

# HOW TO USE YOUR MENTOR

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**ITHS**

Institute of Translational Health Sciences  
Accelerating Research. Improving Health.



What is a mentor?

How to find a mentor

Mentoring styles

Now that you found a mentor...

# What is a mentor?

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# Types of Mentoring

- ▶ Career Mentor
- ▶ Content Mentor
- ▶ Project Mentor
- ▶ Co-mentor
- ▶ Peer Mentor
- ▶ Advisor
- ▶ The Mentor Team



# Data...

- Better career development
- Improves success of women and URM faculty
- Linked to funding, publications, student evaluations
- Predicts promotion in academia
- Leads to less work-life balance stress





What is a mentor?

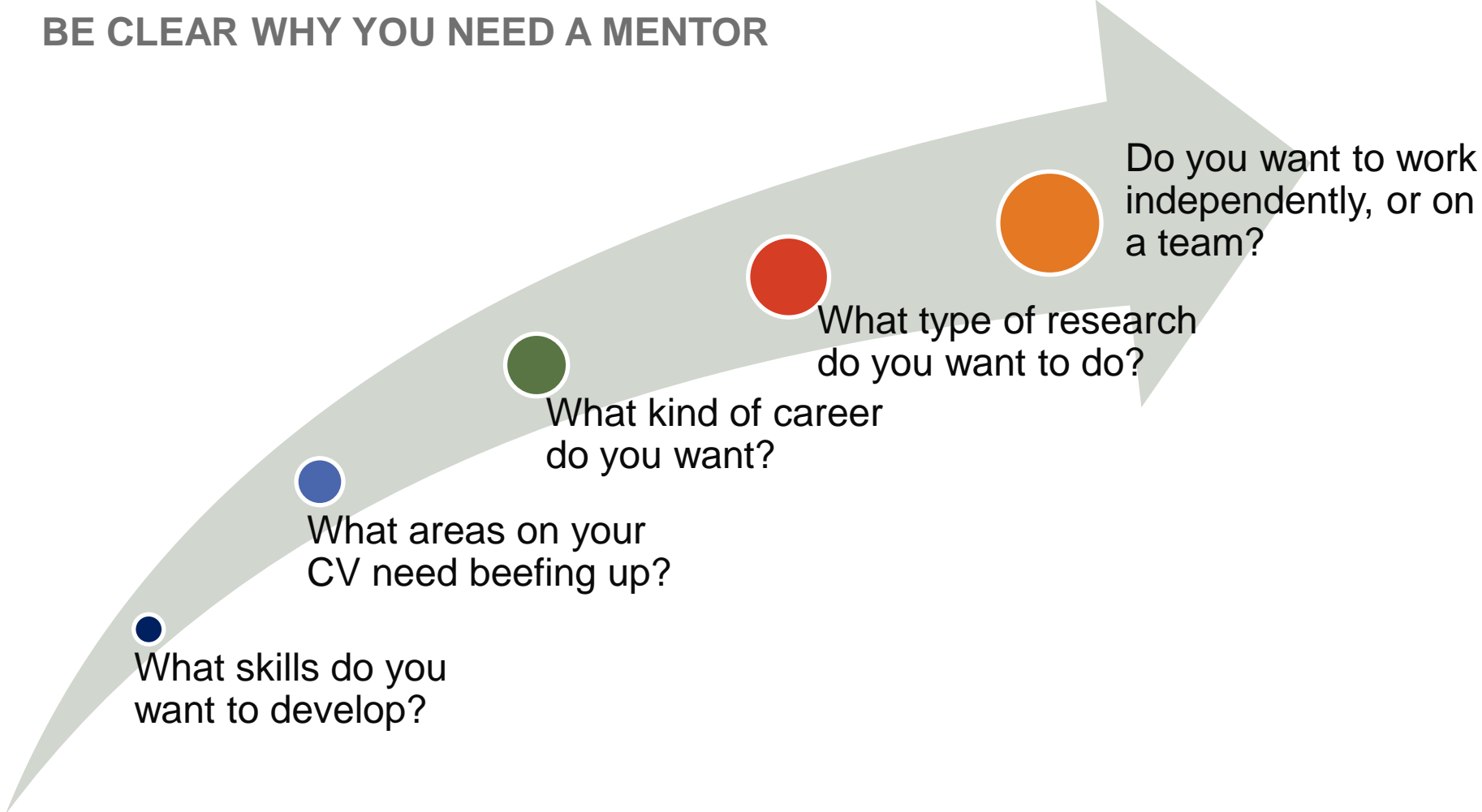
How to find a mentor

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# Before you embark on this journey...

## BE CLEAR WHY YOU NEED A MENTOR



What skills do you want to develop?

What areas on your CV need beefing up?

What kind of career do you want?

What type of research do you want to do?

Do you want to work independently, or on a team?

# True or False

- The best mentor is an expert in your field.
- You only need one mentor.
- You should find out more about the mentor before engaging with them.
- The mentor your department/division/school assigns you is the one you should stick with.



# Myth 1

## The expert is the best mentor

- *Not always the expert in your field.*
- *Ask about the mentor's past experience in mentoring:*
  - Talk to former mentees*
  - Have they won any teaching awards?*
  - Mentees success (publications, grants, promotion)*

# Myth 2

## You only need one mentor

- *Mentoring teams have many benefits*
  - Advancement advice versus content expertise*
  - Advice on work life balance*
  - Advice from some one closer to you on the career path*
  - Peers mentors*

# Myth 3

## You get what you get

- *Mentoring is dynamic*
- *If you are assigned a mentor, be sure the fit is right*
- *It's a time commitment for the mentor, too, so no need to waste anyone's time if the fit isn't right*

# How to Interview Mentors

1. Is there common ground (and is it too common)?
2. What are they like to talk to?
3. What is their time like?
4. Experience with the University and promotion process?
5. Do they like mentoring?
6. How many people have they mentored?
7. What is the success rate of mentees?
8. What are the mentor's expectations from mentees?
9. **What is their mentoring philosophy and style?**



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Selling them



Sell themselves

## Telling

## Mentoring

## Coaching

Here are the goals and implementation specifications for this project...

In my experience...

Now you know the goals for the project ...how do you see yourself implementing it?

This is what I need you to do... specifically

One thing you need to consider is...

You have done this before. How did you do it?

Non-negotiable

Things to watch out for are...

Here are the consequences of failure...

Call this person for advice...

What does success look like to you?



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# What you need to succeed

1. Clear understanding of roles
2. Clear understanding of outcome
3. Know the difference between advice and coaching
4. Regular meetings to review goals
5. Individualized Development Plan





# The Contract



**Don't take "yes" for an answer. Get a contract!**

1. Establish communication methods and frequency
2. Manage expectations
3. Respect your mentors time (come prepared) but don't be a push over (make sure you meet)
4. Express your gratitude
5. Learn to take feedback

# Exercise

# What would you do?

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Evelyn's mentor, Dr. Apple, is THE leading researcher in her field, and Evelyn is thrilled to be working with her. Dr. Apple and Evelyn have done all the right things, created a contract, set up an IDP, and found a regular time to meet. Dr. Apple, given her prominence, misses 50% of the meetings, doesn't get to Evelyn's papers in time, and while always apologetic, Dr. Apple still doesn't follow through. At her academic review, Evelyn's chair comments on how Evelyn is not performing to standard. When Evelyn explains that Dr. Apple, her mentor, never has time to meet with her, the chair says, "Dr. Apple told me that you never told her this was a problem."

# Time to Vote

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A) Tell the chair just how many meetings were missed

B) Talk to Dr. Apple and renegotiate your contract

C) Find another mentor

D) Other

# What would you do?

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You are interviewing Dr. Pretzel as a potential mentor, and indeed you would be thrilled to be in his lab. At the appointed meeting time, you do not meet with Dr. Pretzel, but instead meet with his junior faculty person, Dr. Chip. Dr. Chip explains that Dr. Pretzel is too busy to meet with potential mentees, and besides, Dr. Chip claims he can answer any questions you have. You proceed with your questions, and Dr. Chip seems to be saying all the right things. He then says, “You should know, however, that any papers you write, Dr. Pretzel reserves the right to be lead or senior author. There is not discussion on this.” Dr. Chip also says that while you can write for things like K awards and indeed any grants, you cannot say you have your own lab, ever. If you want your own lab, you have to leave Dr. Pretzel’s lab.

# Time to Vote

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A) Join Dr. Pretzel's lab regardless, both Dr. Pretzel and Dr. Chip are amazing.

B) Clarify further what happens to people who leave Dr. Pretzel's lab to start their own.

C) Forget it, this sounds bad.

D) Other

# What would you do?

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You accepted a position to work in Dr. Muffin's lab, and to work closely with his junior faculty person, Dr. Waffle. Both are super to work with, are great mentors, and you are having the time of your life. One day you wake up and find an email from both Dr. Muffin and Dr. Waffle saying they are leaving the U to work with a large tech firm. Starting today. You are basically mentor-less. They do not return your emails.

# Time to Vote

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A) Talk to your chair about what happened.

B) Start looking for another mentor.

C) See if you can get a job at the tech company.

D) Other



# What would you do?

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Dr. Posole is a junior faculty person who is a rising star. She has been a good mentor to you, although a bit junior. You notice, however, when you go to meetings with her, she asks you to come with her when she meets with prominent researchers, but then never introduces you. You stand there, awkwardly.

# Time to Vote

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A) Start introducing yourself.

B) Talk to Dr. Posole about how it feels to be standing there.

C) Next time Dr. Posole asks you to meet someone with her, decline.

D) Other

# What about you?

What issues have you faced?

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