



Why being a mentor can help your career

The thought of becoming a mentor can be a daunting prospect. The idea of guiding someone else in their career can feel like a big responsibility. What if you are asked questions you don't know the answer to?

Be assured, these feelings are normal. No one can know the answer to everything. In fact that is one of the key benefits of becoming a mentor. It will give you exposure to new challenges that you might otherwise not experience. Your role will be to work with the mentee to look at options, evaluate these and come up with a solution.

The role of mentor isn't to have all of the answers. It is to be able to share your knowledge, perspective and experience and to work with the mentee and to act as a sounding-board to their ideas and proposed solutions. Your role will be to ensure that they look at as many different options and scenarios as possible. Even if you don't have the answers, you are likely to have a very good idea of how they can go about finding the answer.

Why would you want to give up your time to be a mentor?

- 1. Widen your perspective**
By working with a mentee you will not only be able to provide your own perspective, you will gain insight into how others approach challenges and in turn may learn new things in the process. Your mentee will have knowledge and skills that you don't, so you will have the opportunity to develop your own learning.
- 2. Improve your self-belief and confidence**
Once you start working with a mentee you will soon realise just how much valuable knowledge and experience you have and how even things that you think are obvious may be very valuable to a mentee.
- 3. Enhance leadership and management skills**
By becoming a mentor you will naturally learn how to improve your active listening and questioning skills. You will develop your ability to empathise, motivate, reason and build rapport. You will then be able to use this emotional intelligence in managing your own teams.
- 4. Improved problem solving skills**
Working with a mentee will expose you to problems and challenges you may not otherwise have experienced and by working with a mentee to help guide them toward a solution you will further develop your own problem solving skills and gain knowledge in new areas.
- 5. Feel-good factor**
Being a mentor feels rewarding. Knowing that your skills and experience have helped someone else to succeed is a great feeling.