

Getting the most out of your relationship with your mentor

- 1) Set up a regular time to meet if you haven't set up a time already.
- 2) Take notes. Review your notes after the meeting and if something isn't clear, ask more questions or email them to follow up with your questions.
- 3) Respect your mentor's time. They are very busy. Come to meetings prepared and organized with questions you have and things you need from them. (Don't necessarily assume they have a goal for the meeting – you're the one learning, so you need to be clear about what you need).
- 4) Be dependable. If you set a time for a meeting, be there and be ready. If you need to change the time of a meeting, email in advance.
- 5) Ask for what you need. If you need help or advice, ask for it directly and clearly.
- 6) Don't be afraid to admit to not knowing something. It's easier to say you don't understand the first or second time that it is on the 10th. Also, your mentor can't help you and they can't teach you if you don't tell them you don't understand.
- 7) Ask your mentor what their expectations are for you? Their goal for you this summer?
- 8) Set goals or timelines with your mentor. If you know what your advisor expects, it's easier to meet their expectations.
- 9) Be respectful. Your mentor has much more experience than you, so chances are, if they ask you to do something, it's for a good reason. It's fine to inquire as to the purpose of an activity, but it's impolite to question their judgment about giving you a particular task to do.
- 10) Be responsive. If you ask for advice, let your mentor know what action you have taken and how it is working out.
- 11) Respond to emails quickly. If you don't have an answer to a question, and you need more time to come up with an answer, it's fine to say so. But you should communicate that you received the message and propose a timeline for delivering a full response.
- 12) Try to solve some problems on your own. Have you googled it? Maybe try that before asking your mentor.
- 13) Try not to take negative feedback personally. It's an advisor's job to help you succeed. If they give you negative feedback, try to use it in a constructive manor to better yourself/ your work.
- 14) Accept challenges and opportunities. If your advisor suggests some action, your default response should be "yes". (There are of course situations in which "yes" is not the answer you want to give, but as a general guiding principle, you want to take them up on their offer to help you, give you tasks, or opportunities.)