

## Career Mentoring Fact Sheet

### Career Mentoring

Career Mentoring is a Career Exploration activity in which a student is matched one-on-one with an adult professional to explore potential careers and related educational issues. Different than programs such as Big Brother, Big Sister, the career mentor serves as a *career* resource by sharing insights and providing guidance about the workplace, careers and postsecondary education/training. This is accomplished through formal and informal meetings organized at the school, in the workplace or online, but never in an unsupervised environment or the home. (Sometimes a mentor may work with and support a small group of students.)

The development of a trusting relationship between the student and the mentor is the key to a successful experience. Designed to meet specific learning outcomes, career mentoring is educationally rich, is tied to the curriculum, and helps students connect what they're learning in school with the workplace.

### Career Mentoring is designed to:

- Give students exposure to jobs, careers, and industries.
- Offer the opportunity to build a relationship with a caring and knowledgeable adult.
- Offer a chance to practice communication skills and develop professional skills.
- Help students make the connection between school and the workplace.
- Inform career planning.

### Career Mentoring is structured to:

- Build self-esteem, self-worth, confidence and flexibility.
- Build occupational knowledge.
- Enable students to begin identifying areas of career interest.
- Allow for the mentor and mentee to select each other.
- Offer positive life outcomes for students.
- Build knowledge about the education and training needed for a particular job, career path and entry into the industry.

### Career Mentoring is supported by:

- Classroom preparation and reflection upon the experience verbally and in writing.
- A long-term commitment from an adult role model (generally at least a year).
- A focus on building trust and respect with each other.
- The setting of clear and reasonable expectations for students and their mentoring partner.
- Routine meetings or communication with enough regularity to develop a strong relationship.

### What is a Career Mentor?

#### A career mentor is:

- A role model
- A guide
- A coach
- An advisor
- Experienced
- Reliable
- Approachable
- Relatable
- Invested in outcomes
- An additional resource

#### A career mentor is not:

- Assigned
- Any employer partner a student happens to interact with
- A teacher
- A worksite supervisor or internship host (though a mentor/mentee relationship may evolve during or after the internship or work experience)
- A counselor or case manager
- Paid to be there

### Career Mentoring is connected to:

- Individual career development/training plans.
- Future work-based learning activities.
- The student's next steps.

Career mentoring is one activity in the continuum of authentic work-based experiences provided to all students engaged in career-related programs or course of study in New York City schools.

### Career Mentoring Models

Below are some sample mentoring models that can be used alone or in combination to offer students and mentors a range of opportunities.

- Traditional mentoring (one adult to one student)
- Small group mentoring (one adult to as many as four students)
- Team mentoring (several adults working with small groups of students. Adult-to-student ratio is no greater than 1:4.)
- Large group mentoring (one or two adults to seven to ten students)
- Peer mentoring (older students mentoring other students)
- E-mentoring (mentoring via email and the internet combined with another model from the list above.)

## Career Mentoring Support Materials

### Checklists, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets:

- Coordinator Career Mentoring Checklist
- Student Career Mentoring Checklist
- Teacher Career Mentoring Tip Sheet
- Employer Career Mentoring Tip Sheet
- Employer Career Mentoring Fact Sheet

### Required Forms and Documents

- WBL Travel and Media Consent Form
- Employability Skills Profile

### Implementation Tools:

- Career Mentoring Research Activity
- Career Mentoring Student Reflection

#### Tips for Success

Effective Career Mentoring includes structured activity before, during and after the experience. Pay attention to these tips to ensure meaningful experiences that result in enriched learning.

- Engage in proper planning and preparation.
- Address logistical details.
- Communicate with all parties.
- Maximize learning potential.
- Focus on career exploration.
- Connect to the classroom.
- Provide support for students and supervisors.
- Promote student reflection.

Sustaining and growing Career Mentoring and all other work-based learning activities depend on maintaining positive relationships with the participating employers. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address participation needs as they arise.