

# A Resource Guide for Mentees Seeking Career Mentoring Advice







**MENTOR**  
THE NATIONAL MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

*This guide is designed to support mentees in preparing for career mentoring conversations.*





## TAKE INITIATIVE & COME PREPARED

Be sure to arrive on time and consider these questions in advance of your career mentoring conversation:

-  **What are your career interests?** – Make a list of the careers that you are most interested in learning about and why. Check out the Occupational Outlook Handbook (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>) which is full of career information including key responsibilities, required training and education, pay information and more.
-  **What are your strengths and top skills?** – Think about what you are really good at, what comes naturally to you and the things that you really enjoy doing. When considering career pathways, it is important to align your strengths and skills to career opportunities.
-  **What are your goals?** – Think about the goals that you would like to achieve over the next 6-12 months as well as longer-term goals that you are aiming to achieve over the next 5-10 years. Write these goals down and reflect on possible career pathways that align to your goals. Reflect on why you have set these goals.
-  **What are you curious about?** – The life experiences of mentors can teach us valuable lessons. Before meeting with career mentors, make a list of questions to help guide your discussion. To get you started, here is a list of questions to consider (<http://bit.ly/2IKyLKO>).

## FOCUS ON BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

When you meet with a career mentor, it can feel awkward and uncomfortable at first for both you and them. Here are some key tips to consider when building a relationship during a career mentoring session.

-  **Work together.** – Mentors should ask great questions of you and actively listen to get to know you, to understand your goals, and to help you discover and leverage your strengths. By working together, you are open to sharing reflections on the questions above, you are willing to be honest about where you are and where you want to be, and you are open-minded about exploring career pathways that are new to you.
-  **Balance talking and listening.** – Share your life experiences and perspectives with a career mentor, and ask them about their life experiences and perspectives. Brainstorm career options with each other, reflect on the pros and cons of each option, and challenge assumptions. Be fully present in the discussion, avoid distractions and be open to answering questions. Pay attention to how much you are talking and listening.
-  **Be solution oriented.** – Sometimes it is easy for us to focus on reasons why we are not good at something and why we don't feel as though we can achieve a goal. When meeting with a career mentor, it is important that we come to the conversation with a solution orientation, meaning that we focus our attention and energy on developing solutions and strategies to achieving our career goals. Remember that there are always multiple ways to achieve a goal and a career mentor can help us think outside of the box. Develop and maintain your LinkedIn profile and fully leverage the LinkedIn platform to expand your network and continually learn.
-  **Be transparent about what you need and want.** – Share with your career mentor what you need and want in pursuit of your career goals. They can help you by introducing you to others for informational interviews, help you set up job shadowing experiences and brainstorm specific actions that you can take in line with your goals.