



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.