Tips for Mentees

• Write a personal statement that includes specific career objectives, as well as any anticipated challenges to attaining those objectives, to share with potential mentors. Spell out both short-term (6 months – 1 year) and long-term (3–5 years) goals to help you achieve your objectives.

• Choose the best mentors to meet your goals and objectives, and consider identifying several mentors to serve different purposes.

• Determine what you want/need from each prospective mentor.

• Be aware of your own strengths and opportunities, and select a mentor that possesses complementary skills and abilities.

• Observe colleagues to determine who might possess ideal mentor qualities (e.g. approachability, enthusiastic commitment to developing junior faculty, commitment to lifelong learning, respected in the field/institution, role model, values others’ opinions, etc.).

• Develop a strategy for approaching prospective mentors. Why should they choose you to be their mentee?

• Consider choosing mentors to assist you in the following areas: career objectives, career advancement, short-term and long-term goals, time line for achieving goals, educational portfolios, clinical activities, quality improvement initiatives, research activities (grant writing, implementation of research, scientific writing), authorship advice, collaboration, work/life integration, time management, creation of a CV or personal statement, increasing professional visibility, organizational culture and structure.

• Ask for authorship advice, e.g., order of authors, ethics, publishable units, and productivity.

• Prior to the first meeting, create an agenda and send your updated CV to your mentor.

• Begin any mentoring relationship by discussing mutual goals and expectations as well as expected frequency of meetings, and work with your mentor(s) to establish a “no-fault” means to amicably end the relationship in the event that either party feels that the intended goals are not being achieved. Consider a formal or informal contract.

• Ensure that the mentoring relationship is a professional one, based on trust, mutual respect, and confidentiality.

• Be open to feedback, both positive and negative.

• Understand that while mentors may provide valuable advice and assistance, your career success is your responsibility.

• Communicate regularly with your mentors, keeping them up to date on your successes and challenges.

• Be honest, discuss expectations, and focus on interacting in a positive and proactive way.

• Show appreciation for your mentor’s time and assistance, and keep them updated as to how his/her advice was helpful.
• Be prepared for meetings with your mentor, give high priority to scheduled meetings, and take advantage of e-mail and the telephone to keep in touch informally.

• Consider creating minutes of meetings with mentors.

• At the end of each meeting, discuss action items and suggest potential agenda items for future meetings.

• Follow through on recommendations and commitments you make with your mentor.

• Periodically take a step back and evaluate how effective the mentoring relationship is, and consider a discussion with your mentor or changing your mentorship team if it is not working well.

• Avoid making negative comments about your mentor to others, and keep confidential discussions confidential.

• End mentoring relationships professionally, avoid blame, and maintain a good relationship with previous mentors.

• As you move into roles as a mentor, consider that your former mentors may become your colleagues and share with them your mentorship stories.

• Continue to assess and reassess your need for additional mentors based on your professional and personal goals.

• Build and maintain relationships with peer mentors, such as other junior faculty, both inside and outside your Division or Department.

• Familiarize yourself with the resources available to support and strengthen teaching and scholarship development.

• Familiarize yourself with resources available to support your own mentorship and career development.

• Familiarize yourself with the RPT guidelines at CCHMC.

• Request periodic meetings with your Division Director to discuss concerns and progress, in addition to the faculty annual evaluation meeting.

• Document results of these meetings and review them with your career mentor or mentor is she/he is different from your Division Director.

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