

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is about helping people to develop their skills and confidence so that they are able to take control of their own development and work.

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as an “experienced and trusted adviser”. Being a mentor with the ACT Project will cover at least some of the following:

- Listening
- Providing information and sharing knowledge
- Offering different perspectives
- Providing support and encouragement so that the ‘mentee’ can develop their understanding, confidence and skills
- Allowing the ‘mentee’ to put their plans into action, rather than doing it for them

What is required to be a Mentor on the ACT Project?

- Experience, either formally or informally, of developing others
- Accessibility – being willing and able to commit sufficient time to a mentee to meet their needs
- Self-Awareness – having a good understanding of your own strengths and development needs
- Organisational ‘know-how’ – knowing how to get things done, and how things work in your own specialist area
- Trustworthiness – having the trust of the organisation, group etc on which you are guiding a mentee
- Empathy & communication – being able to understand the ideas, views and feelings of a diverse range of people, and to communicate effectively with them
- Empowerment – being able to create an environment where it is safe for individuals to try out different things, encouraging them to contribute

Mentoring Meetings

The first meeting between the mentor and mentee should be about getting to know each other and building a personal rapport, including discussing what is hoped will be the benefits of the mentoring process, from both partners' points of view.

Before this first meeting, mentor and mentee should think about some of the following in relation to active citizenship:

Mentee

- What are my strengths?
- What do I want to achieve?
- What are my short, medium and longer term goals?
- What do I think the mentor could help me with?
- How will I know if the mentoring is working for me?

Mentor

- What can I offer the mentee?
- What career and life experiences have helped me most in my own personal and professional development? What are the important lessons I have learnt? How can I use these to help my mentee?
- How will I know if the mentoring is working?

Next steps:

Either at the first meeting, or at the next available opportunity, you should:

1. Agree the overall purpose of the mentoring, and, if possible, the period of time you plan for it to last – eg a one-off visit through to a series of meetings.
2. Agree the other practicalities such as when and where (in a safe public place) you will meet, and for how long
3. Think about the content of the meetings, and set realistic objectives which can be reviewed between you

And then, once you have agreed on these, when you do meet, you should keep to the dates, times and meeting locations you have agreed. And if you are unable to make a planned meeting, let each other know in good time.

Finally:

Plan a meeting to review progress and achievements in terms of the objectives you have set. This might point to the need for another mentor to provide further guidance. If so, can the mentor suggest someone?



Active Citizens Together Mentoring & Shadowing Programme Shared Agreement

What does this shared agreement mean?

Having a shared agreement for how the mentoring will work is necessary so that you are both (mentor and 'mentee') clear about why you are doing this and what you want to get out of it.

Step 1 - Your first meeting

To start the mentoring process, the ACT Project Team will organise a meeting for you both, and one of us will come along to help with introductions. This will be a chance for you to get to know each other and start to discuss what you are going to do.

The most important point is that as a mentee (learner), you need to be as clear as possible about what you want to get out of having a mentor.

And as a mentor, you need to be clear and honest about what you can provide, and how much time you can give.

Step 2 - Preparing for mentoring

When you meet, you need to read and discuss these points so that you are both prepared for the mentoring process. Tick the boxes where you both agree:

- We will agree on some 'ground rules' to guide the mentoring relationship, such as keeping everything confidential if we think that's needed

- We will work out and write down the aim of our mentoring process (what we want to achieve) and also our agreed objectives (what we are going to do to achieve our aim)

- The mentor's role is to respond to the mentee's needs, based on the agreed aim and objectives

Step 3 - The shared agreement form

We agree that:

1. The mentoring process will last for _____ days/weeks/months, but we can change this as we go along if necessary
2. We will agree when, where, and how long to meet (always in a safe, public place)
3. We will try our best not to cancel our meetings or visits
4. Each meeting will last a minimum of _____ minutes and a maximum of _____ minutes.
5. In between meetings we will contact each other by telephone/email no more than once every _____ weeks/days.
6. We will set a future date to discuss how the mentoring is going, and whether more time is needed for us to achieve our aim
7. We will keep the ACT Project Team informed of our progress

Date: _____

Mentor's signature: _____

Mentee's signature: _____

Disclaimer: The East of England Local Government Association will not be held liable for any injury or loss sustained by either the mentor, mentee, or both, during the mentoring process.

Contact Details and More Information

If you have any questions about the ACT project, or want to talk to us about being a more active citizen, please do contact us and we will be happy to advise you further.

ACT Project Workers:



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More information about the ACT project can be found at:
<http://smp.eelga.gov.uk/migrant-workers/act-project.aspx>