



Growing your mentoring relationship

Here are some questions and answers to facilitate forming and growing your mentoring relationship.

What characteristics contribute to a successful mentoring relationship?

- Feelings of equality, recognition and respect for difference, honesty, trust, confidentiality, reciprocity, and commitment and mutual excitement for the task (i.e. for becoming a HERDSA Fellow)
- Opportunities for intellectual stimulation through challenge and achievement
- Balancing challenge and support in the relationship
- Patient listening by both partners that values the input of each person
- Both partners being willing to take the time to commit to the relationship
- Taking time to get to know each other as the relationship begins.

What do we do at our first meeting?

- Share your goals for mentoring
- Share your ideas about your expectations for mentoring
- Consider your respective responsibilities
- Consider how long you envisage the mentoring relationship lasting
- Decide how often you are going to have contact (be flexible)
- Decide what form that contact will typically take (e.g. email, phone, Skype) and who will contact whom
- Ensure that you have each other's contact details, and know if there are going to be any extended periods when one of you will be unavailable for the mentoring purposes
- Decide if one of you needs to take notes on what has been discussed. If meeting online, it is often useful to record the session and share it afterwards.
- Share ideas about how much time you are willing to invest in the mentoring relationship
- Decide what you are going to do if the relationship seems not to be working.

These are the 'ground rules' for your mentoring relationship. Taking time to set these up in the beginning may help to avoid frustration later on and provide a focus for discussion if your expectations are not being met.

What do I do if I have problems contacting my mentor?

Email the convenor of the Fellowships Committee via the HERDSA office (office@herdsa.org.au). The convenor will help you resolve this problem and may suggest an alternative mentor.

What do we do if one of us has problems with the mentoring relationship?

In the first instance discuss the problem together. If the matter cannot be resolved, contact the convenor of the Fellowships Committee via the HERDSA Office (office@herdsa.org.au).