



How to Be a Great Mentee

Tiffany Cheng, MD, Solmaz Nabipour, MD, Stanford University

- Before you enter into a mentorship relationship, ask yourself a few questions¹:
 - What are you looking for in a mentor?
 - What are your values, motivation, and communication style?
 - Are you ready to discuss your limitations?
 - Are you open to feedback?
- **You are the primary driver of success.** At all times, you should be an active participant and driver of the relationship.¹
- Remember that this is a **learning experience**. Do not be afraid to ask for assistance. Pick projects that interest you and grow with your passions.

Table 1: Behaviors to avoid as a mentee¹

Overcommitting (don't say yes to everything)
Being passive, staying in your comfort zone.
Be close-minded.
Ignore, criticize or argue.
Burn bridges.
Avoid asking for advice at the last minute or being over-dependent on your mentor.

- It is **perfectly fine to have more than one mentor** to meet all of your needs as you grow. Anticipate setting up a diverse group of mentors with different experiences and backgrounds committed to helping you succeed.²
- **Seek out sponsorship.** A sponsor is someone who advocates for you and creates opportunities by opening doors for you. Your mentor can be your sponsor, but often times they can connect

you to people who could be your sponsors. You can be over-mentored and under-sponsored.²

- A mentee's responsibilities include³: Asking productive questions, developing listening skills, using trust-building behaviors to develop mutual respect. Set clear boundaries and expectations.
- Understand that mentorship is like any other relationship – **communication is key!** It is ok to be vulnerable; honesty is the best policy, and do not be afraid to be ambitious in discussing your goals with your mentor.

Table 2: How to be a good mentee^{4,5}

Drive the relationship (“manage up”).
Define your goals.
Invest enough time in the relationship. Make meeting your mentor a priority.
Develop an agenda for each mentor meeting.
Be open to another viewpoint/suggestions, to learning new skills.
Ask your mentor for feedback periodically.
Reflect on the feedback your mentor gives you.
Take advantage of the opportunities your mentor offers.
Even introverts need to network – ask your mentor for opportunities to collaborate.
Be kind and gracious – express appreciation for your mentor's time and advice.

References:

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