

Initial Mentoring Conversation: Preparing the Relationship

To Do List	Strategies for Conversation	Questions to Ponder
1. Take time to get to know each other.	Obtain a copy of your mentoring partner's CV in advance of the conversation. If one is not available, create one through conversation.	What kind of information might you exchange to get to know each other better? What points of connection have you discovered in your conversation? What else do you want to learn about each other?
2. Talk about mentoring.	Share your previous mentoring experiences with your mentoring partner.	What did you like about your experiences that you each want to carry forward into this relationship? What do you want to avoid?
3. Share your learning and development goals.	Describe your career vision, hopes and dreams, and articulate broad learning goals and the reasons why they are important.	Why do you want to engage in this relationship? What learning goals would align with your vision of the future?
4. Determine relationship needs and expectations.	Ask your mentoring partner what he or she wants, needs, and expects out of the relationship.	Are you clear about each other's wants, needs, and expectations for this mentoring relationship? What would be a logical time/outcome to indicate the closure of the relationship?
5. Candidly share your personal assumptions and limitations.	Ask your mentoring partner about his or her assumptions and limitations. Discuss implications for your relationship.	What assumptions do you hold about each other and your relationship? What are you each willing and capable of contributing to the relationship? What limitations do you each bring to the relationship?
6. Discuss your personal style.	Talk about your personal styles. You may have data from instruments such as EI, MBTI, DiSC, and LSI.*	How might each other's styles affect the learning that goes on in the mentoring relationship?

* Emotional Intelligence; Myers Briggs Type Indicator; Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, Conscientiousness Tests; Learning Styles Inventory.

Adapted from Zachary L. *The Mentee Guide: Making Mentoring Work for You*, 2009, p. 50