



Mentorship Guidelines

The Mentorship Guidelines for the IPG Mentorship and Integration Project outline the principles, expectations, and best practices for mentors and mentees in program activities. Mentorship is vital for fostering growth, support, and mutual learning. Mentors share expertise, insights, and experiences, while mentees receive guidance, encouragement, and support in their journey to licensure and in their future careers in Canada. Through these interactions, we aim to empower mentors and mentees to excel and contribute effectively to the pharmacy community.

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Introduction [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a dynamic and collaborative relationship between a more experienced individual (the mentor) and a less experienced individual (the mentee), with the goal of providing guidance, support, and advice to help the mentee advance their personal and professional goals. Mentoring can take various forms, including one-on-one meetings, group sessions, or even virtual interactions.

In a mentoring relationship, the mentor shares their knowledge, expertise, and insights with the mentee, offering encouragement, feedback, and constructive criticism when needed. However, the partnership between the mentor and the mentee also provides a chance for mutual learning. Both mentors and mentees have valuable lived experiences that can benefit each other and have a positive influence on the future of Canadian pharmacy culture and practices.

Key points about mentoring

- Mentoring is a mutual learning-based relationship that occurs outside of formal reporting structures.
- A mentor serves as a trusted guide and advisor but should not take on the roles of a manager, mediator, or recruiter.
- Mentors are not therapists. Their role is not to provide psychological counseling or support.
- Mentors are not meant to be decision-makers for their mentees, but rather guides who offer advice and perspective to support mentees in making their own choices and decisions.
- Mentors assist mentees in discovering their own solutions by reflecting on their experiences and sharing stories.

- Effective mentoring should be:
 - **Confidential:** Discretion and confidentiality are crucial in the mentoring relationship.
 - **Mentee-driven:** The mentee determines the direction of the partnership based on their learning needs.
 - **Based on mutual respect:** Successful mentoring involves mutual respect, trust, and acknowledgment of each other's expertise and choices.

First Meetings between Mentors and Mentees

When you first meet your mentor/mentee, it is a great opportunity to get to know each other and set the tone and foundation for a successful mentorship relationship. The purpose of this first meeting is to discuss and establish learning goals, expectations, talk about preferred modes of communication and meeting frequency, and more generally, to get to know one another. A learning plan should be developed at the next meeting.

Share a Brief History

Getting to know your mentor or mentee will help you relate to one another, and to understand the others' experience and what they bring to the table. Consider sharing your background, and why you chose to participate in the mentorship program.

Questions to ask Mentees:

- ✓ Where did you practice pharmacy before coming to Canada?
- ✓ In which settings did you practice pharmacy?
- ✓ How long did you practice pharmacy before coming to Canada?

Questions to ask Mentors:

- ✓ How long have you been a pharmacist?
- ✓ In which settings have you practiced?
- ✓ What made you want to be a mentor in this program?

Please refer to the Discussion Guide for a more comprehensive list of questions that mentors and mentees can explore.

Ethical Standards [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

CPhA is committed to fostering a respectful, productive, and ethical environment for all IPG Mentorship and Integration project participants. To ensure a positive and professional experience, we have established a set of ethical standards that both mentors and mentees are expected to uphold throughout their involvement in project activities.

Confidentiality and Privacy

- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding all information shared during mentorship sessions.
- Ensure the privacy of mentees and mentors by not disclosing personal information without explicit consent.
- Use secure communication channels for all interactions involving sensitive information.

Respect and Cultural Sensitivity

- Foster an environment of mutual respect where diverse perspectives are valued.
- Acknowledge and embrace cultural differences, ensuring mentorship activities are culturally sensitive and inclusive.
- Avoid any actions or language that could be perceived as discriminatory or offensive.

Professionalism and Integrity

- Uphold the highest standards of professionalism and integrity in all interactions.
- Provide accurate and honest guidance, refraining from misleading or deceptive practices.
- Disclose any conflicts of interest and maintain objectivity in mentorship relationships.

Informed Consent and Boundaries

- Obtain informed consent from mentees regarding the scope, purpose, and limitations of the mentorship relationship.
- Establish clear boundaries to maintain the professional nature of the mentorship dynamic.
- Respect mentees' autonomy and preferences in decision-making processes.

Competence and Continuous Learning

- Maintain professional competence and stay updated on relevant knowledge and skills.
- Recognize personal limitations and refer mentees to appropriate resources or experts when necessary.

Guidelines [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Mentorship will help support the professional growth of unlicensed pharmacists in Canada. The following guidelines aim to empower both mentors and mentees within the IPG Mentorship and Integration project to build successful and impactful mentoring relationships.

Commitment to Professional Growth

As a mentor or mentee, commit to your own professional growth and development by staying updated with the latest practices, regulations, and advancements in pharmacy.

Establish Clear Objectives

Clearly define the objectives and expectations of the mentoring relationship at the outset. Understand the mentee's goals, strengths, and areas for improvement.

Promote a Positive Learning Environment

Foster an inclusive, supportive, and respectful environment where the mentee feels comfortable asking questions and sharing concerns.

Solicit Feedback

Establish a feedback mechanism where both the mentor and the mentee can provide constructive feedback on the mentorship process. This helps to address issues or concerns early on and promotes continuous improvement. (see feedback section for more information)

Encourage Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Encourage the mentee to think critically, solve problems independently, and develop sound clinical judgment in pharmacy practice.

Lead by Example

Demonstrate professionalism, ethical conduct, empathy, and integrity in all interactions with patients, colleagues, and other healthcare professionals.

Facilitate Networking Opportunities

Introduce the mentee to relevant professional networks, associations, and resources to expand their professional network and support their career growth.

Clarify Confidentiality

Discuss confidentiality expectations. Both parties should agree on what can be shared outside of the mentorship relationship and what should remain confidential.

Encourage Reflection and Self-Assessment

Encourage the mentee to reflect on their experiences, identify areas for improvement, and engage in self-assessment to track their progress.

Promote Work-Life Balance

Advocate for a healthy work-life balance and encourage the mentee to prioritize self-care and personal well-being.

Celebrate Achievements

Celebrate the mentee's achievements and milestones along their professional journey to reinforce their progress and boost morale.

Boundaries and Expectations [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Setting boundaries in a mentorship relationship is crucial for maintaining a healthy dynamic and ensuring that both the mentor and the mentee benefit from the interaction. Here are some tips for effectively setting boundaries in a mentorship relationship:

Establish Clear Expectations

From the beginning, communicate openly about the goals, objectives, and expectations of the mentorship relationship. This includes discussing the frequency of meetings, communication channels, and the topics or areas of focus.

Define Availability

Clearly outline when you are both available to communicate or meet. Set specific times or days for meetings to ensure that both parties can plan their schedules accordingly.

Respect Personal Time

It is important for both the mentor and the mentee to respect each other's personal time and boundaries. Avoid contacting each other outside of the agreed-upon communication channels or during non-working hours.

Be Transparent

If there are topics or areas that either the mentor or mentee are not comfortable discussing or providing guidance on, both parties should communicate this openly with one another. It is okay to set boundaries around certain subjects that fall outside of your expertise or comfort zone.

Encourage Independence

While it is important to offer support and guidance, encourage your mentee to think critically and problem-solve independently.

Revisit and Adjust

As the mentorship relationship progresses, periodically revisit the established boundaries, and adjust as needed. Circumstances may change, and it is important to adapt the boundaries to ensure the effectiveness of the mentorship.

Address Boundary Violations Promptly

If either party crosses a boundary, address it promptly and respectfully. Use it as an opportunity to reinforce the importance of boundaries and clarify expectations moving forward.

The Do's and Don'ts of Mentoring [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be a sounding board.• Listen and be patient.• Show empathy.• Create and open space that will enable the mentee to approach you.• Demonstrate confidentiality and respect.• Be open and honest.• Be constructively confrontational – it's ok to have the uncomfortable conversations.• Empower the mentee to take charge and be a leader.• Help your mentee with access to resources and support.• Listen and learn from their lived experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be judgemental.• Be dominant/micromanage – Keep yourself in the background.• Expect to know and have the solutions for everything – it's ok to say you don't know.• Ignore your own needs.• Give up- hang in there, even if the relationship is shaky at times.• Take the lead and tell the mentee what to do.• Lose your patience.• Belittle someone's lived experiences.

Giving and Receiving Feedback [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Giving and receiving feedback is essential for personal and professional growth. It is a skill that requires both empathy and clarity, ensuring that the feedback is constructive and actionable. Here is a breakdown of how to approach both aspects:

GIVING FEEDBACK

Be Specific

When giving feedback, provide specific examples to illustrate your points. Vague feedback can be confusing and less actionable.

Focus on Behavior

Discuss actions or behaviors rather than making judgments about the person's character. This helps keep the feedback objective and avoids personal attacks.

Be Timely

Provide feedback as soon as possible after the relevant event or behavior occurs. This ensures that it is fresh in everyone's minds and allows for prompt action if necessary.

Use "I" Statements

Frame feedback using "I" statements to express your own thoughts and feelings without sounding accusatory. For example, "I noticed that..." or "I feel that..."

Balance Positive and Negative

If possible, balance constructive criticism with positive reinforcement. Acknowledge strengths and achievements while also addressing areas for improvement.

Offer Solutions or Suggestions

Instead of just pointing out problems, offer solutions or suggestions for improvement. This shows that you are invested in helping the person grow and succeed.

Encourage Dialogue

Create an open and supportive environment where the recipient feels comfortable discussing the feedback further or asking questions.

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Listen Actively

When receiving feedback, give the person your full attention. Listen without interrupting, allowing them to express their thoughts fully.

Stay Open-Minded

Approach feedback with a growth mindset. Even if it is difficult to hear, view it as an opportunity for improvement rather than criticism.

Ask Clarifying Questions

If something is not clear or you need more context, do not hesitate to ask for further explanation. This demonstrates your willingness to understand and learn from the feedback.

Reflect on Feedback

Take some time to process the feedback before responding. Consider its validity and how it aligns with your goals and values.

Express Gratitude

Regardless of whether the feedback was positive or negative, thank the person for taking the time to provide it. Acknowledge their effort and insight.

Follow Up

After reflecting on the feedback, consider following up with the person to discuss any actions you've taken or further questions you may have.

Remember, effective feedback is a two-way street. Both parties should strive to communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully to foster growth and development.

Conflict Resolution [\(back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Effective conflict resolution between mentors and mentees is crucial for maintaining a productive and positive mentorship relationship. It requires a delicate balance of sensitivity, empathy, and clear communication. The following recommendations are designed to help navigate and resolve conflicts constructively, ensuring a supportive mentorship experience.

Acknowledge the Conflict

Begin by acknowledging that there is a conflict. Ignoring it or downplaying it will only exacerbate the situation.

Create a Safe Environment

Ensure that all parties feel safe and comfortable expressing their thoughts and feelings. Emphasize confidentiality and respect for each other's perspectives. Have the conversation in a space away from others.

Listen Actively

Allow each party to express their grievances without interruption. Articulate your concerns openly and honestly. Actively listen to understand each other's perspectives rather than formulating a response.

Identify Underlying Issues

Try to uncover the root cause of the conflict. Is it a misunderstanding, mismatched expectations, personality clash, or something else? Identifying the underlying issues is crucial for finding a resolution.

Find Common Ground

Look for areas of agreement or common goals that both parties share. Focus on these shared interests as a foundation for resolving the conflict and moving forward positively.

Brainstorm Solutions

Mentors and mentees are encouraged to brainstorm potential solutions together. Encourage creativity and flexibility in finding mutually beneficial resolutions.

Evaluate Solutions

Assess each proposed solution based on its feasibility, effectiveness, and potential impact on all parties involved. Encourage compromise and negotiation to reach a consensus.

Agree On a Plan of Action

Once a resolution is reached, document the agreed-upon plan of action. Clarify roles, responsibilities, timelines, and follow-up procedures to ensure accountability.

Follow Up

Schedule follow-up meetings to monitor progress and address any lingering issues. Encourage ongoing communication and feedback to maintain a positive mentor-mentee relationship.

Facilitate Dialogue

If the above doesn't work, reach out to CPhA. The project team will help to facilitate the conversation.

There may be situations where it isn't appropriate or safe to have difficult conversations. In instances of abuse, harassment, discrimination or serious breaches of professional conduct or ethics should be reported immediately. If you are unsure of the situation and wish to discuss it further, please reach out to project staff. CPhA takes these matters very seriously.