

MENTORING HANDBOOK



INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a map to guide you on the road to successful mentoring--a road that is becoming far more traveled. Mentoring is not a new concept; in fact, mentoring existed in ancient Greece.

The mentor-mentee relationship is charted from beginning to end by tips on how to identify a mentee, cultivate the relationship, and avoid obstacles that can detour a mentor-mentee relationship. Finally, this handbook outlines the positive effects of traveling this road, effects that are shared by the mentor, the mentee, and the fraternity. Recommendations for Use This handbook contains comprehensive information on mentoring, with tips, suggestions, and examples to supplement this information. It is recommended that you read all sections of the handbook at least once.

Remember, this handbook is the map that guides you on the road to successful mentoring. You need to decide how to best use this tool. What Is Mentoring Mentoring is an open vista of new experiences and possibilities. One usually charts unfamiliar territory when attempting to define mentoring.

Mentoring is not a term that is easy to define because it is an ever-changing process. The mentoring process links an experienced Mason (mentor) with a less experienced Mason (mentee) to help foster Masonic development and growth.

The mentoring process requires that the mentor and mentee work together to reach specific goals and to provide each other with sufficient feedback to ensure that the goals are reached.

Many define a mentor as a teacher who assigns tasks and reviews performance, but a mentor is more than a teacher. A mentor facilitates personal and Masonic growth in an individual by sharing the knowledge and insights that have been learned through the years. The desire to want to share these life experiences is characteristic of a successful mentor. This supportive attitude is critical to the successful development of the mentee. A mentor must encourage the mentee to accept challenges and overcome difficulties.

Time requirements are defined by both the mentor and the mentee. A mentor is someone who has earned the respect of his peers and/or his Fraternity. It is important that this person be someone to whom others can look at as a positive role model. A mentee, as a bright and motivated individual, is the future of the fraternity; the insurance that a well trained, high quality Mason will exist to meet long-term goals.

Mentees represent a wide range of individuals in terms of age and work experience. A mentee is an achiever groomed for advancement by being provided opportunities to excel beyond the limits of his current position. A mentee is the man new to Masonry, the junior colleague who needs to be taught everything about our great fraternity in order to make this good man better.

Of course, the success of this relationship depends on both the mentor and the mentee. Both you and your mentee must want the relationship to work. You must cooperate with each other to make the most of the experience.

TIP: Watch for signs of “lopsided” mentoring. This occurs when one party is devoting more time and energy to the mentoring process than the other. In most cases, efforts should be equal. Make sure you both are committing time and energy to the process.

The success of the mentoring relationship also depends on how well the mentoring relationship is defined. You need to know each other's expectations. Once you have a clear understanding of these expectations you will be able to ensure that each other's expectations are being met.

Finally, you must be concerned with the overall development of your mentee. You should be the influencing force behind your mentee's Masonic growth--providing guidance, promoting participation in Lodge training, and assisting in decisions--to cultivate overall development.

MENTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Like marks around a compass, the roles you assume as a mentor point you in many different directions. Which role you assume depends on the needs of your mentee and on the relationship you build with your mentee. Each of the roles is explained in the next section to help you prepare for the different directions you will take. Teacher

As a teacher, you may need to teach the mentee the skills and knowledge required to be a successful Mason. This role requires you to outline the “nuts and bolts” of the Lodge and to share your experiences as a seasoned Mason. You have identified the knowledge and skills that make a seasoned Mason. You need to identify what knowledge and skills the mentee already has and what knowledge and skills require development.

The most important developmental method you can use is to answer the questions your mentee poses. Keep in mind that you are not required to be the “expert” on everything. A good mentor knows when to direct the mentee to a knowledgeable source. Knowledgeable sources can be people or materials (e.g., handbook, diagram, chart, the internet). As a teacher, it is important that you share the wisdom of past mistakes.

A mentee cannot only learn from your errors, but also can realize that no one is perfect. Make a point to relate these learning experiences, special anecdotes, and trials whenever appropriate. It is this sharing of information that strengthens the mentor-mentee relationship.

As a guide, you help navigate through the inner workings of Masonry and decipher the “unwritten rules” for your mentee. This information is usually the “kernels of knowledge” that one only acquires over a period of time. The inner workings of Masonry are simply the “behind the scenes” dynamics that are not always apparent, but are crucial to know. The “unwritten rules” can include the special procedures your Lodge follows, the guidelines that are not always documented, and policies under consideration. This is known as the Lodge culture. Who’s who in the Lodge.

As a mentor, it is important that you explain the inner workings and “unwritten rules” to your mentee. Brief your mentee on who does what and the critical responsibilities that each performs. The mentee may well ask why all of the rules are not written so that mistakes or misinterpretations are not made. Sadly the answer may be that you don't know. A good mentor will strive to correct this deficiency in his lodge.

The role of counselor requires you to establish a trusting and open relationship. In order to create a trusting relationship, you need to stress confidentiality and show respect for the mentee. You can promote confidentiality by not disclosing personal information that the mentee shares with you.

Show respect by listening carefully and attentively to the mentee and by not interrupting while your mentee is talking. The counselor role also encourages a mentee to develop problem-solving skills. A mentee must be able to think through problems rather than always depending on you to provide a solution.

As a motivator, you may at times need to generate motivation in your mentee. Motivation is an inner drive that compels a person to succeed. It is not often you will find an unmotivated mentee. In general, most mentees are enthusiastic about their journey in Masonry. After all, mentees tend to be characterized as highly motivated individuals with a thirst for knowledge. You usually perform the role of motivator only when you need to motivate your mentee to complete a difficult assignment or to pursue an ambitious goal.

GOALS

Through encouragement, support, and incentives, you can motivate your mentee to succeed. One of the most effective ways to encourage your mentee is to provide frequent positive feedback during an assigned task or while the mentee strives toward a goal.

Concentrate on what the mentee is doing well and tell your mentee about these successes. This role requires you to help the mentee develop interests and set realistic Masonic goals. As the old saying goes, "If you don't know where you are going, you won't know how to get there." This saying holds true for a mentee's Masonic development. In the role of advisor, you need to think about where the mentee wants to go in Masonry. That is, you need to help the mentee set Masonic goals. There are several factors to consider when setting Masonic goals.

- Goals should be specific. Goals need to be clearly explained using details about what the mentee wants to achieve.
- Goals must be time framed. You both need to plan an overall time frame for goals with interim deadlines to ensure that your mentee is moving toward these goals. It is important not to make goals too future oriented. Most mentors recommend that you keep goal time frames within a three to six month range.
- Goals must be results oriented. You need to concentrate on the results of their efforts, not so much on the activities that are required to accomplish them. An activity provides a way of reaching the goal, but the end result (the goal) should not be neglected.

- Goals must be relevant. The goals must be appropriate and in tune with Masonry, while moving the mentee closer to the knowledge and proficiency that he finds challenging and enjoyable.
- Goals must be reachable. The goals must be within the mentee's reach. The mentee needs to feel challenged, but not incapable of reaching the goals. You must consider the special talents of your mentee and weigh these talents with the requirements of the goal for which your mentee strives. You may want to create several Masonic goals to eliminate the possibility of your mentee feeling “trapped.” Keep in mind that goals must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in the mentee’s personal life. Goals shouldn’t be so rigid that adjustments can’t be made.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MENTOR

A mentor is someone who inspires a mentee to do better. A mentor needs to be able to motivate a mentee through encouraging feedback and challenging assignments. A mentor once described this characteristic by saying, “a mentor needs to stretch the mentee’s potential, setting new limits for what the mentee can do.”

A mentor must thoroughly understand the mentee’s current knowledge and goals, and be able to effectively teach his mentee. A mentor must not only teach the “skills of the craft,” but also manage the learning of the mentee. This means that a mentor must actively try to recognize and use teaching opportunities.

A mentor must be confident in his Masonic knowledge so that pride for the mentee’s accomplishments can be genuinely expressed. A mentor should appreciate a mentee’s developing strengths and abilities, without viewing these accomplishments as a threat. A secure mentor delights in a mentee’s discoveries and welcomes a mentee’s achievements. In truth, a mentor enjoys being a part of the mentee’s growth and development.

A mentor is usually an achiever himself, one who sets realistic goals, continually evaluates these goals, strives to reach them, and demonstrates a thirst for Masonic knowledge and improvement. A successful mentor is usually one who takes on more responsibility than is required, volunteers for more activities, and tends to climb the proverbial Masonic ladder at a quick pace.

A mentor attempts to inspire a mentee with the same drive for achievement. This “attempt at achievement,” or thirst for Masonic

knowledge, is the flint that sparks a mentee's desire for Masonic success. In this way, a mentor helps a mentee set, evaluate, and reach Masonic goals.

A mentor takes pride in being a Mason and relishes the every day challenges that typically arise. A mentor understands the vision and values of the fraternity and supports his lodge and Grand Lodge initiatives.

A mentor should be well versed in lodge culture as well as its particular policies and procedures. Keep in mind that a mentee looks to his mentor for guidance on interpreting policies and procedures as well as understanding the lodge culture.

A mentor is one who shows regard for another's well-being. Every person, including the mentor, has certain vulnerabilities and imperfections that must be accepted. A mentor should learn to accept a mentee's weaknesses and minor flaws, just as the mentee must learn to accept the weaknesses and flaws of the mentor. Mentors can, in fact, help a mentee explore his vulnerabilities and imperfections.

Without passing judgment, a mentor must also recognize the differences in opinions, values, and interests that will exist. By accepting such differences, a mentor projects openness to others. Not all these characteristics are equally found in everyone. If you fall short in one or several of these characteristics, it doesn't mean that you can't be a successful mentor. It just means that you need to strengthen those characteristics that you think are a bit weak.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A MENTEE

A successful mentoring relationship not only depends on the characteristics of the mentor, but also on the characteristics of the mentee. The following list outlines the characteristics of the ideal mentee.

A mentee seeks educational and/or training opportunities whenever possible to broaden his knowledge. A mentee strives to elevate his level of Masonic knowledge to gain a greater mastery of the Craft. A mentee should also be permitted and encouraged to search out a Mason whom he believes that he will be compatible with and whom he believes will be of value in his own Masonic enlightenment.

A mentee must interact with many others as a part of the fraternity. Therefore, it is important that the mentee cooperate and communicate with the brethren. A mentee must learn how to be a team player, to contribute as much as possible to the mentoring relationship.

To do this, a mentee should:

- Initiate and participate in discussions

- Seek information and opinions
- Suggest a plan for reaching goals
- Clarify or elaborate on ideas
- Try to ease tension between parties
- Resolve differences
- Be fair with praise and criticism
- Accept praise and criticism.

A mentee must be willing to put time and effort into the mentoring relationship. A mentee must realize that to grow in Masonry, it is necessary to assess oneself, to acquire needed knowledge and to make contact with other brothers.

Mentees must be willing to take chances! In fact, a mentor should encourage risk taking. A mentee with a poor or “defeatist” attitude will not move ahead as the first “bump in the road” will jar this person off course. An optimistic mentee is more likely to tackle difficulties and to stay on course. A mentee should not be afraid to fail. Remember, these characteristics are desired characteristics of the “ideal” mentee. If your mentee has only two or three of these characteristics, this does not mean that the mentoring relationship will fail. It may, however, take extra effort to overcome possible obstacles that could arise from lacking one or several of these characteristics.

ESSENTIALS OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

When you are traveling to an unfamiliar destination, there are probably some essentials you should take to make your trip a success, a road map, directions, and perhaps a contact's telephone number in case you get lost. Well, as you begin your Masonic mentoring journey, there are several essentials that you should know to make your journey a success.

These essential factors are:

- Respect
- Trust
- Partnership Building
- Self Esteem
- Time Respect

RESPECT:

The first essential of a successful mentoring relationship is respect. Respect is established when the mentee recognizes knowledge, skills, and abilities in the mentor that he would like to possess. The mentee then attempts to acquire these much-admired characteristics. Respect usually increases over time.

TRUST:

This is essential for a successful mentoring relationship. Trust is a two-way street--both mentors and mentees need to work together to build trust. There are four factors to building trust: Communication + Availability + Predictability + Loyalty = TRUST
Communication: You need to talk and actively listen to your mentee. It is important to value your mentee's opinions and let your mentee know that he is being taken seriously. Y

You should be willing to meet with your mentee whenever he needs you. Remember the "open door" policy, that is, you should keep the door open as often as possible. Your mentee should also make time for this relationship.
Predictability: Your mentee needs you to be dependable and reliable. You should make a point to give consistent feedback, direction, and advice.

Never compromise your relationship by discussing your mentee's problems or concerns with others. In addition, instruct your mentee not to discuss your relationship with others. Keep the information discussed between the two of you in strict confidence. Avoid criticizing or complaining about other Masons. Disloyalty to the organization or a brother may cause confusion on the part of your mentee.

Partnership Building

When you enter a mentoring relationship, you and your mentee become Masonic partners. There are natural barriers that all partnerships face. Natural barriers may include miscommunication or an uncertainty of each other's expectations.

Five improvement activities can help you overcome these barriers:

- Maintain communication
- Fix obvious problems
- Forecast how decisions could affect goals

- Discuss progress
- Monitor changes
- Show enthusiasm.
- Create a positive atmosphere
- Approach changes slowly.

Tip: Always provide honest feedback. Your mentee deserves the truth, and honest feedback helps your mentee keep a realistic self-perception.

MENTORING SKILLS

Building skills such as listening, counseling, and advising are crucial skills for a mentor.

There are two styles of listening, one-way listening, and two-way listening. One-way listening, also known as passive listening, occurs when a listener tries to understand the speaker's remarks without actively trying to provide feedback. In this style of listening there is little or no feedback. The listener may deliberately, or unintentionally, send nonverbal messages such as eye contact, smiles, yawns, or nods. However, there is no verbal response to indicate how the message is being received.

Sometimes one-way listening is an appropriate way to listen. If your mentee wants to air a gripe, vent frustration, or express an opinion, you may want to practice one-way listening. Your mentee may not want or need a verbal response, but only wants you to serve as a "sounding board." One-way listening is also appropriate when you want to ease back mentally and be entertained. It would be a mistake to interrupt your mentee as he relates a good joke or story.

Two-way listening involves verbal feedback. There are two types of feedback that you can use as a listener. One type of verbal feedback involves a questioning response. You ask for additional information to clarify your idea of the mentee's message. For instance, you may want to ask, "What do you mean?" By asking this type of question, you are asking your mentee to elaborate on information already given.

The second type of verbal feedback is paraphrasing. In this type of feedback, you need to demonstrate that you have understood your mentee's concerns. You need to rephrase your mentee's ideas in your own words. If you concentrate on restating your mentee's words, you can avoid selective listening, which is responding only to parts of the conversation that interest you.

TIP. You can summarize your mentee's points by saying, "Let me make sure I'm with you so far," or "The way you see the problem is..."

Listening for the whole meaning: Listen for feeling as well as fact. In other words, try to "get inside the other person's head."

During the course of the mentoring relationship, you may be required to counsel your mentee on problems that can stem from conditions outside of the Lodge, or from conflicts in the Lodge. You may also counsel your mentee on how to make certain decisions.

As a mentor, you should be familiar with the non-directive approach to counseling. The focus of this approach is to let your mentee discover problems and work out solutions that best fit his value system. This type of approach avoids the need for making a diagnosis.

TIP: One role you don't want to assume is that of psychoanalyst. Never try to diagnose a mentee's problem.

A non-directive counseling approach requires you to use active listening skills. While listening to your mentee, refrain from passing judgment. You should accept the different values and opinions of your mentee without imposing your own values and opinions.

Make your mentee feel comfortable and at ease and show a genuine interest in your mentee's welfare. Attempt to get your mentee to "open up" with phrases such as: "I see, would you like to tell me about it?" "Would you help me to better understand what you're feeling?" "Why do you feel that way?" "OK ... what happened?" As part of the non-directive approach, you should learn how to reflect on what has been said by your mentee.

A non-directive approach does NOT mean that you are passive throughout the discussion. Any discussion, if it is to be productive, requires give and take. You should reflect on your mentee's statement by restating the key point(s). Make sure you really know what your mentee is trying to tell you. It is not unusual for a person to stop talking during a conversation to organize thoughts, focus opinions, interpret feelings, or simply catch his breath.

You may feel great pressure to break the silence by saying something. However, it is better to let your mentee restart the conversation and

continue the conversation at their own pace. This eliminates putting too much of your own feelings and biases into the conversation.

If you are asked for advice, preface your statements with “From my experience...” or “The way I view the situation...” or “If I were in your situation, I would consider...”. These statements help your mentee understand that this advice is from your perspective. It is the mentee’s choice and responsibility to decide whether or not to apply it. Remember the more serious and personal your mentee’s concern, the more cautious you should be about giving advice.

It goes without saying that confidences should be maintained. You should use considerable discretion in handling sensitive or confidential information. Realize that your mentee may be feeling anxiety, apprehension, or fear about disclosing this information to you. Your mentee may wonder how this information is going to be interpreted or acted upon. (This is where trust really is a factor.) When you counsel your mentee, you can learn to better understand how your mentee thinks, feels, acts, or reacts. In fact, counseling can effectively stimulate your mentee’s problemsolving ability.

Advising Mentoring requires you to help your mentee set goals and to meet these goals within a specified time frame. First, you need to determine your mentee’s interests. To help your mentee determine his interests begin by asking questions such as: What activities do you enjoy or find satisfying in Masonry? What outside activities or other organizations do you enjoy? In what other volunteer programs are you active? Keep in mind that your mentee may have difficulty identifying his skills and abilities for three reasons. People tend to be modest and not want to toot their own horns. People tend to recall only those attributes necessary to address their current experiences. People tend to diminish their abilities by thinking the abilities are common to everyone.

Second, once your mentee shares some of his interests, begin to categorize these interests. By categorizing your mentee’s interests, you can help your mentee focus on the areas of knowledge that he enjoys. Once you have identified your mentee’s interests, you need to identify his skills and abilities within these interest areas. You need to gather this information to focus your mentee’s goals and his areas of interest. Ask your mentee: What do you think are your responsibilities? What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you need to meet these responsibilities? What do you believe are your strengths? Often knowledge, skills, and abilities are shown in accomplishments.

Accomplishments include the successful completion of any assignment or task that clearly demonstrates a particular skill or combination of skills.

Have your mentee think about his professional, personal, or Masonic accomplishments by asking your mentee the following questions: What would you consider to be your three most significant accomplishments? Why do you consider these to be the most significant? You can help your mentee reveal knowledge, skills, and abilities by forcing him to closely examine professional, personal, or Masonic accomplishments.

Third, once you have determined your mentee's interests, knowledge, skills, and abilities, help your mentee to formulate and develop or isolate his Masonic, as well as his personal goals. Masonic goals are desires to enhance one's Masonic interaction and personal endeavors. Masonic development goals are sometimes hard to quantify so be patient and willing to accept small detours along the path that you are traveling. Ask your mentee: Where would you like to be in three years (long-term goals)? What series of one-year goals (short-term goals) could lead you to these objectives?

You can set a formalized Masonic education structure for your mentee by writing the long-term and short-term goals on a planning worksheet. Keep in mind that your mentee's goals must be realistic and flexible. You also should ensure that the mentee's goals coincide with Masonry's philosophy and culture.

Once you have identified the Masonic development goals, organize these goals in one of the following categories.

- **Knowledge goals:** These goals are desires to advance one's Masonic knowledge and proficiency. To attain Masonic knowledge goals, one must use his previous knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- **Target areas:** Target areas are subtasks that a mentee needs to do to reach his Masonic goals.
- **Social goals:** Social goals are aspirations to meet other brothers to build a network of contacts.
- **Personal goals:** Personal goals are strong desires to improve oneself.

Fourth, once your mentee's goals are established, you need to meet at least every six weeks to evaluate them. You and your mentee may want to adjust Masonic development goals as your mentee's interests change.

TYPES OF MENTORING

There are three different routes one can take on the road to successful mentoring.

The three routes to mentoring are:

- Traditional mentoring

- Planned mentoring
- Self-mentoring

Although these routes will lead you to the same destination, you need to decide which route to follow.

Traditional Mentoring

Traditional mentoring also referred to as informal mentoring, focuses primarily on the mentee. This type of mentoring promotes the examination of the mentee's Masonic path through goal setting. The mentor and mentee work together to devise an action plan that sets Masonic goals that will lead the mentee on the appropriate path.

Traditional mentoring not only encourages the mentee to establish Masonic goals but also advocates setting personal goals. The overall development of the individual is the focus of traditional mentoring. Traditional mentoring is a natural process; that is, the mentor and mentee pair together by their own internal forces.

Internal forces such as mutual respect, shared experiences, and common interests are the ingredients that create the relationship. With this type of mentoring, you can say that a mentor and mentee come together through a special chemistry. Generally, traditional mentoring lasts between 8-15 years, although friendships that are formed through this type of mentoring can last a lifetime. Another characteristic of traditional mentoring is that it involves frequent social interaction between the mentor and mentee. This type of mentoring relationship usually results in the mentor and mentee spending time together outside of the Lodge and sharing a friendly, comfortable relationship.

This type of mentoring is usually successful because the two parties have a genuine concern for each other's well being. Friendship, rather than acquaintance, keeps the two parties together.

Planned Mentoring

Planned mentoring, also known as formal mentoring, focuses on the goals of the lodge as well as the individual. This results in benefits to both the lodge and the mentee. This type of mentoring promotes a "formal" approach to the relationship so there is little or no out of Lodge social interaction. The mentor and mentee rarely see each other outside the Lodge. The mentor and mentee are not concerned with developing a friendship as much as they are interested in meeting the Lodge's needs. After all, the basis for the relationship is organizational commitment.

Planned mentoring usually lasts from six to eight months. This phase will entail assisting the mentee getting through his degrees proficiency. The relationship ends when the Lodge's goals are reached.

This type of mentoring takes a systematic approach that consists of four steps:

- Write a formal contract: The mentor and mentee develop a contract (or plan) that outlines expectations and obligations. Both participants agree to the contract to bind the relationship.
- Train participants: The Lodge trains the participants to understand their roles as mentor and mentee.
- Monitor the relationship: The mentor and mentee monitor the mentoring program to ensure compliance with the formal contract.
- Evaluate the program: The program is evaluated to determine the results.

Note: Some mentoring relationships develop into a combination of both planned and traditional.

Self-Mentoring

Although self-mentoring can be considered a type of mentoring, it differs significantly from the other two mentoring types. Why? Because self-mentoring is more a strategy than a type as there is no mentor who promotes the development of a mentee. Rather, the individual cultivates his own Masonic growth through self-tutoring activities and resource-finding techniques.

Self-mentoring requires the individual to be highly motivated and self-disciplined. The individual prefers to increase his Masonic knowledge and augment his Masonic obligations by building a body of knowledge in the craft and developing skills without the aid of other brothers. There are several self-mentoring strategies that successful individuals have used.

Here are five strategies that individuals have used to help advance their Masonic growth.

- Ask questions and listen carefully to the experts in Masonry. This includes finding out who is the authority on a subject and asking detailed questions. Talk to brothers who are in positions to which you aspire.
- Read and research materials in Masonry and related fields. Learn new information from magazines, books, and periodicals.

- Observe brothers in leadership positions. Individuals can learn a lot about the inner workings of Masonry and different leadership styles simply by watching those in authority.
- Attend educational programs. Educational programs may include conferences, seminars, night classes, or training courses.
- Seek out new opportunities. Volunteer for projects or join concordant organizations. You may want to alert your mentee to these strategies. A mentee should be encouraged to look for opportunities to develop independently, outside of the traditional mentoring arena.

MENTORING STAGES

Mentoring, as a dynamic and ever-changing process, consists of different stages that provide a mentee with the opportunity to learn and grow. A mentor needs to be aware that each stage requires that different roles be assumed.

There are four stages of mentoring.

- Prescriptive
- Persuasive
- Collaborative
- Confirmative

Prescriptive Stage, the mentee usually has little or no experience in Masonry or in the lodge. This stage is most comfortable for the novice mentee, who depends heavily on you for support and direction. This is where you are prescribing and advising your mentee.

The Prescriptive Stage requires you to give a lot of praise and attention to build your mentee's self-confidence. You will devote more time to your mentee in this stage than in any of the other stages. You will provide detailed guidance and advice to your mentee on many, if not all, Masonic issues and procedures. In this stage, think of the mentee as a sponge, soaking up every new piece of information you provide. You will share many of your experiences, trials, and anecdotes during this stage.

TIP: Give examples of how you or other people handled similar situations and what consequences resulted.

The Persuasive Stage, the second stage, requires you to take a strong approach with your mentee. In this stage, you actively persuade your mentee to find answers and seek challenges. The mentee usually has some experience, but needs firm direction to be successful.

During this stage, your mentee may need to be prodded into taking risks. Suggest new strategies, coach, question, and push your mentee into discoveries.

In the Collaborative Stage, the mentee has enough experience and ability that he can work together with the mentor to jointly solve problems and participate in more equal communication. In this stage, the mentee actively cooperates with the mentor in his Masonic development.

The Confirmative Stage is suitable for mentees with a lot of experience who have mastered the degree proficiencies, but require your insight into Masonic policies and procedures. In this stage, you act more as a sounding board or empathetic listener. While everyone can benefit from a mentor at any point in his life, the ultimate goal of the mentoring stages is to produce a well-rounded, competent Mason who outgrows the tutelage of a mentor. Your relationship should evolve to the point where your mentee is self-motivated, confident, and polished.

Ideally, you want your protégé to move on to become a mentor to another colleague. Each mentoring stage is characterized by the degree of dependence your mentee has on you as a mentor.

The degree of mentee dependency is greatest at the Prescriptive Stage, with dependency decreasing with each subsequent stage. This means that a mentee who is successfully capable of working independently most of the time would be comfortable in the Confirmative Stage.

As the mentee grows in Masonry, the amount of dependence decreases, until the mentee is shaped into an independent and competent Freemason.

OBSTACLES IN A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

During the course of your mentoring relationship, you and your mentee may experience roadblocks. Roadblocks are obstacles that could hinder a developing relationship. There are obstacles unique to a mentor and obstacles that only a mentee may encounter.

The obstacles that could confront a mentor include a mentoring style that does not meet the mentee's needs or suits the mentor. What happens when

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- A highly organized mentor has a mentee with a relaxed work style?
- A creative mentee has a mentor who practices the old school of thought?
- An assertive mentor has a mentee with a reserved personality?

Of course you can guess what would happen ...frustration!

As a mentor, your style of mentoring may not always match the needs of your mentee. Your mentoring style has a lot to do with who you are and how you interact with people.

If you are a detail-oriented person, you probably tend to give extensive directions or outline each step of an assignment. If you are a person who tends to see the “big picture,” you probably are more inclined to give looser, perhaps even vague, directions to your mentee.

Of course, noting these differences does not make one style better than the other. However, differences in styles between you and your mentee can pose an obstacle. Both of you need to understand each other’s styles.

Be flexible, but remember that disorganization and sloppiness warrant improvement rather than acceptance. Frustration may also occur when you don’t adapt your style to meet the developing needs of your mentee. As your relationship evolves, your mentee’s confidence grows as Masonic knowledge and proficiency develop and successes are relished. You need to adjust your mentoring techniques to keep in sync with your mentee’s evolution.

In time, detailed directions or certain problem-solving strategies may be considered stifling by your developing mentee. Consider giving less and accepting more from your mentee. Once you evaluate your mentee and discover the required amount of guidance, you can determine what style is appropriate for your mentee.

Another potential obstacle for mentors is insufficient time. Some mentors can’t seem to devote enough time to their mentee. Other commitments in your life may prevent you from spending enough time with your mentee. If you start to sacrifice sufficient time with your mentee because of other commitments, he may lose faith in you and your mentoring relationship will suffer.

Another obstacle involving time occurs when a mentor expects too much progress from the mentee, in an unrealistic amount of time. You need to give your mentee time to grow in Masonry and to make mistakes along the way. Try not to be impatient with your mentee and expect too much too soon.

Unless you are your mentee’s ritualistic instructor, you may find that the mentee’s instructor feels excluded from the mentoring relationship. It is imperative that you do not undermine the authority of your mentee’s instructor in teaching the trial questions and answers.

Another possible obstacle involves a mentee's inappropriate attitude toward the mentoring relationship. Some mentees expect too much from their mentors, demanding more time and attention than they actually need.

Others may expect to control their mentors. Be firm with your mentee about commitments and responsibilities. In terms of social etiquette, you must be supportive of your mentee and sensitive to cultural differences. For example, in some cultures, there is a preference towards modesty, reserve, and control. Where as, with another culture, directness or emotionally intense, dynamic, and demonstrative behavior is considered appropriate.

These are just a few of the obstacles you and your mentee may encounter during your relationship, but with time and effort these obstacles can be overcome.

BENEFITS OF MENTORING

Mentoring provides benefits to the mentor, mentee, and Masonry. An overwhelming number of mentors have stated that one of the greatest rewards of being a mentor is the personal satisfaction of fostering the Masonic growth of their mentees.

As a mentor, you may reap the following rewards:

- A chance to cultivate your own Masonic knowledge, Masonic leadership, and interpersonal skills. You sharpen these skills by delegating challenging work to your mentee and by giving constructive feedback.
- A source of recognition from your peers. Others will respect the role you have in imparting Masonic to your mentee.
- The potential for developing rewarding Masonic contacts by interacting with other mentors, as well as with contacts made through your mentee.
- Learning from your mentee--mentors and mentees can learn from each other. Here are some specific ways that a mentee can benefit from mentoring:
 - The mentee is provided a role model and sounding board. By using the mentor as a role model, the mentee can learn from example. In addition, the mentee can use the mentor as a sounding board to express new ideas or to vent frustrations.
 - For the novice mentee, mentoring allows for a smoother transition into the workings of the Lodge. A mentee who is new to Masonry may join the Lodge with unrealistic expectations and naive illusions. A mentor can make

this adjustment period easier through communication, understanding, and guidance.

- The mentee will have an opportunity to work on challenging and interesting projects and can be given a chance to try different and more advanced tasks.

Mentoring done correctly means you have an engaged, active Mason forever.

IDEA: Discover how your Lodge mentors new Masons. If there is no formal program, then start one.