

# MASTERFUL MENTORING



Triple Creek's Mentoring Newsletter

June 2004

Creators of Open Mentoring™

## TIPS

### Mentee Tip of the Month

Identify the critical path to achieving your goals and then resolve to stick to it.

### Mentor Tip of the Month

Use journalistic questions to check for clarity around expectations: who, what, where, when, why and how.

## MENTORING AGREEMENTS



### Creating the foundation for your mentoring relationship.

Establishing the groundwork for your mentoring relationship is a key element for success. You give yourself

and your mentoring partner an advantage by creating a mentoring agreement at the beginning of the relationship, which provides a concrete foundation for what each wishes to accomplish through the mentoring relationship. It also helps you both manage relational expectations and clearly define your commitments. A good agreement provides the framework for the scope of the relationship and acts as a contract between the mentee and mentor.

The process of negotiating this agreement should be seen as a constructive dialogue between the mentoring partners. The mentee should create the first draft of the mentoring agreement before ever meeting with or speaking to the mentor. By creating the agreement before meeting with the mentor, the mentee proactively begins to take the relationship into his/her own hands and forms a better understanding of exactly what it is s/he wants to learn.

Even though the mentee creates the *original* version of the agreement, the mentor will give constructive feedback and input to the final draft of the agreement with the mentee so that each feels responsible for the finished product. Both parties must be involved in refining and ratifying the mentoring agreement, since both will be held accountable to it.

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## MENTORING AGREEMENTS (continued)

Several factors should be covered in a mentoring agreement:

- The mentee's learning needs and development goals.
- Ways the mentee will be held accountable for his/her development (both by himself/herself and the mentor).
- Areas of the relationship that the mentee and/or mentor want to remain confidential.
- An ideal schedule for meeting.
- Ways for both the mentee and mentor to monitor progress.

The mentee and mentor will work together on the final draft of the agreement. Based on the essential elements of a mentoring agreement, **mentees** should keep the following questions in mind when negotiating the final agreement.

- Can my mentor help me meet these goals?
- How will I be held accountable for my progress?
- Do these confidentiality standards meet both of our needs?
- Will this meeting schedule work for me?
- How can we both monitor my progress?

Based on the essential elements of the mentoring agreement, **mentors** should consider asking the following questions of the mentee's proposed agreement.

- Can I help my mentee meet these goals?
- Are there additional ways I can help my mentee retain accountability for his/her progress?
- Do these confidentiality standards meet both of our needs?
- Will this meeting schedule work for me?
- How can the mentee and I both monitor his/her progress?

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## MENTORING AGREEMENTS (continued)

By asking these questions of the mentoring agreement and using the agreement as the foundation for your mentoring relationship, you can better address any relational components that may arise during the relationship, such as misunderstandings, personality conflicts and unmet expectations. Additionally, the mentoring agreement will help you stay focused as you handle the intangible qualities of the mentoring relationship. With this groundwork laid, you will be able to focus your energy and time toward more important matters: actually engaging in mentoring.

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