

## Starting the Conversation

### General Guidelines for a Successful Mentoring Relationship

- Have open discussion at first meeting
- Introduce yourselves, your professional/personal backgrounds
- Discuss specific issues mentee would like to be addressed in mentoring relationship; keep notes during meeting
- Discourage any feelings of the mentee imposing on the mentor
- Remember that mentorship can be a 2-way street. A newer clinician may have a better handle on current evidence, technology, or a specific content area.
- Establish expectations through:
  - a. Goal setting with clear timelines
  - b. Discussing structure of sessions
  - c. Determining how often you want to communicate and through what means (e-mail, phone, in-person)
  - d. Pledge to respond to e-mails or voice messages as promptly as possible, but within 2-3 days (or as agreed by you both)
  - e. Agree to organization of topics discussed
  - f. Share how you best learn and teach
  - g. Set specific guidelines for frequency and approximate length of communication sessions/meetings
- We encourage the mentee to follow up with a summary e-mail of issues covered in meeting/what to focus on by time of next meeting.



- Facilitate career planning by outlining your career path and discuss the possible next steps for your mentee's career: <http://www.apta.org/CareerDevelopment>
- Introduce your mentee to your professional network
- Focus on transferring academic knowledge to clinical situations
- Allow for trial and error when applying guidance in clinical sessions
- Incorporate evidence based practice:
- Challenge one another to provide rationale and evidence for treatment plans on a semi regular basis. (Maintain patient confidentiality)
- Share your top 2 journal articles for each diagnosis that guide your clinical practice.
- Share your top 5 resources: outcome tool databases, favorite handouts, websites, community organizations, exercises, webinars, or education courses
- Relate mentoring to personal development
- Encourage your mentee to perform a self-assessment and create goals: <http://www.apta.org/CareerManagement/SelfAssessments/>
- Encourage each other to create a professional developmental portfolio. You could use the NCS re-certification template as a guideline even if you are not trying to get or recertify your NCS. <http://www.abpts.org/Recertification/Neurology/>

Challenge each other to: get involved with the APTA on a state or national level, submit an article to a journal, write a case report, teach a course, speak in the community, present a poster, become a manuscript reviewer, be an investigator on research study, be test item writer, become a credentialed clinical instructor (CI), contribute to a PT outcome database, revise a department protocol based on evidence, start a journal club, attend a national conference, write a senator about an issue important to physical therapy.

The understanding for this mentoring program is that the mentoring relationship is driven by the mentee sharing their interests and needs.