



# **A Guide for Effective Mentoring Partnerships**

[Type here]

## **Getting Started**

Thank you for your commitment to The Rotary Club of Akron's Mentorship program. This program is designed to support our new members' growth and guidance through contact with current members who are actively involved in our club and the community who can offer advice and experience.

Mentors and mentees benefit in different ways by participating in this program. Mentors have:

- The opportunity to influence up-and-coming, as well as current, leaders in our community.
- Exposure and increased investment in future leaders of our club.
- A mechanism for the transfer of knowledge.

Mentees benefit through:

- Support in achieving personal learning and community involvement.
- Creating a greater sense of involvement in The Rotary Club of Akron.
- Exposure to seasoned leaders in our community and the wisdom of experience.

## **The Purpose of Mentoring Partnerships**

The benefits of a mentoring program are many, including the enrichment of the new members, driving club and community involvement through objective mentorship, and contributing to a culture of *Service above Self*.

Mentoring partnerships are an important way for us to demonstrate an interest in and commitment to the club and our community.

Mentoring is not coaching; it is not managing. This guide will help you understand the unique features of a mentoring partnership and determine how to make the most of this opportunity, whether you are the mentor or mentee.

## **Duration of the Partnership**

We suggest approximately 12 months for mentoring partnerships; however, there is no "right" amount of time for a partnership to be successful. Once the mentee feels comfortable and has begun to take part in the club and the community without suggestion, and both parties feel the time is ripe, dissolving the formal partnership may be appropriate. Mentors/mentees should not feel bound to continue the relationship if it is not productive.

In some cases, mentoring relationships do not succeed. If either the mentor or mentee feel the relationship is unproductive, please reach out to the mentorship committee to discuss potential next steps.

## **Matching Mentors and Mentees**

We take the following factors into consideration:

- Service interests
- Hobbies
- Career goals
- Willingness
- Personalities

Using this type of information, the mentorship committee will work with the membership committee, along with the nominating Rotarian, to match mentors with mentees who share similar goals, who can teach each other through their own experiences, and who demonstrate alignment with values.

## **Beginning Your Mentoring Partnership**

Once paired, the mentors and mentees should be responsible for self-management of this partnership. Begin simply by introducing yourself. Either the mentor or the mentee may initiate the first meeting. Set aside approximately an hour or so for this important step.

When ready to sit down, face-to-face, with your new partner, use the following guidelines for *both* mentor and mentee:

1. Be prepared for "tell me about yourself." A professional review of your background, your current position and work and your Rotary involvement.
2. Describe your experience, if any, as either a mentor or mentee.

What has been your experience in your career/Rotary? If you have had a mentor/mentee, talk about the successful elements of the relationship and how it helped you personally.

3. Consider sharing a glimpse into your personal side.

Typical topics include your family situation, your favorite pastimes, and things important in your life.

## **Setting Expectations**

Beyond getting to know one another, it's important that the initial meeting address the following goals for the partnership:

- Connect via phone once a month for 15 min before a Rotary meeting to check in
- Join each other once per quarter for a service project.
  - If you cannot, please connect with another rotary member to attend service project.
- Quarterly meeting with other new members and their mentors.
  - Could be at the normally scheduled social gathering or separate.
- Introduce new member via email or in person to other rotary members with whom you feel they would connect well.

## **Plan to Assess and Evaluate the Partnership**

After setting goals for the partnership, mentor and mentee should also determine how they will measure the effectiveness of the partnership. Giving and receiving feedback is essential to achieving outcomes; therefore, it may be helpful if both mentor and mentee can describe how they personally benefit most when receiving feedback about their performance. Some people prefer a direct, head-on approach while others prefer a more tactful review of the feedback. Reviewing and discussing the effectiveness of the partnership helps both parties know how they can contribute to the ongoing success.

## **Celebration and Conclusion**

Once both the mentor and mentee recognize the time to dissolve the formal relationship, it is appropriate for a celebratory event. Lunch or dinner out to a special restaurant or other, similar event, brings closure to the formal relationship. This is a time for mentor and mentee to reflect on the months behind them, on the goals achieved and the lessons learned. Both mentor and mentee should share insights about the partnership and use the conclusion to identify how they benefited by being connected through mentoring.

***\* Given the current pandemic, we respect the need to follow local safety and distancing recommendations, so alternative virtual options can be used.***