



PAYNE

Fellowship Program

Mentoring Program Participant Handbook*

**Adapted from the Human Capital and Talent Management Center for Professional Development
Mentoring Program Participant Handbook and OPM's Best Practices: Mentoring*

LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

USAID's Leadership Philosophy enables leadership at all levels to foster a culture of respect, learning, and accountability. At USAID, we believe:

- **LEADERS INSPIRE:** Leaders cultivate a passion for mission in ourselves and our partners, and champion a collective vision.
- **LEADERS LISTEN:** Leaders create opportunities for all voices and perspectives to be heard and valued in an environment of trust.
- **LEADERS DEVELOP LEADERS:** Leaders strengthen the workforce through continuous learning and regular coaching and mentoring.
- **LEADERS PROMOTE WELL-BEING:** Leaders are mindful, and care for the wellbeing of our staff, partners, and others.
- **LEADERS INNOVATE:** Leaders encourage informed risk-taking and inspire curiosity, creativity, and innovation.
- **LEADERS ACT AND EMPOWER:** Leaders make informed decisions, delegate authority, communicate the decision-making process openly, and ensure timely action.
- **LEADERS ADVANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:** Leaders hold themselves, colleagues, and team accountable for doing what they say they will do.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PAYNE FELLOWSHIP MENTORING PROGRAM?

The Payne Fellowship Mentoring Program's purpose is to provide career-enhancing mentoring for fellows to connect with seasoned USAID mentors, build stronger networks, enhance their skills and knowledge and gain an early understanding of the values, vision and mission of the Agency.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF THIS MENTORING PROGRAM WAS SUCCESSFUL?

The following statements will be measured at the end of the mentoring period:

- Fellows recognize the skills they need for success in the areas of technical expertise, building relationships, and navigating the organization.
- Fellows have developed useful connections and identified professional development opportunities.
- Fellows are taking responsibility for their own career development and are achieving realistic goals.
- Fellows feel committed to the Agency throughout the fellowship program and look forward to onboarding.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is a relationship between two individuals (the mentor and the mentee) that focuses on a conversational process of continuous learning and growth where the mentee is able to clarify development goals, develop a Mentoring Action Plan, and achieve success by building their own competence to recognize and solve problems.

WHAT TYPES OF MENTORING EXIST?

- Formal – A carefully constructed learning relationship with formal support that includes a facilitated matching process, formal training, and clear goals for measuring success.
- Situational – A spontaneous connection (a brief conversation via email or a quick chat) that provides the right help at the right time, that can help the mentee solve a specific problem or encourage them to uncover a hidden talent.
- Supervisory – The supervisor shares valuable information about the Agency and provides meaningful work and developmental learning opportunities to their employees.
- Informal – A relationship built on mutual trust and respect where a mentor sees a quality in another person they admire and would like to develop. Usually this relationship is nurtured over a long period of time and sometimes lasts the length of a mentee’s career.

WHAT IS NEEDED FOR MENTORING SUCCESS?

Successful mentoring relationships depend on common goals and expectations, a strong commitment to mentoring, and mutual trust and respect. A framework that accommodates the needs of both partners may rest on the following critical success factors:

1. Common goals – Mentoring partnerships must clearly understand what they are trying to accomplish together.
2. Realistic expectations – People bring different expectations to the mentoring partnership. To guarantee success, it is critical that roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clearly defined early in the relationship
3. Commitment – Both partners will need to make mentoring a priority. The success of a mentoring relationship will depend on how much time the partners can dedicate to the effort.
4. Mutual trust – A mentoring relationship is a leap of faith. It is vital for the mentor and mentee to trust each other so that meaningful information can be shared.
5. Respect for differences – Mentors and mentees will both bring unique experiences and personalities into the mentoring partnership. The success of the partnership will depend on the ability to respect and value differences. (Drahosz, 2014)

GROUND RULES

We are voluntarily entering into a mentoring partnership, which we expect to benefit all participants and the Agency overall. At the end of the mentoring period, we understand that we may elect to continue our partnership on an informal basis.

We agree to begin a mutually beneficial partnership focused on the development of the mentee and that it is the responsibility of both the mentor and mentee to keep this relationship active and effective.

We also agree:

- To be partners in learning, meeting informally to share knowledge and experiences.
- To meet regularly at mutually convenient times and locations. Should one of us be unable to attend the meeting, that partner will inform the other as far in advance as possible.
- To set realistic and challenging goals for this relationship.
- To actively listen to one another and give honest feedback to further the learning experience.

- To communicate openly to discuss issues, ideas, and concerns, to request assistance, and to share information with each other as needed.
- To collaboratively develop a Mentoring Action Plan that will help the mentee achieve his/her objectives.
- As the mentor, to present options to the mentee, but not mandate courses of action.
- As the mentee, to seriously consider options and suggestions presented by the mentor and to keep an open line of communication regarding progress.
- Once the Mentoring Action Plan is developed, to take the agreed upon actions in a timely manner.
- To evaluate our relationship regularly and assess how we are progressing towards the goals.
- To respect the rules of confidentiality. Our meetings will be confidential. Neither party will divulge what has been discussed without the permission of the other.
- To complete mentoring program surveys and evaluations during and at the end of the partnership to support continuous program improvement.
- To permit either partner to conclude the partnership at any time. The partner ending the mentoring relationship will inform the other of his/her intent to do so and notify the Payne Fellowship Program Director.

WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF A MENTOR?

- Mentor – uses their inner competence to pass on information and skills on their experience and knowledge for long-term development.
- Coach – uses communications skills (questioning, listening, etc.) for both long- and short-term development to benefit the individual and/or the Agency.
- Teacher – helps the mentee to assess career goals and outline plans to achieve them; suggests developmental opportunities to stretch the mentee out of his/her comfort zone, leverage skills, and build confidence.
- Counselor – fosters learning through self-discovery by encouraging the mentee to think for his/herself and to draw his/her own conclusions.
- Guide – helps the mentee navigate the political workings of the Agency by sharing the “big picture” (i.e., where the Agency is going and why the mentee’s work is important); as well as sharing his/her network of key players at higher levels.
- Challenger – helps the mentee to uncover blind spots in his/her behavior and performance by providing developmental feedback on strengths and weaknesses.

WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF A MENTEE?

- Mentee – has a strong desire to learn, a commitment to being mentored and takes charge of his/her career.
- Learner – continuously looks for opportunities to grow and develop, which involves asking for feedback, reflecting on experiences (both successes and setbacks), and developing new skills and abilities.

- Planner – maintains a clear sense of where he/she is going and tracks and evaluates progress along the way. The mentee comes to mentoring meetings prepared with a concise outline of mentoring topics and issues to discuss.
- Communicator – openly discusses goals, challenges, and concerns with the mentor, in addition to keeping his/her mentor informed of progress.
- Driver – maintains momentum in the learning process by initiating and following through on mentoring meetings and commitments. (Drahosz, 2014)

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MENTOR?

- Recognize that respect, trust, and openness are the foundations for successful mentoring partnerships.
- Manage the relationship and build the partnership but not the goals.
- Be available, follow through on commitments, and assess the progress of the partnership.
- Act as a coach, teacher, counselor, guide, and challenger.
- Clarify and set realistic expectations for the partnership, for mentee achievement, and for your own involvement.
- Provide constructive feedback and encouragement; build the mentee's confidence level.
- Challenge the mentee to take risks and try new strategies; ask powerful questions and help the mentee to make new discoveries.
- Share information on one's own successes and failures, as appropriate.
- Actively listen with empathy, be open minded to the mentee's needs and opinions.
- Alert the mentee to existing or developing opportunities.
- Provide information on workplace issues and procedures.
- Know when to terminate the partnership.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MENTEE?

- Recognize that respect, trust, and openness are the foundations for successful partnerships.
- Assume responsibility and accountability for developing and implementing the Mentoring Action Plan.
- Be available, follow through on commitments, and complete homework assignments.
- Act as learner, planner, communicator and driver.
- Seek realistic expectations and goals with the mentor and take responsibility for your career.
- Accept feedback without interpreting it as evaluation and let it build and develop you.
- Take risks, try new strategies; communicate openly and embrace new discoveries.
- Share information on one's own successes and failures, as appropriate.
- Be honest and open-minded with the mentor about your needs, feelings, and opinions.
- Make a conscious effort to build the partnership, but also know when to terminate the partnership.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD MENTOR?

- Integrity
- Maturity
- Held in high esteem by others
- Respect
- Discretion
- Political savvy
- Knowledge of the organization
- Good communicator
- Self-confident
- Honest
- Trustworthy
- Goal-oriented
- Genuinely likes people

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD MENTEE?

- Competent
- Honest
- Credible
- Trustworthy
- Can take advice and feedback
- Good communicator
- Open-minded
- Forthright
- Goal-oriented

BENEFITS OF MENTORING FOR THE MENTOR

As a result of being a mentor, the person:

- Renews their enthusiasm for the role of expert;
- Obtains a greater understanding of the barriers experienced at lower levels of the organization;
- Enhances skills in coaching, counseling, listening, and modeling;
- Develops and practices a more personal style of leadership;
- Demonstrates expertise and shares knowledge, and;
- Increases generational awareness.

BENEFITS OF MENTORING FOR THE MENTEE

As a result of having a mentor, the fellow:

- Makes a smoother transition into the workforce;
- Furthers his/her development as a professional;
- Gains the capacity to translate values and strategies into productive actions;
- Complements ongoing formal study and/or training and development activities;
- Gains career development opportunities;
- Develops new and/or different perspectives;
- Gets assistance with ideas;
- Demonstrates strengths and explores potential, and;
- Increases career networks and receives greater Agency exposure.

WHAT ARE THE ENEMIES OF LEARNING?

- Inability to say “I don’t know”
- No time
- Unawareness of personal blind spots
- Looking for quick fixes
- Feeling that I have to get it right all the time
- Fear of failure/success
- Judging and assessing instead of being open to new ideas
- Needing to “look good”

WHAT MENTORING CHALLENGES MAY EXIST?

- Physical differences
- Position in the organization
- Gender differences
- Morals and values
- Cultural differences
- Personality styles (e.g. MBTI)
- Generational differences
- Religion
- Remote mentoring partnerships

HOW TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES?

- Open a dialogue using a statement such as, “Research shows that racial and other differences affect both the mentee and the mentor. Do you think there are examples of this in our relationship?”

- Move from the impact of differences on the relationship to impact on the organizational dynamic.
- Utilize appreciative inquiry – the process of posing questions that generate positive awareness rather than focusing on the challenges of differences.
- If you are in a mentoring relationship with someone from a different country, take the time to learn something about his/her culture before engaging in the relationship and use this information to get to know your partner.

TIPS FOR ACTIVE LISTENING

- Ask questions and do less talking.
- Be attentive.
- Put the speaker at ease.
- Show the speaker that you want to listen and use non-verbal behavior to encourage the speaker (nod head, eye contact, etc.).
- Remove distractions (cell phones, responding to email, etc.).
- Empathize.
- Reflect and summarize.
- Be patient, allow time, and do not interrupt.
- Use verbal responses, e.g., “I see,” “go on.”

HOW DO I CREATE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

Mentees can use the acronym “SMART” to make sure that their goals and objectives are well written.

A SMART objective is:

- **Specific:** The goal or objective is clear, precise, provides concrete detail, not just good intentions.
- **Measurable:** The objective is tied to concrete results.
- **Achievable:** You and your mentee agree that the objective can be achieved with available resources.
- **Results-oriented:** The objective focuses on a result that your mentee cares about and will help them to achieve their goal.
- **Time-framed:** Specific deadlines for achievement exist. This builds in accountability so that you and your mentee will always know whether you are on schedule or not.

WHAT TYPES OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT MY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

There are three types of learning activities to consider: developmental, networking, and stretch assignments. A well-rounded Mentoring Action Plan should include at least one of each area of learning.

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