



## LEVELS OF MENTORING

### Finding the right fit.

While universal in practice, mentoring is not uniform in application. One variation is the level of mentoring at which the participants engage. There are three levels of mentoring, as shown in the Mentoring Levels™ model created by Triple Creek Associates. These levels are information, skill and advocacy, and each incorporates various degrees of accountability, intensity and trust for which both parties are responsible.

The Mentoring Levels™ model is based on a continuum. This continuum starts with a form of mentoring that requires a less demanding relationship (Information) and moves toward a form of mentoring that is quite demanding (Advocacy). At each point in the continuum, the degree of accountability, intensity and trust shifts.

- **Accountability** – This is the fuel that drives any effective mentoring relationship. It encourages deliberate planning, keeping agreements, and honestly assessing one another's actions and attitudes. This level of honesty can keep the learning relationship focused and serious.
- **Intensity** – Intensity involves a deliberate, intentional and heightened degree of concern that supports the mentoring relationship. Matched levels of intensity are needed from both parties to keep the interest and involvement in the mentoring process high.
- **Trust** – This is the confidence both parties need in each other's character, ability, strength, maturity and truthfulness in the relationship. Mentoring is a mutual process. Trust has to be evident to both parties for the relationship to be productive.





## LEVELS OF MENTORING (CONTINUED)

### Three Levels of Mentoring

With a firm understanding of accountability, intensity and trust, mentees and mentors can begin to decide which of the three levels of mentoring will best suit their needs.

#### Information

At this level of mentoring, mentees simply need information or understanding about a particular aspect of their work lives. Mentors share experiences and techniques that they think will meet the mentees' immediate needs. Information mentoring suggests a lower level of relationship accountability, intensity and trust. This type of mentoring is also less deliberate and involves less forethought and planning. Mentors perform three basic functions through information mentoring.

- They act as **resources**, providing information based on the mentees' needs.
- They act as **advisors**, becoming a reliable living source of instruction.
- They **enlighten** by illustrating and bringing understanding to mentees based on their needs.

#### Skill

The second level of mentoring is skill-based mentoring. In this level of mentoring, mentees need to develop a specific skill. Mentors make themselves available to handle questions, consult on techniques, point out potential difficulties, set expectations, and report on how they have done it in the past. Skill-based mentoring suggests a moderate amount of accountability, intensity and trust. It is also more deliberate and involves more forethought and planning than

### MENTORING TIPS OF THE MONTH

#### Mentee

Communicate your expectations of relational commitment to your mentor and invite his/her response and suggestions.

#### Mentor

Ask your mentee what s/he needs from you relationally to accomplish the goals set forth for the mentoring relationship.



## LEVELS OF MENTORING (CONTINUED)

information-based mentoring. Through skill-based mentoring, mentors perform three basic roles.

- They act as **teachers**, using on-the-job training methods to instruct mentees in specific skill development areas.
- They act as **coaches**, providing first-hand feedback on current performance.
- They act as **role models**, becoming living examples while mentees pursue specific areas of skill development.

### Advocacy

The last level of mentoring is advocacy. In this level of mentoring, mentees need to focus on highly complex interpersonal behaviors. Mentors, although never taking responsibility for future successes, become guiding influences, helping mentees develop the most effective behaviors for various situations. Mentors assess what abilities mentees possess and help them plan appropriate learning and development activities. Mentors also observe and provide feedback on mentees' performances. This level of mentoring suggests a high level of accountability, intensity and trust. Advocacy-based mentoring is very deliberate and involves high levels of forethought or planning. In this type of mentoring, mentors perform three basic tasks.

- They act as **guides**, helping mentees navigate through the personal development process.
- They act as **consultants**, becoming sounding boards and guiding mentees while they develop specific behaviors and abilities.
- They act as **sponsors**, advocating mentees' recognition and promotion.

## WE WANT YOUR STORIES!

Do you have a mentoring story you'd like to share with us and our readers?

We want to hear from you!

Send your mentoring stories to us at [info@3creek.com](mailto:info@3creek.com) and you may see your tale in an upcoming issue of *Masterful Mentoring*.

# Masterful Mentoring

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Triple Creek's Mentoring Newsletter

Creators of  
Open Mentoring®



## LEVELS OF MENTORING (CONTINUED)

Clearly, the three levels of mentoring differ in their tasks, roles and approaches. Yet even with these variances, each remains a viable solution for meeting mentoring needs, especially considering how wide the range of mentees is and the goals and development needs they bring with them. No matter who a person is or what he/she wishes to accomplish, a level of mentoring exists that is the perfect fit – and a mentor exists who is the perfect match. This model helps clarify the relational commitment expectations between you and your mentoring partner, which in turn helps you find a partner who is right for you.



## Triple Creek Associates, Inc.

7730 E. Belleview Ave.  
Suite 200A  
Greenwood Village, CO 80111  
Phone: 303-707-0800  
Email: [info@3creek.com](mailto:info@3creek.com)  
URL: [www.3creek.com](http://www.3creek.com)



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