# DEVELOP YOUR CAREER WITH MENTORING SUPPORT

What is mentoring and how can it support the development of emloyability skills, and aid career advancement in challenging times.



# What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a partnership between an employee and his or her supervisor. Even though there is an inequality in the skills, experience and knowledge of the partners, the partnership itself is equal. Both parties agree to the relationship and both parties agree to it's success.

The partnership is collaborative with both mentor and mentee working together to decide what the partnership hopes to achieve and how it hopes to achieve those aims.



# Mentoring as a concept

- M Manages the relationship
- E Encourages
- N Nurtures
- T Teaches
- O Offers mutual respect
- R Responds to the mentees needs



# **Principles of Mentoring**

#### Collaboration

Mentoring should be enriching for both mentor and mentee. It is about learning and not teaching. The mentee is empowered to take responsibility for his/her own actions

#### Relationship

Mentoring is a partnership between two individuals and the focus is not to make mentee dependent but to develop mentees independent critical thinking.

### HOW TO FIND A GOOD MENTOR





# Finding the right person

- Find the right person for your needs; someone who is working in a job or sector that you're interested in.
- A helpful mentor to have is someone who is two or three levels above you. Don't expect someone in a high-level leadership role, like the CEO of a large company, to immediately agree to be your mentor.
- You have to know what you want from that person in order to identify the right mentor:
  - Do you want a sounding board or a tough love honesty?
  - Do you want advice on the direction of your career overall or a particular aspect?
- Try to identify people with the skills you want to have. These are the kinds of people who could have good things to teach you. Setting goals is an important part of finding a mentor that is a good fit for you.



# **Goal Setting**

- Know your goals (both short and long term). What do you want to accomplish professionally in the next three months? The more specific you are with your goals, the easier it will be to find the right mentor.
- One strategy to create effective, easily achievable goals is to work SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound.
- Goals still matter. If you mention your specific, achievable goals from the beginning of the relationship, your mentor can help you stay on track at eachmeeting.

### HOW TO ASK FOR A MENTOR



# Making the ask....

- If it's someone already in your network, then
  the ask can be much easier than starting with a
  cold email to a new contact. Either way it can
  be a good idea to start by asking to conduct an
  informational interview. You'll find more about
  informational interviews HERE.
- Have an elevator pitch ready. Be clear about why you think this person is the right mentor for you. Be up front about the timecommitment, what you're willing to put into the relationship and what you would like to get from them. If you're clear about what you need from the start, communication will flow smoothly.



 Keep the request light and casual. Let it unfold organically by asking your potential mentor for his or her guidance on some career queries that you have.



 Use the LinkedIn Alumni Tool to identify potential mentors. The Alumni Tool allows you to search for UCC graduates from your and other degree programmes that are working in specific career areas both nationally and internationally. You'll find more information on the tool HERE



• If you're feeling reluctant about asking for help, think about it this way: Imagine someone contacted you and asked if you'd be willing to chat to them about your degree programme as they were interested in doing the same course, would you be happy to help?

# **HOW TO MAKE IT WORK**



# Top 10 tips for successful mentoring

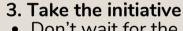
#### 1. Meet consistently

 Figure out how often (i.e. once a week or once a month), how long (i.e. half hour or one hour) and how you want to meet and make it consistent. In-person or over video conference is a good start.



#### 2. Let the relationship evolve organically

 Mentoring is organic. It's healthy to let it grow like any other relationship — over time and based on mutual respect and trust. Don't force it. Give it time; it needs to grow.



 Don't wait for the mentor to initiate your meetings and don't be afraid to propose a meeting yourself! Ask for more of your mentor without demanding it.



#### 4. Be organised

 Before each meeting, send your mentor an agenda. Take notes as you're meeting so that you can follow up via email. Keep the meetings as brief as possible.



#### 5. Decide on an end date.

 Based on how long those short-term goals will take to achieve, decide how long you want the mentorship relationship to last. A good rule of thumb is usually approximately six months but some partnerships go for much longer so long as both parties are happy to continue.

# **HOW TO MAKE IT WORK**



# Top 10 tips continued...

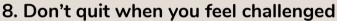
#### 6. Evaluate the mentoring

 After meeting, consider: did you get something from it? Did you leave the meeting feeling better about yourself? If it went well, then immediately put together a follow-up plan. If it's not working out, that's OK too.



#### 7. Follow up after each meeting

 It's appropriate to follow up immediately via email, thanking your prospective mentor for their time.



 You'll get to a point where your mentor may feel comfortable enough to challenge you.
 Remember: it's not supposed to be easy and this is where the really good stuff happens.



#### 9. Ask for feedback

 Be open to feedback: positive or constructive. As your relationship with your mentor progresses, this will be the #1 way you grow. A good mentor will treat these times with great care and sensitivity.



#### 10. Consider having more than one mentor

 No one mentor can help you achieve all of your goals. Maybe one mentor can help you consider a path to a particular career; another can help with specific technical skills etc

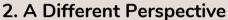
# BENEFITS OF SUCCESSFUL MENTORING



# 6 Key Benefits of Mentoring

#### 1. Guidance on Professional Development

 Your mentor will be able to provide you with an insider perspective on your chosen career, and will encourage and empower you in your professional development.



 A mentor can provide you with a different perspective on the challenges you face. It's not up to a mentor to solve your problems but some fresh ideas can help you develop effective solutions.



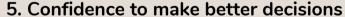
#### 3. Improving Key Skills

 A mentor can help you identify and value the skills you have as well as offering suggestions on overcoming the weaknesses you need to address.



#### 4. Expanding Your Network

 Your mentor can put you in touch with contacts who can further help you in your career development. The more you develop your network, the more opportunity will present itself.



 A good mentor can give you confidence when facing difficult decisions. Making decisions can be challenging and your mentor can be an objective resource in uncertain times.



#### 6. Greater knowledge of career success factors

 Your mentor will have been in your position in the not too distant past and so you will be able to learn about the key factors that contributed to their successful to the professional work environment.

**Commit to the process** - Remember you will only get out of it what you put in. Good luck!