



Ending a mentoring partnership

Just as you would contract or agree ground rules at the start of mentoring it is equally important to mark the end of the partnership appropriately. Whether mentoring is ending early or at the agreed duration, do not let it fizzle out or part awkwardly because you are not sure how to say goodbye to your mentoring partner. Mentoring is a professional partnership that has a finite duration and needs to be drawn cleanly to a close.

Sometimes there may be a need to extend a mentoring partnership for a short period. This could be because goals or objectives have not yet been achieved. If this is the case, we recommend no more than two extra meetings if necessary and only if both parties agree.

When it is time to end the partnership, you may want to use the whole of the final session, or at least put aside 20 minutes to mark the end of the partnership. There are three stages which include looking back and looking forwards using the acronym **END** as a prompt.

1. Evaluate
2. Next Steps
3. Development

1. Evaluate

At the final meeting discuss the reason for mentoring coming to an end. Is it because you have reached the agreed duration, reached the initial objectives or have you agreed to part for other reasons?

Spend some time together reviewing and discussing progress based on the mentoring objectives agreed between you. If appropriate, include any that the mentor may have set for themselves too. Looking at the session log or learning log (if used), or the notes you took during the sessions, talk about the steps taken and progress made over the duration of mentoring. Highlight key milestones, outcomes and learnings. Celebrate any successes.

Talk about what you have both learned about yourselves, about mentoring as a development activity, as well as the strengths you brought and have developed during your time together.

2. Next steps

Mentoring may have helped take some steps towards achieving the objectives, achieved or even exceeded them, or the objectives may have changed during mentoring. Discuss the next steps based on what was discussed and achieved during mentoring. Just because mentoring is stopping doesn't mean that the work you did together stops here. See it as a springboard for the mentee to carry on the same path taking the steps by themselves.

Mentoring is not a dependent partnership, one of the aims is to enable the mentee to move forwards using their own strengths and skills, and with improved confidence and awareness on the path mapped out together with the mentor.

3. Development

Discuss future career goals and objectives of the mentee beyond those that were discussed in mentoring. Explore other possible opportunities and support that the mentee could access to help them in the future. The mentor may choose to share how mentoring has affected their future career goals and objectives. Would both of you consider being a mentor to other people in the future. Discuss whether to stay in touch informally, and what form that may take.

Thank your mentoring partner and wish them luck for the future – and anything else you feel appropriate to say or offer.

Having said goodbye and marked the end you can transition smoothly out of mentoring.

