

The Successful Mentee

Successful faculty members manage their relationships with their mentors and are proactive about both the relationship and their career. Here are some things to think about as you work with your mentor(s):

- Be proactive. Whether your mentor is assigned to you, or you have chosen one yourself, make the first appointment to talk about your career. Have a game plan for your conversations with your mentor.
- Agree on the parameters and responsibilities of the relationship: what kinds of topics do you want to talk about? How often and under what circumstances will you meet or communicate? What would you like the mentor to do? What does your mentor expect you to do? These expectations can be renegotiated but must be established early.
- Make a plan with your mentor. Start by clearly articulating your career needs and goals, ask your mentor for feedback on a timeline for achieving your goals.
- Spend time reflecting with your mentor on the achievement of your goals and realistic adjustments to your career plan. Make sure your career plan has enough flexibility to account for unexpected opportunities.
- Set an agenda for meetings with the mentor. The agenda can take into account changes in your career plan as you put it into practice as well as any immediate concerns you may have regarding your career at Cornell.
- Build a relationship in between formal meetings, so that you and your mentor are comfortable with one another in case a time comes when you need to consult your mentor for ideas on a difficult situation.
- Be receptive to constructive feedback.
- Get more than one mentor. No single person can have all the answers. Choose senior faculty, both on campus and off as mentors
- Develop a peer network, both on campus and nationally. You will find that you are not alone and can get good advice and information from those who are in the same situation.
- Be aware of the challenges and “seasons” of a mentoring relationship (see “The Mentoring Relationship”)

Adapted from:

- University of Manitoba, University Teaching Services
http://www.umanitoba.ca/academic_support/uts/services/mentoring/success.php
- The Faculty Mentoring Program for Women, University of Texas at El Paso