, goal setting, and planning.
- Create a supportive and trusting environment.
- Agree to, and schedule, uninterrupted time with your mentee.
- Stay accessible, committed, and engaged during the length of the program.
- Actively listen and question.
- Give feedback to the mentee on their goals, situations, plans, and ideas.
- Encourage your mentee by giving them genuine, positive reinforcement.
- Serve as a positive role model.
- Provide direct but kind corrective feedback if necessary.
- Openly and honestly share “lessons learned” from your own experience.
- Keep discussions on track.
- Respect your mentee’s time and resources.
- Participate in the scheduled events for the program.
- Seek assistance if questions arise that you cannot answer.

## **Ideas to assist your mentee**

Here are some strategies to enhance your mentee's experience:

- **Shadowing:** Invite your mentee to observe you during work, including meetings, to demonstrate your competencies in action.
- **Work Sharing:** Design tasks within projects that allow your mentee to assist you, helping them understand your role and contributions to the organization.

- Hands-on Training: Provide opportunities for your mentee to learn specific skills and introduce them to new aspects of the organization.
- Networking Introductions: Facilitate introductions to key individuals and others within the organization to expand your mentee's network and perspective.
- Effective Communication: Focus on listening more than talking. Utilize effective questioning techniques to foster progress and improve your listening skills to better support your mentee.

## **Effective questioning tips for mentors**

As a mentor, it can be very easy to just jump in and solve your mentee's problems for them. However, your role is to help the mentee think for themselves, and to do so, this involves you asking thought-provoking questions. Help your partner self-discover. Questions should usually be open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a one-word answer.

We want you to be a questioning coach. Use questions to help your mentee reflect on their experiences and learn from yours. Being a questioning coach gives you an opportunity to:

- Uncover additional facts and information about your mentee.
- Confirm your mentee's goals, aspirations, and needs.
- Explore strong feelings about situations.
- Define problems and possible solutions.
- Discover your mentee's commitment to growth.

Here are some suggestions for questions you might ask during your sessions.

### **Exploratory questions — to assess the real issues and gain greater understanding:**

- What are the most interesting aspects of your job?
- Why did you pick this to concentrate on?
- What do you want to gain?
- What do you want to be known for?
- What do you understand the issue to be?



- What tells you that your assessment is correct? What are other people's perceptions of this issue?
- What assumptions are you making here?
- What other ideas do you have?
- How long has this been an issue?
- What did you learn from past experiences that you didn't expect to learn?
- What are the reasons behind an issue?
- Have you tried to resolve this issue before? Why or why not? If yes, what was the result?
- What choices do you have?
- What progress have you made?
- What other ideas do you have?
- How are you using the things/ideas we've spoken about?
- What results are you looking for?

**Empowering questions — to assist the mentee to think for themselves:**

- What are the skills you want to develop?
- What strategies come to mind when looking at a situation?
- What do you see as possible solutions here?
- What outcomes are you after here? Are these outcomes reasonable given the circumstances?
- What resources are available to help you move forward?
- What key players do you need help from?
- What forces may help and/or hinder you?
- What other information do you need to arrive at a solution?
- What are the pros and cons of each solution?
- What is the first step you need to take to achieve your preferred outcome?
- What alternative strategies should you develop?

- How will you know you have mastered or successfully enhanced a competency?
- How will you apply your new skill?

Ask more questions to fully grasp the responses you receive. Rephrase the answers to confirm your understanding.

Most importantly—**ask more questions and give fewer answers!**

## **Giving feedback — checklist for mentors**

These are some guidelines and suggestions that can help you during your mentoring sessions.

### **Two types of feedback**

- Reinforcing
  - Highlights behaviors
  - Builds confidence
  - Inspires team members
  - Creates a culture of respect
- Redirecting
  - Raises awareness
  - Highlights impact
  - Clarifies expected behaviors
  - Communicates belief
- How to receive feedback
  - Stay Open: Approach feedback with an open mind and a non-defensive attitude to fully absorb and learn from it.
  - Listen and Clarify: Actively listen to the feedback and ask for specific examples to understand it better.
  - Express Appreciation: Thank the provider for their feedback, showing gratitude for their effort to help you improve.

## **Guidelines for giving feedback**

- Clarify the intent: Make sure your intent is to help the other person learn and grow. If your intent is not genuine, reconsider giving feedback.
- Share specific observations
- Lay out the fact of what you've seen and the behaviors you have observed. Use "I" messages to do this.
  - "I've observed that \_\_\_\_\_".
  - "It appears to me \_\_\_\_\_".
  - Describe the impact
  - State the impact on results. What outcomes has this behavior produced?
- Ask for/offer suggestions as needed
- Explore ways to either repeat positive behaviors (reinforcing) or adopt new behaviors (redirecting).

## **Exhibit positive or neutral body language**

Do use:

- Good eye contact — no scary stares
- Interested/neutral facial expression
- Nodding of head to show understanding or agreement
- Calm tone of voice
- Even voice volume
- Sitting slightly forward
- Relaxed arm and hand placement

Avoid using:

- Reduced eye contact, scowling, or narrowing of eyes
- Tense or aggressive posture
- Rocking, pen bouncing, hand wringing, or your specific version of nervousness or defensiveness

- Hands on hips or tightly clenched
- Arms folded across chest
- A blank expression

## **Listening and sharing**

- Use “I” statements – give examples from your experience.
- Avoid statements that describe your mentee(s) instead of their actions. Ensure feedback is specific.
- Give the other person an opportunity to ask questions or share their viewpoint.
- Listen carefully not only to the words but also to the feelings and body language of the speaker. If you find yourself feeling defensive, change your body position and take a deep breath, then continue the discussion.
- Don’t interrupt when the other person is responding.
- Be open to receiving feedback, as well – not only is this good practice for your mentee(s), but it will help you better understand your mentee’s needs and improve your mentoring skills.
- Allow time and privacy for feedback — avoid/minimize distractions, set aside an uninterrupted time for your feedback session.
- Help your mentee plan for next steps. Ask questions such as:
  - What is a step you can take to reach your desired outcome?
  - What are some ways you can think of to resolve this challenge?
  - What resources are available to you?
  - What can I do to help you?

## **Tips for being a good listener**

Be an “active” listener. That means doing the following:

- Give the mentee(s) your undivided attention. Put your phone on Do Not Disturb and lock your computer (unless you need it for mentoring) to minimize disruptions.
- Hear the person out. Avoid interrupting.

- Be aware of your non-verbal cues such as nodding, smiling, and maintaining eye contact.
- To ensure that you heard the person correctly:
  - Paraphrase: "As I understand ...", "So, you're saying that ...", "Let me see if I got that ..."
  - Summarize: "So, your three concerns are ...", "There seem to be a few issues ...", "So, our main goals this time are ..."

# Mentee Toolkit

## Mentee benefits

Mentoring is a unique partnership grounded in mutual commitment, shared goals, focus, and trust. This relationship is a partnership designed for mutual growth.

As a mentee, you benefit from your mentor's experience, learning from their expertise and past mistakes. You'll enhance specific skills, build connections with experienced colleagues, and gain insights into higher-level roles within the organization.

Key benefits include:

- A supportive listener for both successes and challenges.
- Improved planning, learning, and communication skills.
- Insight into organizational dynamics and direct, honest feedback.
- Advocacy within the company.

Reflect on what you seek in a mentor:

- Do you want someone who has followed the career path you aspire to?
- Do you want someone who embodies the skills you want to develop?
- Are you looking for a mentor who possesses skills you lack but want to acquire?
- Do you need a mentor who can act as a reliable sounding board for your goals?

## Mentee roles and responsibilities

Your development hinges on exploring career aspirations and identifying strengths and weaknesses. Collaboration involves working with your mentor to set goals, strategize, utilize resources, and evaluate progress. Your mentor provides guidance, drawing on their wisdom and experience to benefit you.

- Key roles and responsibilities include:

- Commit to your development.
- Take responsibility for acquiring and enhancing skills.
- Discuss your Individual Development Plan with your mentor.
- Maintain openness and honesty about your goals, expectations, and concerns.
- Engage actively in listening and questioning.
- Foster a supportive and trusting environment.
- Seek and be open to advice, feedback, and direction.
- Ask for additional feedback if needed—it's essential for growth.
- Prepare for meetings with specific topics or issues.
- Respect your mentor's time and resources.
- Apply what you learn to your job.
- Keep your supervisor updated on your progress.
- Provide feedback to your mentor to improve the mentoring relationship.
- Participate in scheduled program events.

## **Giving & receiving feedback**

These are some guidelines and suggestions that can help you during your mentoring sessions and beyond.

- Reinforcing
  - Highlights behaviors
  - Builds confidence
  - Inspires team members
  - Creates a culture of respect

- Redirecting
  - Raises awareness
  - Highlights impact
  - Clarifies expected behaviors
  - Communicates belief

## **Receiving feedback—checklist for mentees**

Feedback is a valuable learning opportunity! Here's how to effectively receive it:

- Positive Body Language:
  - Maintain good eye contact.
  - Keep a neutral or interested facial expression.
  - Nod to show understanding.
  - Use a calm tone with an even voice volume.
  - Sit slightly forward with relaxed arms and hands.
- Avoid Negative Body Language:
  - Avoid reduced eye contact, scowling, or narrowing of eyes.
  - Don't adopt a tense or aggressive posture.
  - Refrain from fidgeting like rocking or pen bouncing.
  - Keep your arms uncrossed and hands relaxed, not on hips or clenched.
- Effective Listening:
  - Don't interrupt; listen fully before responding.
  - If unclear, ask for clarification or examples.
  - Paraphrase what was said to confirm understanding, e.g., "What I understood you to say was...", "Let me see if I have this right...", "What I hear you say is if I do X, I will achieve Y."



- Constructive Response:
  - Provide necessary background information succinctly, avoiding excuses.
  - Stay open and non-defensive; if you feel defensive, adjust your posture, take a deep breath, and refocus on the discussion.
  - Compare the feedback with other feedback you've received to see patterns or differences.
  - Discuss strategies and next steps, proposing solutions.
  - Share your progress with your mentor to demonstrate growth and engage them in your development.

## **Listening and sharing**

- Use "I" statements – give examples from your experience.
- Ensure feedback is specific.
- Give the other person an opportunity to ask questions or share their viewpoint.
- Listen carefully not only to the words but also to the feelings and body language of the speaker. If you find yourself feeling defensive, change your body position and take a deep breath, then continue the discussion.
- Don't interrupt when the other person is responding.
- Avoid/minimize distractions.
- Help your mentor plan for next steps. Consider these questions before each session:
  - What is a step you can take to reach your desired outcome?
  - What are some ways you can think of to resolve this challenge?
  - What resources are available to you?
  - What can your mentor do to help you?

## **Giving feedback— checklist for mentees**

These are some guidelines for giving feedback to your mentor.

- Be clear to yourself about the intent: Make sure your intent is to help the other person learn and grow. If your intent is not genuine and helpful, reconsider giving feedback.

- Give examples of the current method, approach, or whatever you're giving feedback about based on your observations.
- Describe the impact: State the impact on your learning. What outcomes has this behavior produced?
- Suggest to your mentor what would be helpful for how you learn or what you're interested in to meet your goals, for example:
  - Maybe having more examples related to your subject of interest.
  - Maybe more hands-on practice during your mentoring sessions.
  - If your sessions are virtual, maybe asking to record the sessions for your own reference later.
- Let your mentor know what IS working for you! It's just as important to give feedback about what is going well so your mentor knows what's helpful to you.

## **Tips for being a good listener**

Be an "active" listener. That means doing the following:

- Give the mentor your undivided attention.
- Put your phone on Do Not Disturb and lock your computer (unless you need it for mentoring) to minimize disruptions.
- Hear the person out. Avoid interrupting.
- Be aware of your non-verbal cues such as nodding, smiling, and maintaining eye contact.
- To ensure that you heard the person correctly:
  - Paraphrase: "As I understand ...", "So, you're saying that ...", "Let me see if I got that ..."
  - Summarize: "So, your three concerns are ...", "There seem to be a few issues ...", "So, our main goals this time are ..."

## **Appendix: Templates and Forms**

The following are meant to provide example templates and forms to capture important discussion outcomes for program success. Mentors and Mentees may use these as a basis for establishing agreement on confidentiality and meeting rules, and for planning and capturing important ideas and data for the program. Additionally, any of these documents are subject to change by the WIT Mentorship Program Committee.

# Confidentiality Agreement

**Trust must be a verb before it is a noun.** You must trust and be trustworthy to be trusted. It is one of the most, if not THE most, important factors in the partnership.

Mentoring pairs will share information about one another throughout the association. Partners must be very clear on the limits they want to place on the information shared. Establishing clear boundaries is a big step toward building trust.

Here are a couple of statements to start your agreement. You may accept these as they are, build upon them, or establish a completely new agreement. The important thing is that both partners concur with the Confidentiality Agreement.

1. What we discuss will stay between the two of us. [use the space below to add to this]

2. What we discuss will stay between the two of us, unless we give each other permission or ask that the information be shared with others. [use the space below to add to this]

3. Add other additional conditions you both mutually agree to.

---

Mentor signature

---

Date

---

Mentee signature

---

Date

## Mentoring Agreement

Mentoring is a “get and give” experience with the goal of providing a rich and rewarding experience for both partners. Both partners must be respectful of each other’s time and commitments. This form can help you develop a schedule for your meetings. Please print information and sign below. Each partner is to keep a copy, and one is to be provided to the program administrator.

Mentor:

Mentee:

Meeting time (e.g., 10 AM., 2:30 PM):

Preferred meeting day:

Frequency of meetings (e.g., once a week, every other week):

We will generally meet for <# of minutes or hours>.

The best way to contact < Mentor name> is by <phone, text, email, Teams, etc.>.

The best way to contact < Mentee name> is by <phone, text, email, Teams, etc.>.

If unforeseen events arise and meeting time/day must be changed, we will give our mentoring partner at least <number> <hours, days> notice if possible.

---

Mentor signature

---

Date

---

Mentee signature

---

Date

## Mentee Action Plan

With your mentor, set goals that are focused, realistic, and tied to your competency goals. Effective goals should be SMART:

**S:** Specific

**M:** Measurable

**A:** Achievable

**R:** Results-oriented

**T:** Time-based

Focus on competencies important to your organization. Build on your strengths as well as your weaknesses. Look for opportunities to learn by doing as well as observing and listening. You can copy/paste the table for additional goals.

### Goal #1:

| Competency: What specific skill(s) do I want to develop? | Learning activity: What action will I take to develop this? | Beginning date and ending date | My co-workers and supervisor will see the following... | I know I have achieved my goal when ... |
|--|---|--------------------------------|--|---|
|  |   |                                |  |   |
|  |   |                                |  |   |
|  |   |                                |  |   |

**Goal #2:**

| <b>Competency: What specific skill(s) do I want to develop?</b> | <b>Learning activity: What action will I take to develop this?</b> | <b>Beginning date and ending date</b> | <b>My co-workers and supervisor will see the following ...</b> | <b>I know I have achieved my goal when ...</b> |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|   |  |                                       |  |  |
|   |  |                                       |  |  |
|   |  |                                       |  |  |

**Goal #3:**

| <b>Competency: What specific skill(s) do I want to develop?</b> | <b>Learning activity: What action will I take to develop this?</b> | <b>Beginning date and ending date</b> | <b>My co-workers and supervisor will see the following ...</b> | <b>I know I have achieved my goal when ...</b> |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|   |  |                                       |  |  |
|   |  |                                       |  |  |
|   |  |                                       |  |  |





## **Mentoring Program Mid-Point Review—Mentor Form**

Mentee name:

Mentor name:

Date:

1. How has your overall experience with the mentoring program been so far?
2. Do you feel the resources provided by the mentoring program manager adequately prepared you for your role as a mentor?
3. Have you and your mentee been able to build a comfortable working relationship?
4. Do you think reviewing your mentee's application was helpful in learning how you two could work together? Why or why not?
5. Do you think the Mentoring Log and Action Plan were helpful in keeping your meetings on track? Why or why not?
6. Please share additional comments here:

## **Mentoring Program Mid-Point Review — Mentee Form**

Mentee name:

Mentor name:

Date:

1. How has your overall experience with the mentorship program been so far?
2. Do you feel the resources provided by the mentorship program team adequately prepared you for your role as a mentee?
3. Have you and your mentor been able to build a comfortable working relationship?
4. Are you able to learn from your mentor's experience and background?
5. Do you think reviewing your individual development plan with your mentor will help you achieve your goals? Why or why not?
6. Please share additional comments here: