



Support your colleagues

-----+ February 2011

MENTOR'S GUIDE



The Bar of
Montreal



JEUNE BARREAU DE MONTRÉAL
YOUNG BAR OF MONTREAL

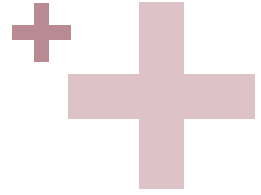


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part 1 – What is mentorship?	3
TABLE A – Key elements of mentorship	3
Part 2 – Origin and objectives of the mentorship program	4
TABLE B – Roles of the mentor	4
Part 3 – Why become involved in this program?	5
TABLE C – Interest of the parties	5
Part 4 – Secrets of a successful mentorship relationship	6
TABLE D – Lifecycle of a mentorship relationship	7
TABLE E – Characteristics of a good mentor and duties to the mentee	8
Part 5 – Subjects frequently raised by mentees	8
Part 6 – Some tools at your disposal	9

Our thanks to the Mentorship Network of the Fondation de l'entrepreneurship for allowing us to use its mentors' guide as a basis for this publication.

What is mentorship ?



Mentorship is a relationship in which mentors invest their time and share their knowledge and skills with less experienced persons who wish to benefit from this exchange and take steps to make it happen.

Everyone can remember someone who has helped them learn something important, achieve a goal or make a dream come true. Mentorship is thus a social phenomenon. And while it is a form of education and learning that is as old as time, it is more than a simple relationship.

While coaching focuses on the transfer of specific skills from an experienced person to an apprentice (i.e. a one-way process for communicating knowledge), mentorship, in its essence, encompasses the system of moral and social values of a given society whose manifestation triggers an interaction between two individuals, the mentor and the mentee.

To structure the relationship and determine what direction discussions, support and learning should take, the mentor takes into account both the professional and personal situation of the mentee and the reasons for engaging in mentorship.

Characteristics of mentorship¹	Concepts contrary to mentorship²
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• transmission of knowledge in an interaction• relationship based on respect, frankness and mutual trust• relationship that contributes to the personal fulfillment and development of both the mentor and mentee• mutual assistance• free• voluntary• sharing of experiences• exchange of ideas• constructive debates• willingness to give positive and critical feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• obligation• hierarchical relationship• power relationship• private tutoring• one-way relationship• therapy• rigid process with very strict rules

1 Based on promotional materials from Mentorat Quebec (2004); for details see their portal: www.mentoratquebec.org

2 Excerpt from the *Programme interministériel de mentorat pour les gestionnaires intermédiaires*, Human Resources Branch, Canada, 2000.

Part 2

Origin and objectives of the mentorship program

In 1999, the Bar of Montreal and the Young Bar of Montreal together created the mentorship service. It consists of matching lawyers to create a relationship of mutual assistance for a minimum period of six months. Its goal is to reduce isolation, answer questions associated with the practice of law that can occur to any lawyer after any number of years of practice and guide the youngest lawyers in the practice of law.

A lawyer with more than five years of practice acts as mentor to a colleague (mentee), enabling the colleague to benefit, among others, from a network of contacts, receive advice or simply obtain another point of view regarding professional practice.

The relationship so established is mutually satisfying and offers a very positive image of such mutual assistance, not only within the legal community but also to the general public.

Mentors may also be asked to answer practical and ethical questions.

TABLE B — Roles of the mentor

- create a trusting relationship;
- focus on discussions of ideas rather than engaging in monologues;
- share the highs and lows of his practice in order to discuss varied experiences;
- consult other colleagues in case of doubt;
- assist the mentee in standing out in their workplace;
- guide the mentee, in the discussion of a particular case, to ask questions in the form of a statement of facts, to avoid revealing the client's identity or creating a conflict of interest;
- ensure, when the identity of a client must be disclosed, that there is no current or potential conflict of interest before pursuing the discussion;
- inform the mentee about the appropriate conduct with colleagues;
- assist the mentee in finding answers or guide him to the appropriate services (courthouse, CAIJ, Internet, Bar, etc.);
- inform the mentee about ethical issues, alert him, point out the practical considerations that may be involved and, if necessary, refer him to the Office of the Syndic of the Barreau du Québec at 514 954-3438.

Why become involved in this program ?



By offering the mentee opportunities for learning and achievement, the mentor helps him develop self-confidence. Since the mentorship relationship is both personal and professional, it also offers the mentor an opportunity, even a unique chance for self-evaluation.

Moreover, mentorship enables experienced lawyers to feel useful, experience personal satisfaction and develop a critical attitude. It appears that the main benefits for the parties go hand-in-hand with higher quality legal services, thereby resulting in greater protection of the public.

The mentor	The mentee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• has a real and positive impact on the future of a colleague;• contributes to the success of one of his peers;• shares his experiences and feels useful;• profits from learning and continues to improve;• trains and strengthens the next generation by supporting the efforts of young lawyers;• develops new relationships in the law community;• contributes to the advancement of the profession;• assures greater protection of the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wishes to learn and develop his potential;• needs help, acknowledges it and expresses it;• agrees to sum up the experience and set goals for himself;• is open to the opinions and advice of a peer;• profits from the relationship and makes progress;• is ready to enrich his attitudes, try out new behaviours and learn from his errors;• is aware of the priceless assistance he is receiving• improves his own and his family's quality of life;• understands the importance of mentorship within his profession and is willing, in turn - sometime in the future - to contribute to it;• assures greater protection of the public.

Secrets of a successful mentorship relationship

Mentorship is based on a relationship of trust between two individuals; they must each feel comfortable in this special situation. Accordingly, there must be an appropriate structure.

For a match to be successful, it is vital for the mentor and mentee to be sure that every step of the process meets their respective expectations.

During their first encounters, affinities become evident and the desire to create a mutually helpful relationship either becomes more present or does not.

Here are some suggested questions to help you get to know the mentee better :

- Tell me about your background (family, places that have marked your life, etc.).
- Tell me about the people who are most important for you.
- Tell me about things you care about.
- Tell me about the main stages in your life, your career.
- What have been the happiest moments in your life and why?
- What are your main talents?
- What are your weaknesses and your greatest flaws?
- Why did you decide to practice law?
- What are your strengths in law and/or other areas?
- When did you think of starting your own firm and why?
- When and how did you come into contact with your first clients and your current clientele?

Although mentorship is a natural phenomenon, there are five fundamental principles that must be present in a structured mentorship relationship³:

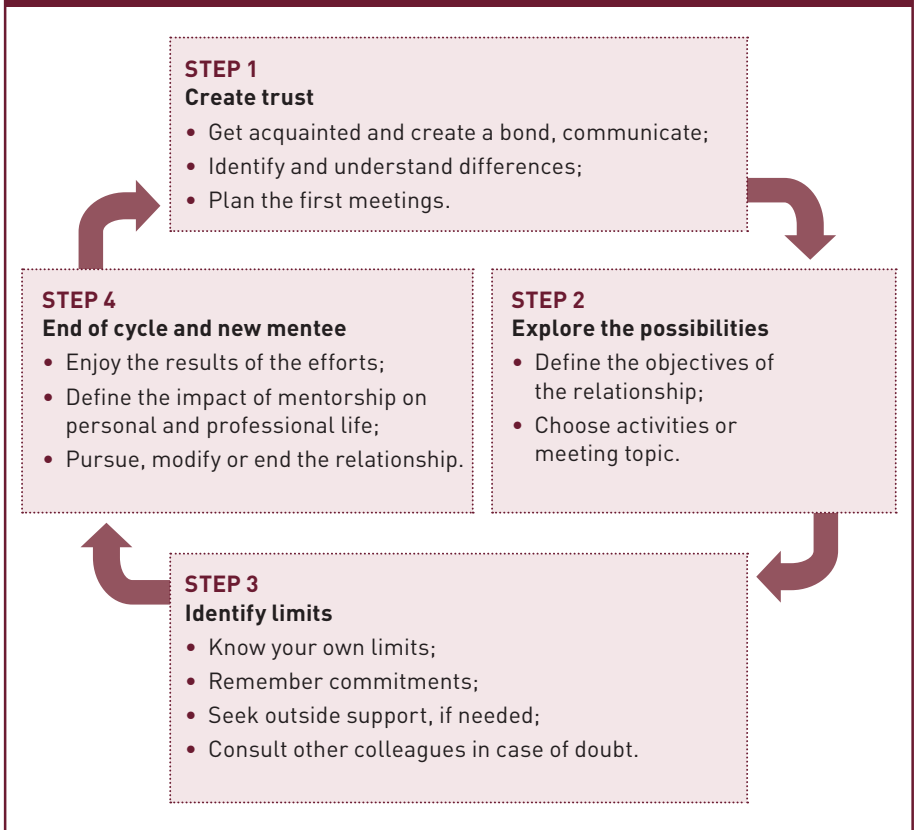
- The mentor is a volunteer who has structured resources at his disposal;
- The relationship is based on a mutual agreement that has simple, quantifiable, targeted, realistic and tangible objectives;
- The meetings take place on a regular basis and are followed by a report, as needed (see page 12);
- The meetings are confidential;
- A Mentor's Code of Ethics is proposed (see page 10).

³ Principles recommended by the Canadian Youth Foundation.

Success also comes from well planned meetings, and the parties are urged to agree on the following⁴:

- Frequency of meetings;
- Time of day;
- Day of the week;
- Week of the month, preferably;
- Desired length of meetings;
- Desired place of meetings;
- Confirmation of meetings;
- Preparation of meeting report, as needed (see page 11).

TABLE D — Lifecycle of a mentorship relationship⁵



⁴ Ibid, Note 2

⁵ Taken from R. Hamilton and M. Mocket, "How To Be A Great Mentor", Newsweek, Washington, United States.

TABLE E — Characteristics of a good mentor and duties to the mentee

Characteristics of a good mentor ⁶	Duties to the mentee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• likes and understands human nature;• listens;• analyzes needs;• provokes thought;• strengthens self-confidence;• gives wise advice;• shares critical sense;• offers a sincere and happy relationship;• establishes close links;• ensures that it is a secure relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows interest in his well-being;• detects his aspirations;• put his fears in perspective;• recognizes and confronts negative behaviours;• encourages and promotes winning behaviours;• respects his decisions;• is not judgmental;• is tolerant and sympathetic in all circumstances.

Part 5

Subjects frequently raised by mentees

The concerns of the mentee are the focus of the discussions between the parties. The way a subject is treated or analyzed determines the quality of the mentor's involvement.

Here are some examples of subjects frequently mentioned by mentees :

- Ethical aspects of the practice of law;
- Family-work or work-leisure balance;
- Computerized record management;
- Research and new technologies (Internet);
- Work satisfaction and motivation;
- Fees, learning and office management;
- Potential career paths;
- Job search advice;
- Opening a firm and various types of partnerships;
- Establishment of a network of contacts;
- Personal organization of work;
- Harmonious relationships at work;
- Becoming a partner.

⁶ Based on the Leadership Handbook, SCORE, U.S., Crisp Publications, 1997.

Part 6

Some tools at your disposal



To assist the mentor, here are some tools for better launching the mentorship relationship and ensuring adequate follow-up while it continues.

Improve listening and evaluate needs⁷

The mentor should answer the following questions, in order to improve his qualities as a mentor, for the benefit of himself and the mentee.

	Enough	Not enough
1. I ask questions to better understand, when necessary.	_____	_____
2. I ask questions to get the mentee to clarify his thoughts.	_____	_____
3. I use humour prudently to reduce tension.	_____	_____
4. I let him know that I enjoy helping him achieve his objectives or his dreams.	_____	_____
5. I let him know that I am available in an emergency.	_____	_____
6. I choose varied meeting places to facilitate discussion, at the convenience of the mentee.	_____	_____
7. I make sure of the dynamics of communication at meetings.	_____	_____

⁷ Ibid, Note 6 and adaptation.

Mentor's Code of Ethics⁸

1. Act in the interest of the mentee

- The mentor and the coordinator must conduct their activities so that the interest of the mentee always comes first;
- When the mentor is no longer able to pursue his commitment, he must inform the coordinator as soon as possible, so that the coordinator can take the appropriate steps;
- Coordinator and mentor must always protect the confidentiality of the information disclosed by the mentee or by any person who may have business dealings with him.

2. Conflict of interest

- When a mentor has several mentees he and the coordinator must make sure that his mentees are not in either direct or indirect competition;
- The mentor may not participate or agree to act as a mentor if he is putting himself in a conflict of interest with a relative, partner or a partnership or company in which he has financial or other interests;
- The mentor must not use the mentorship program to develop his own business. Thus, he cannot recommend an action or a transaction, nor solicit or offer his services.

3. Compensation ou rémunération

- The mentor is a volunteer. No advantage, reward or compensation may be accepted in return for his services.

4. Ethics of the mentorship relationship

- The persons responsible for the quality of the relationship are the mentor and the mentee. Any problem must first be discussed between them before having recourse to the coordinator.

⁸ Based on a form from the Mentorship Network of the Fondation de l'entrepreneurship

Meeting Report Form⁹

Follow-up of objectives and actions decided at the last meeting	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Principal topic of the day's meeting	
<hr/> <hr/>	
Conclusion of the meeting	
<hr/> <hr/>	
Actions to accomplish	Schedule
a. _____	_____
b. _____	_____
c. _____	_____
d. _____	_____
Other / various	
<hr/> <hr/>	
Next meeting	
Confirmation of the meeting by: _____	
Date: _____	Time: _____ Place: _____
Main topic to discuss:	_____

⁹ Based on a form from the Mentorship Network of the Fondation de l'entrepreneuship

Review of the Mentorship Relationship Form¹⁰

Questions	Answers
1. Have the initial objectives been achieved?	
2. Have we respected the meeting frequency?	
3. Were the meetings the right length?	
4. Were the meetings in suitable places?	
5. Was the follow-up of the meetings structured and did it favour the achievement of the objectives?	
6. Have we respected the principles, the means and the ethical issues initially defined for achieving the objectives set?	
7. Overall, what transfer of knowledge was the most significant during this period?	
8. Are you generally satisfied with the mentorship relationship?	
9. What was the most significant aspect of the mentorship relationship?	

Date of review: _____

¹⁰ Based on a form from the Mentorship Network of the Fondation de l'entrepreneuriat

Edited by the Bar of Montreal

WWW.BARREAUDEMONTREAL.QC.CA

1, Notre-Dame Street East, Suite 9.80
Montreal (Quebec) H2Y 1B6
Telephone: 514 866-9392
Fax : 514 866-1488
E-mail : info@barreaudemontreal.qc.ca