

Mentoring Guidelines

Hints for mentors

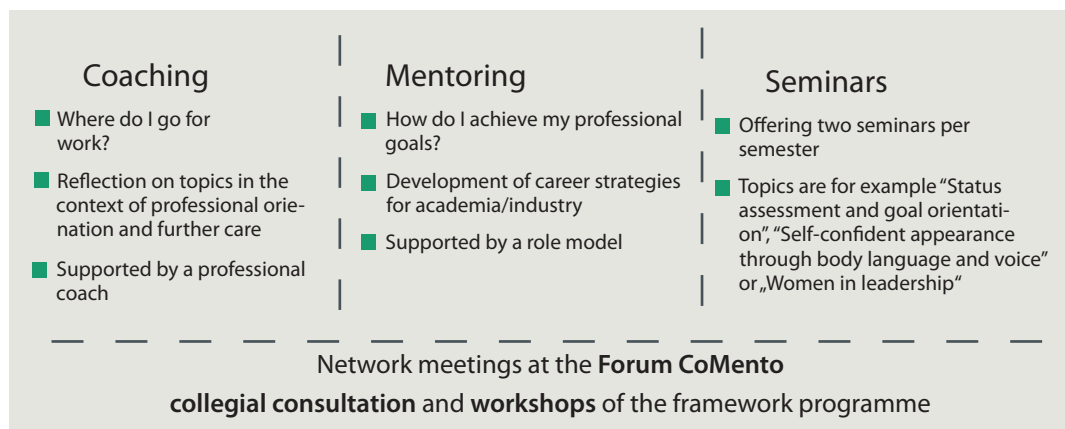


The CoMento Programme

Dear Mentor,

we are happy to welcome you to mentoring which is one element in the CoMento Programme: Coaching and Mentoring for Women in Academia. We would like to thank you very much for your commitment! For about a year, you will be accompany the mentee, deal with topics concerning her further professional career or e.g. questions about balancing family and work. You will support the mentee in making the most of her finding her personal way. We hope that you will benefit from your role as a mentor, too, and that the experience you will gain from it will be enriching for yourself. For the cooperation in the mentoring tandem, we wish you that you will discover many new learning opportunities and have a lot of fun!

The CoMento Programme: Coaching and Mentoring for Women in Academia is run by the Equal Opportunities Department at the University of Bayreuth. The goals of the 18-month partnership at CoMento are in general the professional orientation and the development of career strategies as well as leadership skills. The two core elements of the programme are coaching and mentoring. In addition, the participants meet regularly at small groups for collegial consultation. Furthermore, they have the opportunity to participate in seminars organised by the Equal Opportunities Department and to attend network meetings of the Forum CoMento. After a two-day kick-off workshop and an introduction into mentoring, the participants decide on one of the two programme tracks, whereby in the course of CoMento a change between coaching and mentoring is possible.



In mentoring, those scientists who already have a clear career perspective are present. Together with a mentor, career strategies can be developed to prepare the mentee for a career in the desired area. How the cooperation between mentor and mentee can be structured is described below.

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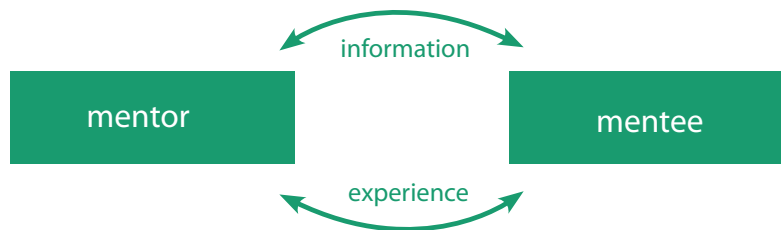
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Mentoring

In general, mentoring is to be understood as a supplement, not as a substitute for the usual scientific supervision and is free from hierarchical relationships.

Mentoring refers to an individual learning process in which an experienced person (mentor) advises a less experienced person (mentee) over a longer period in face-to-face meetings. [...] The aim is to find individual solutions for personal and professional topics and questions as well as to support the mentee in her personal development. (cf. Bernd Schmid, Nele Haasen: Einführung in das systemische Mentoring, Heidelberg 2011, p.14)

Today, the concept of mentoring is often used as a human resources development tool. Especially junior employees are individually promoted in mentoring programmes in order to be prepared for a leadership role. Both in numerous companies and at over one hundred universities, mentoring is successfully used. Like hardly any other method, mentoring is able to take into account the individual needs of a junior staff member or scientist in order to support him or her in his or her personal and professional development.



The core element of mentoring is the personal relationship between mentor and mentee, in which the development and awareness of resources and competences as well as the exchange of individual experiences are taken into account. In particular, this relationship serves the mutual exchange of information and experience.

With your commitment as a mentor, you will be given the opportunity

- to get or stay in contact to the young generation, to their way of thinking
- to reflect on your own professional and methodical working methods,
- to gain a new network with new cooperation possibilities,
- to gain insights into current research results,
- to strengthen the cooperation between universities or between universities and companies,
- to attract qualified junior staff to your own institution,
- to develop your own social skills

The mentee has the opportunity

- to get to know and estimate their personal and professional skills,
- to develop ideas for her further career,
- to identify fields of research/work for her own professional development,
- to prepare for the demands of professional life in a practical and gender-oriented manner,
- to develop the courage for her own career and to tackle it with determination,
- to receive new professional impulses within a network

Our philosophy at CoMento

- We want to create space for the career development of our participants.
- In all programme points, we pay attention to a gender- and diversity-sensitive implementation.
- We want to promote gender competence.
- We expect our participants to be proactive and self-reliant.
- We work resource-oriented.
- Within the programme, we work to enable each mentee to develop her skills and resources. We want to point out ways in which she can use these for her future career. In our work, we use the career resource model (Karriereressourcen-Modell) of the psychologist Andreas Hirschi.

Hierschi distinguishes four resource areas that are crucial for a successful professional career:

Identity resources

knowledge about one's own abilities, skills and goals

Human resources

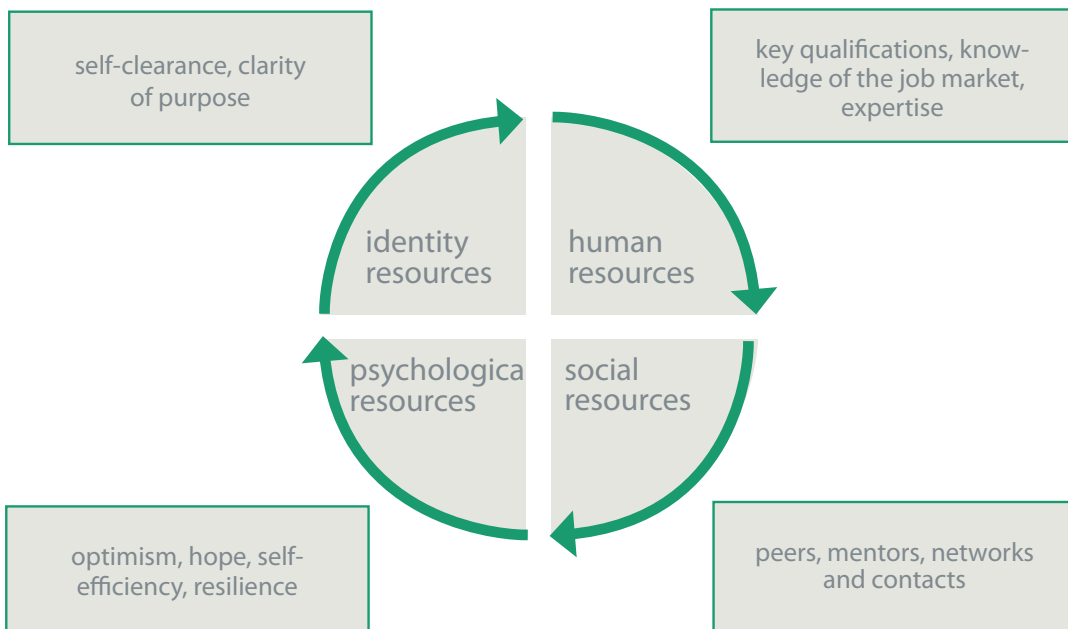
any professional competence, soft skills or knowledge related to the job market

Social resources

beneficial professional support networks

Psychological resources

describe the inner attitude



We are trying to find offers for our mentees in all four resource areas whereby the so-called Zurich Resource Model (Zürcher Ressourcen Modell) helps us to create a personal target for each participant. This can be achieved in coaching, in the seminars, in collegial consultation as well as in mentoring. (cf. Andreas Hirschi: Wirksames Karriere-Coaching: Ein Grundlagenmodell, in: OSC 18, 2011, pp. 301-315)

Voluntariness	Mentee and mentor participate in the programme voluntarily.
Independency	There is no direct relationship of interdependence between mentee and mentor, i.e. no direct or indirect working relationship, doctoral or post-doctoral supervision.
Defined period	The mentoring relationship lasts for a defined period and can also be continued informally beyond that time.
Confidentiality	The mentoring meetings take place in a protected setting and are to be treated as strictly confidential by the involved persons.
Commitment	The binding and reliable handling of appointments and agreements is a basic requirement for the successful mentoring relationship
Agreement	At the beginning of the mentoring partnership, tangible expectations and agreements on the formal goal, rules for making contact, feedback, etc. should be discussed between mentee and mentor and written down. For this purpose, a mentoring agreement will be drawn up and signed by the mentor and mentee once they have agreed to the mentoring tandem.

(cf. www.forum-mentoring.de, 20.01.2020)

Requirements for a good cooperation

The mentor

- has more knowledge and work experience in comparison to her or his mentee,
- knows the informal rules and structures and is willing to pass on this knowledge,
- has already dealt with the opportunities and barriers of his/her own career planning,
- can use the basics of conducting a conversation, knows feedback rules and has basic knowledge in the field of consulting (consultation with the coordinator is possible, of course),
- is willing to learn new things through the mentee and sees this as an important aspect of mentoring partnership,
- is willing to take time for the mentee (recommendation: about two meetings per semester).

The mentee

- has clear ideas about her professional future,
- sets clear goals as to what is to be achieved through mentoring,
- has distinct professional ambitions and the desire to rise to a leadership position,
- takes an active role, is open to cooperation and self-presentation,
- uses the critique and suggestions of the mentor constructively,
- does not create a dependency or establish a competitive relationship.

Role and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee

The mentor's role

- sees the personal development of the mentee as primary goal of the cooperation,
- focuses on the learning process of the mentee,
- accompanies the mentee during the implementation and review of goals,
- helps the mentee to recognise and develop her own competences and skills,
- leaves decisions to the mentee.

Each mentor will fill this role with life in a different way. So, set your individual priorities!

The responsibilities of the mentor

The Mentor

- provides advice and helps to develop strategies to achieve the goals,
- asks questions, shows alternative perspectives and gives critical and constructive feedback,
- gives impulses for professional and personal development,
- introduces the mentee to relevant networks and passes on important contacts.

The mentee's role

The Mentee

- is open towards the mentor, which enables her to learn from challenging situations,
- works with the mentor in a relationship free of hierarchy and competition,
- is responsible for maintaining personal responsibility and not to become involved into dependency.

The responsibilities of the mentee

The Mentee

- sets goals for the cooperation in the mentoring tandem,
- uses critique and suggestions of the mentor constructively and implements them,
- keeps in contact with the mentor and informs him or her about her progress and gives feedback if the solutions developed do not fit to her own situation or person,
- is responsible for making appointments (about two meetings per semester),
- notes topics and cases in everyday life and brings them into the mentoring,
- prepares the mentoring meetings before and after, for example by taking notes or keeping the mentoring diary,
- applies what has been learned and insights from mentoring in everyday professional life.

The first meeting in mentoring

The first meeting in mentoring is essential for the further process. This is where the decision is made, whether or not you would like to enter into mentoring with your counterpart. The basis for the cooperation will be set.

To give you a little help, here is a checklist that should or can be discussed at your first meeting: In order to get to know each other better, it is a good idea to introduce yourself to each other, whereby questions regarding the career path are allowed, even wanted. In this way, the (professional) biography can be linked to clarify questions that concern the mentee. The topics that were touched upon with the questions of the mentee can then be taken up again and deepened in further meetings.

Mentor

- Your current position
- Area of activity, qualification, main research topics
- Career to date

Mentee

- Current activities of the mentee
- Area of activity, qualification, main research topics
- Career to date
- Future career plans

Together

- clarifying the framework conditions such as time, place, frequency of meetings
- choice of means of communication between the meetings
- clarifying responsibilities for scheduling and preparing the meetings
- the topics for the individual meetings
- clarifying taboo topics; procedure when difficulties arise
- fill out the mentoring agreement together: set expectations and goals for the mentoring and write them down
- targets to be achieved by the next meeting, by the mid-term of the cooperation or by the end of the cooperation

Structuring the cooperation in mentoring

Within the CoMento Programme, two personal meetings per semester are recommended. But, of course, more meetings, phone calls or video chats are possible. The places where the meetings takes place can be chosen freely. For mentees, meetings at the workplace of the mentor are mainly of particular interest, but an appointment for lunch or in a café are also possible. Depending on the individual concerns of the mentee, various forms of cooperation in mentoring can be used: Face-to-face meetings, shadowing or access to relevant networks.

Face-to-face meetings

- Support for current challenges,
- Exchange of experience on job-related topics such as career strategies or work-life-balance,
- Personal development, e.g. preparation for a difficult interview or analysis of strengths and weaknesses,
- Transfer of informal knowledge about academia.

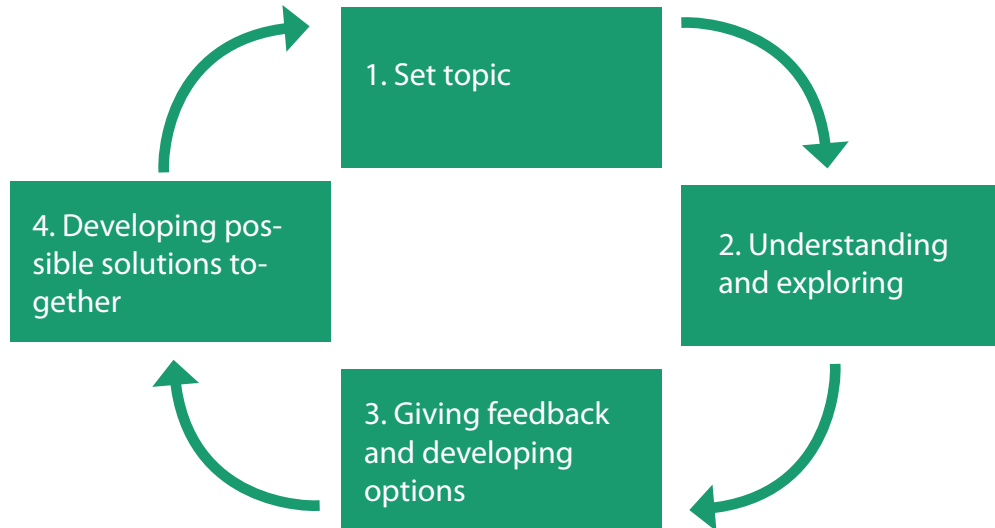
Shadowing

- The mentee spends a certain amount of time looking over the shoulder of her mentor during appointments, meetings or events. Afterwards the observed is discussed together.
- The mentee should be shown how work or discussions are conducted in the upper levels of hierarchy.
- Shadowing can also be done the other way round: It can also be interesting for the mentor to experience the mentee in her professional environment and give feedback.

Access to relevant networks

- Introduction of the mentee in different groups, e.g. in the work field, at network events, conferences
- Establishing contacts with individual persons or through other events

Moderating and structuring mentoring meetings



1. Set topic

The topic of the session should be chosen so that it can be dealt with within 1.5 to 2 hours. If possible, the topic should be submitted to the mentor in advance. At the beginning of the meeting, the mentee ideally describes a particular situation that exemplifies the problem to be discussed. Afterwards, a question as precise as possible should be formulated.

2. Understanding and exploring,

As a mentor, you have the task of understanding the mentee's problem and of listening to her narration carefully and empathetically. To do this, you ask the mentee questions about the background of the situation until you understand. The aim is to understand her problem, what is challenging for her („What have you tried to do to solve the problem“?), and not suggesting solutions („Have you already tried XY“?). Your main task as a mentor is to ask questions and in this way to make the mentee reflect on her situation.

3. Giving feedback and developing options,

Give the mentee feedback on how their behaviour affects you, because this is how she might affect others. This can help the mentee to gain an impression of her external effect. Develop options for the problem together with the mentee or offer possible ideas for a solution. It is your task to narrow down a problem that needs to be dealt with and to lead back to the topic in case of any digressions.

4. Developing possible solutions together

In the last step, you will work with the mentee to evaluate the options developed and derive possible solutions. It is the mentee's responsibility to decide which solution she chooses. You will provide advice and plan the implementation together with the mentee.

Examples of systemic questions

1. Questions on the general context

What should not come out anyway?

What are your expectations of me as a mentor? (Advice, listening to the mentor's experiences, encouragement, just listen to me...)

2. Questions about the context of the problem

When, since when, in what intensity and where does the problem appear?

Why is the problem important right now?

What view do others have?

Who is responsible for the success of the situation or the project? Through what?

What are the advantages or disadvantages of having the problem?

What has played a part in ensuring that it hasn't gotten much worse?

3. Previous attempts solving the challenging situation

What has been done so far?

How do you explain that other strategies already tried were not been successful?

Who else is involved and might help to change anything?

4. Questions on concretisation

Assuming I would see the behaviour of person X through a video camera, what exactly would I see?

What is a tangible example for the problem?

How could the problem be made worse? What can you do to make the problem permanent?

How can others help you?

5. Questions helping to solve the problem

What do you want to preserve? What do you want to hold on to? What do you want to be like before?

How would you specifically recognise that the problem has been solved? What would be the first sign that something is changing?

Assuming that the problem has been solved, what would be helpful to make the solution possible?

Even if not everything has been done now, what can we record as progress for today?

6. Questions about possibilities

Suppose that ...; What if ...; Suppose that ...; Who would then react how ...?

Suppose an expert on XX was here: What solution would he see to the problem?

Suppose you were your own consultant: what would you advise?

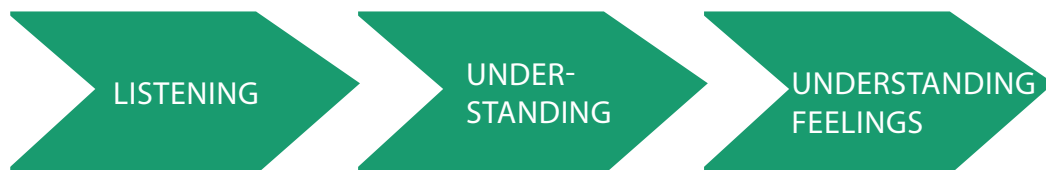
7. Situations where the problem does not occur (exceptions)

How often, how long, when did the problem not occur? What did you do differently in these times? When does the cooperation work well? What do you have to do to get more of it?

Listening actively

Listening actively means,

- that the person you are talking to feels accepted.
- to understand what moves the other, what she feels, what she wants to express.
- to implicitly encourage the person to speak and to open up.
- an empathetic response to the other person.
- to pay attention to non-linguistic expressions such as voice, facial expressions and body language.
- to understand what is being said and not just to agree!



Give your partner in conversation your utmost attention.	Repeat the objective statement of your conversation partner in your own words.	Repeat the emotional statement of your counterpart.
Maintain eye contact. "Mhh" or "yes" are usually sufficient to signal that you are listening. Do not interrupt the narrative.	Repeat and summarise the content in your own words. Try to remain objective.	Make feelings verbal. Put yourself in the other person's position. Try to make wishes known.

Give the mentee feedback on how you feel about what she has told you. Be descriptive and use ego-messages, such as „If you tell me how you behaved in this conflict, it seems to me as if you very quickly decided on a single solution.“ This helps the mentee to get an impression of her external impact. It is important not to generalise the statements, but to illustrate them with the help of specific examples.

Allow the mentee the freedom to accept or reject the feedback. Reflect the strengths of the mentee and encourage her. The main task of mentors is to ask questions that make the mentee reflect. You can help the mentee to take a new perspective.

For contact



If you have any questions about CoMento Programme or you would like to get an individual preparation for your role as a mentor, please get in touch:

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