



The Center for Women &
Information Technology

Mentoring Tool Kit

UMBC

AN HONORS UNIVERSITY IN MARYLAND

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Mission of CWIT

The Center for Women and Information Technology (CWIT), established at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) in July 1998, is dedicated to providing global leadership in achieving women's full participation in all aspects of information technology. Women's participation in IT will strengthen the workforce, raise the standard of living for many women, and help to assure that information technology addresses women's needs and expands the possibilities for their lives. The Center has a three-fold mission:

- ◆ To encourage more women and girls to prepare for careers and become leaders in information technology.
- ◆ To communicate information related to the richness and breadth of women's lives, concerns and possibilities using technology
- ◆ To foster research supporting gender and information technology

The Center plans to accomplish its mission through varied initiatives. To find out more, visit our award-winning website at <http://www.umbc.edu/cwit>

Goal of the CWIT Mentoring Program

The CWIT Mentoring Program engages students, faculty, staff, and business professionals in an environment that promotes academic excellence, leadership development, and career exploration for women and men. Furthermore, the program supports students' continuous growth and development, the transfer of knowledge, and the building of capability in our protégés and mentors.

Program Outcomes

- ◆ Protégés learn to take charge- focus on what they can influence rather than what is out of their control
- ◆ Protégés learn to demand the best of themselves- accept responsibility for their actions and attitudes
- ◆ Protégés learn the importance of teamwork
- ◆ Protégés understand and pursue academic integrity
- ◆ Protégés learn to be patient- with themselves and with others
- ◆ Protégés learn to value diversity- be confident in themselves so they are free to accept the differences of others
- ◆ Protégés learn when to work independently and when to ask for needed help
- ◆ Protégés and mentors learn that they have the ability to make a difference in their lives and someone else's life
- ◆ Enduring relationships between protégés and their mentors are developed through a mutual respect for different points of view and the different stages in a career pathway

The mentor/protégé relationship is designed to meet the personal and professional development needs of the student protégé. A productive mentor/protégé relationship offers a comfortable, criticism-free environment. Conversely, both the mentor and protégé must realize that some expectations will be unmet and mistakes will happen. In addition, the protégé must take some risks and show initiative. The mentor's role is to help and support, not rescue or complete tasks for the protégé.

Mentoring inherently involves personal change and growth. As such changes occur, friendships also grow. These friendships can last a lifetime.

Definition of Mentoring

A developmental, caring, sharing, and helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how, and effort in enhancing another person's growth, knowledge, and skills, and responds to critical needs in the life of that person in ways that prepare the individual for greater productivity or achievement in the future. (<http://www.orau.gov/tdd/trainingadmin/Mentoring.pdf>)

Definition of Mentor

A person looked upon for wise advice and guidance. (Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary, Revised edition, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston)

Definition of Protégé

A person guided and helped especially in the furtherance of his or her career, by another, more influential person. (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 3rd edition, Macmillan, USA, Victoria Neufeldt, Editor in Chief)

Formal vs. Informal Mentoring

Both formal (assigned) and informal (self-selected, not assigned) mentoring have been used for years to help protégés increase their confidence, instill a sense of responsibility, raise awareness of the importance of receiving a quality education, and generate both a desire and an ability to succeed personally and professionally. While informal methods of mentoring have been more successful for protégés generally, formal programs conducted properly have much to offer. In both cases, training will provide the protégé an opportunity to develop a clear plan including goals and expectations. In addition, participating in a formal program will allow the protégé and the mentor to understand the process better, which will enable them to become better informal mentors.

Steps to a Successful Mentoring Program

Finding a mentor requires thought, time, and a comprehensive understanding of what you hope to achieve. Steps to a successful mentoring experience include:

1. Consider your goals in having a mentor.

- ◆ Having a mentor means you are ready and open for change, growth, and personal improvement.
- ◆ Do you want to improve as a student, a researcher, a business professional?
- ◆ Different goals will mean finding different mentors. You can have more than one.
- ◆ Make sure you are ready to learn and accept constructive criticism!

2. Identify your expectations for a mentor and what you will commit to the relationship.

- ◆ Consider both your available time and the time needed from your mentor.
- ◆ Besides time, what other commitments might be involved?
- ◆ Have realistic expectations – you won't achieve your goals overnight!
- ◆ Honestly convey your expectations to your mentor. Clear missions, goals, and objectives should be formed during this process.
- ◆ It is important to remember that both the mentors and protégés play a vital role in the mentoring relationship. Both require an investment of oneself and time.

3. Selecting a Mentor.

Select someone a step or two ahead of where you want to be. For freshmen and sophomores in college, choose a junior or senior. For juniors and seniors, select a graduate student, staff person, or faculty member. If you have the opportunity, work with faculty, staff or the alumni office to identify an employee 3-5 years into his or her career. Once in the workforce, look for someone who has surpassed the next step you want to achieve.

4. Develop a solid plan to meet and make sure you stick to the plan.

Regular meetings with mentors will give you time to voice concerns, challenges, and victories. Mentors can share advice on how to deal with specific issues. This begins by asking the following questions:

- ◆ “Can we meet once a month for breakfast?”
- ◆ “I’ll e-mail you with questions as they arise. If I don’t hear from you, is it okay if I follow up with a phone call?”

Set a timeline for contact, be it weekly e-mails or monthly in-person meetings. Keeping a log of what was said and the advice or guidance you received may be a good point for introducing the next conversation. “I called her as you suggested, but she has not returned my call. Now what?”

5. Seek advice and counsel when needed.

- ◆ Your mentor does not know when to phone you to provide help.
- ◆ Listen and observe. Try to keep an open mind, even if you don't agree.
- ◆ Ask questions or for clarification!
- ◆ Inquire about resources.
- ◆ Help problem solve.

6. Training is an excellent way to prepare mentors and protégés for their roles.

If training is available, sign up!

7. Make sure you show up for all meetings and appointments as scheduled.

8. Although most of the learning is focused in the direction of the protégés, mentors also learn. Mentors discover the ability they have to impact others' lives.

9. Consider that every protégé also has someone she or he can mentor. A good mentor will teach you how to mentor others, which in turn will enrich your life as you provide mentoring to those following in your footsteps.

Creating a Workshop to Get Started

Students who are leaving home for the first time often do not understand the value of a mentor or appreciate how to identify an individual who can serve in that role. Establishing a formal mentoring program at a college or university is a wonderful way to educate students on the value mentors can provide in their lives. CWIT begins its program with a two hour workshop for mentors and their protégés. CWIT staff matches participants using the completed **CWIT Protégé Surveys** (see the Appendix) and personal knowledge of the individuals, which has been very successful. The surveys also are used as an icebreaker at the beginning of the workshop. The new mentor and protégé read each others surveys and use them as a starting point for conversation and relationship building.

Workshop Objectives for Mentors

- ◆ Understand the personal benefits from serving as a mentor.
- ◆ List the personal and professional skills you possess to be an effective mentor.
- ◆ Build a mentoring agreement with your protégé with a work plan and timelines.
- ◆ Provide leadership in ensuring the mentoring requested happens and is effective.

Workshop Objectives for Protégés

- ◆ Identify three desired outcomes of the mentoring relationship.
- ◆ Develop personal goals against which to measure success.
- ◆ Establish with your mentor a timeline for meeting and other criteria you set (e.g., attending workshops, getting training, etc.).

Mentor's Roles and Responsibilities

An important part of the workshop is for the mentor and protégé to understand the expectations that come with the role. As a mentor, you have entered into an agreement to serve as a mentor for a young adult. While you may have children or younger brothers or sisters of a similar age, refrain from thinking of this person in that context. Instead, consider her or him as a future faculty member or business professional with whom you may work. Below are some guidelines for the mentoring relationship.

- ◆ Provide opportunities for your protégé to explore career and life choices
- ◆ Provide and promote support networks for your protégé both in the college and in the community
- ◆ Assist your protégé in cultivating skills for living and working with people of diverse backgrounds and opinions
- ◆ Promote the self-esteem and confidence of your protégé
- ◆ Empower your protégé as a leader, professional, and engaged citizen
- ◆ Maintain focus on skill development
- ◆ Be available to your protégé
- ◆ Initiate contact with your protégé to develop the relationship
- ◆ Listen with an open mind
- ◆ Encourage
- ◆ Provide emotional support when needed
- ◆ Communicate regularly, even if just to say “hi”
- ◆ Share information on your own successes and failures, if appropriate
- ◆ Give and receive feedback, as needed
- ◆ Create a spirit of mutual learning, trust, and respect
- ◆ Lead by example
- ◆ Foster a deeper understanding of women's and/or minorities' diverse roles and contributions to society
- ◆ Foster strategies to address obstacles that women and/or minorities have faced and are facing

Dos and Don'ts of Mentoring

Effective mentors:

- ◆ Have an open mind; don't discount, dismiss, or minimize
- ◆ Provide constructive criticism; don't patronize or make light of a perceived obstacle or place undue guilt on the protégé
- ◆ Provide support, but don't become a “crutch” for the protégé
- ◆ Maintain personal and professional boundaries, but don't be distant or unapproachable

Protégé's Roles and Responsibilities

As a protégé, you have entered into a partnership with an upper level student, a faculty member, or businessperson in your desired field. Keep in mind that this relationship needs nurturing from both you and your mentor. Do not expect the mentor to “take care of you” as a parent or older sibling or intercede on your behalf when challenges occur. The mentor is the person who will help you learn to handle your own challenges. The mentor is not necessarily a personal friend but rather a guide to help you successfully achieve your academic and career goals.

Be Committed

- ◆ Know the extent of interaction that your mentor is able to provide
- ◆ Know what is expected from you
- ◆ Have realistic expectations of your mentor's time and your ability to achieve your goals
- ◆ Be willing to learn and accept constructive criticism

Be An Active Participant

- ◆ Seek advice and counsel. Your mentor does not know when you need help
- ◆ Actively explore course and program options with your mentor
- ◆ Actively explore career and life choices with your mentor
- ◆ Listen and observe. Try to keep an open mind, even if you don't agree
- ◆ Ask questions. Questioning is a key component in learning
- ◆ Ask for clarification. Don't expect to understand everything at once
- ◆ Inquire about resources. Your mentor probably already has a network established
- ◆ Help problem solve. You learn most effectively by doing
- ◆ Make suggestions. You have fresh ideas to share
- ◆ Be flexible - only then do you truly grow
- ◆ Make sure that you attend all meetings and appointments as scheduled
- ◆ Engage in cultivating skills for living and working with people of diverse backgrounds
- ◆ Enhance your self-esteem and confidence in partnership with your mentor
- ◆ Create a spirit of mutual learning, trust, and respect
- ◆ Discuss women's and/or minorities' diverse roles and contribution to society
- ◆ Discuss strategies to address obstacles that women and/or minorities have faced and are continuing to face in the IT arena

Practice What You Learn

- ◆ Develop your own planning skills. The same methods do not work for everyone
- ◆ Develop self-assessment tools. There are long-term benefits from learning to know yourself - your capabilities and limitations
- ◆ Seek out support networks with your mentor
- ◆ Assess yourself honestly. Keep in mind - no one is perfect

- ◆ Empower yourself to become a leader, professional, and engaged citizen with the support of your mentor
- ◆ Follow through quickly when your mentor contacts you
- ◆ Take responsibility for meeting objectives of your mentoring program

If problems develop during the course of the program, contact the program officer immediately so action can be taken. Examples include failure to come to meetings, lack of response to calls or e-mails, an unwillingness to meet with you, etc.

The Basis for a Mentoring Agreement

At the conclusion of the workshop, you should be ready to sign an agreement that include the following elements.

1. The Relationship

- ◆ What should I know about you that would enhance our relationship?
- ◆ What can I do to increase the comfort level between us?

2. Expectations

- ◆ What is the most important thing you would like to get from this partnership?
- ◆ What goals or expectations do you have?
- ◆ What help or support do you want to receive as the protégé?
- ◆ What help or support are you willing to provide as the mentor?

3. Logistics

- ◆ How often will we talk/meet?
- ◆ When are the best times for us to talk?
- ◆ What are realistic time frames for returning calls outside of our standard meeting time?
- ◆ What is the best way for us to communicate (e-mail, voice mail, direct calls, face-to-face visits)?
- ◆ How will we alter this agreement if it becomes necessary?
- ◆ What is an appropriate response if I don't get a timely communication?

Template Situations to Use for Training

During the training, you may want to divide the mentors and protégés into two separate groups and discuss potential challenges that may arise and how to deal with them. The group may even come up with a few ideas of their own.

Situations for Mentors....

1. Your protégé confides in you about some personal problems. At first you are flattered and offer some suggestions, but then the personal problems seem to become the only focus of your conversations. How do you steer the student into other academic and professional development areas of conversation?
2. Your protégé spends too much time gossiping about others. What might be a strategy for guiding this student?
3. Your protégé is not returning your calls or replying to your e-mails. What should you do?
4. Your protégé is struggling academically and is considering changing majors or perhaps dropping out of school and getting a job. How would you handle this?

Situations for Protégés....

1. Your mentor is not returning your calls or replying to your e-mails. What should you do?
2. Your mentor seems to be offering a lot of advice but not really listening to your concerns. What do you do?
3. Your mentor seems distracted when you are talking and you're not sure she heard everything you said. What do you do?
4. Your mentor has invited you to lunch, and you accepted. But now a major report is looming and it is going to take all your time to get an A. What do you do?

Template Mentoring Points of Discussion

One question that often comes up during the training, is “what do I talk about,” particularly if either the mentor or protégé are new to a formal mentoring program at a college or university. Here are a few suggestions.

- ◆ What are some useful study strategies?
- ◆ What should I do if I need tutoring within my major?
- ◆ What are some of the career opportunities within this field?
- ◆ Are there certain classes that should be taken together and some that should not be taken together?
- ◆ What types of research are being done in this field? How can I get research experience at the University?
- ◆ Are there any leadership opportunities within the department? If yes, who is the contact person?
- ◆ What is it like being a professor versus working in the corporate world?
- ◆ What are the advantages to advancing academically and getting a Ph.D.?
- ◆ What do companies look for in prospective employees beyond the traditional qualifications of grades and experience? What are some important tricks for “acing” the interview?
- ◆ When I start to look for jobs, what are some helpful hints to make my résumé stand out if my experience in the field is minimal?
- ◆ My knowledge of technology is more up-to-date than my superiors. Is there a good way to highlight my knowledge and skills without looking like I’m showing off?

Template Mentoring Monthly Activities

Planned activities can help ensure that mentors and protégés communicate on a regular basis. Below are some activities that take into account the nine month academic year and have worked well for CWIT.

September: *Match-up/Training*

This will serve as the initial meeting of the mentoring group in a comfortable environment where the mentors, protégés, and program staff can meet and receive training. If the protégés are new to the college environment, they may be nervous while interacting with their mentors. Mentors should keep this in mind while conversing with the group and try to help the protégés feel more comfortable.

October: *Invite protégé to lunch*

The mentor should invite his/her protégé to lunch. The mentor should select a place where both parties will feel comfortable (maybe not the faculty dining room). The conversation can begin with the possible difficulties of balancing academic and personal time. If the protégé is having issues in this area, the mentor can offer some suggestions and discuss time management. The mentor should also inquire about the protégé's performance in his/her classes. The mentor may want to share with his/her protégé the importance of communicating with his/her professors.

November/December: *Be supportive to your protégé(s)*

As the end of the semester is approaching and final projects are due, the protégé will need the support of his/her mentor. He/she may not be available for regular meetings and telephone calls. The mentor can be helpful just by being supportive in small ways, such as sending a card or note wishing the protégé "good luck" on her or his exams. A small care package with a candy or fruit bar, eraser, or colored highlighters are always a good way to build rapport as well.

Late January: *Dinner prepared by protégé*

At the beginning of the semester, the protégé will probably be refreshed and ready to embark upon a new semester. Therefore, this will probably be more of a casual and relaxed atmosphere. The mentor and protégé can briefly discuss the last semester's outcomes, but neither should linger on the topic of academics too long. If the protégé had unsatisfactory grades in courses, plan to keep in contact with him/her to come up with a plan of action for the next semester.

February: *Invite protégé to job-shadow*

In celebration of National Job-Shadowing Month, the protégé can shadow his/her mentor for a day (or longer). The invitation should be extended by the mentor. While both parties should recognize that no job is "lively" everyday, the mentor should prepare to work on items that may be interesting to his/her protégé. The mentor can also set up a shadowing experience with another colleague if he/she deems it appropriate.

March: *Mentors vs. protégés game night*

This event will be planned by the protégés. Protégés should survey the mentors to find out their favorite board games and/or activities. The protégés may want to consider having the event in the campus game room to remind the mentors of campus life. With all of the expertise of the mentors, this may be the only opportunity for the protégés to feel like they have the edge. If the participants are feeling very athletic, consider having a mentor vs. protégé basketball or volleyball game.

April: *Invite mentors to lunch*

Both the mentor and protégé should be comfortable in the mentoring relationship by now. Therefore, the protégé can step out of his/her comfort zone and invite his/her mentor to lunch, possibly at the University's faculty dining room or the mentor's favorite restaurant (within a college budget). The protégé should focus on the research and/or accomplishments of his/her mentor. Though this is still a learning experience for the protégé, it doesn't seem like a lot of work for the mentor since he/she is simply talking about him/herself and his/her achievements and challenges.

May: *Be supportive to your protégé(s)*

As the end of the semester is approaching and final projects are due, the protégé will again need the support of his/her mentor. If possible, schedule a final meeting between you and your protégé before the student returns home for the summer. Check with the program organizer to see if a more formal final get together can be scheduled as a time for reflection and goodbyes. A picnic outside the dormitory has worked well in the past.

If this is an on-going program, you may see your protégé/mentor again next year, but if this is a final meeting, you'll want to make it an opportunity to conclude the relationship with good wishes and congratulations to both participants for a job well done!

Ending the Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring relationships end in a number of ways:

- ◆ Protégés graduate
- ◆ Mentors change jobs or take on added responsibility at home or in their work
- ◆ Protégés mature and need someone with different experiences or levels of experience
- ◆ The relationship is not a good fit and the mentor and protégé drift apart

It is a natural that the mentoring relationship will alter over time. Formal mentoring programs can have planned end dates. In an academic program, formally ending the relationship for the year is a good idea. Have an end of year event- cookout, party, luncheon or awards ceremony to thank and honor the mentors for their time. Have time for evaluation as well at the final event so you can continuously improve the program. For those unable to attend, send the final evaluation to their work or home to get their feedback.

Mentoring Tool Kit Appendix

CWIT Protégé Survey

General Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Address: _____

Personal Information

Gender: Female _____ Male _____ Date of Birth: Day _____ Month _____

Languages Spoken (Other than English): _____

Hobbies: _____

Favorite food: _____

Tell something interesting about yourself: _____

Academic Interests/Career Interests:

In what areas do you seek development?

What expectations do you have for the mentor program?

Additional comments:

CWIT Mentor Survey

General Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Address: _____

Personal Information

Gender: Female _____ Male _____ Date of Birth: Day _____ Month _____

Languages Spoken (Other than English): _____

Hobbies: _____

Favorite food: _____

Tell something interesting about yourself: _____

Research Interests/Career Interests:

Additional comments:

Mentoring Agreement

I will contribute to the success of the program by:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The goals I hope to achieve from being a mentor/protégé are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I am committed to open and honest communication in my mentoring relationship. I will discuss and attempt to resolve any conflicts with my mentor/protégé as they arise. I will ensure that any issues discussed are held in confidence. I will contact the program officer with any questions, concerns, or suggestions that may arise.

	Mentor	Protégé
SIGNATURE:	_____	_____
NAME (printed):	_____	_____

Mentoring Log-Sheet for Protégé

To be used by the protégé to keep record regular communication.

Date: _____

Mentor: _____

Method of Communication: person-person phone e-mail other

Outcome: _____

Date: _____

Mentor: _____

Method of Communication: person-person phone e-mail other

Outcome: _____

Mentoring Log-Sheet for Mentor

To be used by the mentor to keep record regular communication.

Date: _____

Protégé: _____

Method of Communication: person-person phone e-mail other

Outcome: _____

Date: _____

Protégé: _____

Method of Communication: person-person phone e-mail other

Outcome: _____

Protégé Evaluation of Mentor

Name: _____

1. Please answer the following questions about your mentoring experience.

	Not At All	Very Little	Some	A Lot
a. There was sufficient communication between myself and my mentor.	1	2	3	4
b. Adequate training was provided prior to the beginning of the mentoring relationship.	1	2	3	4
c. The mentoring relationship positively affected academic outcomes.	1	2	3	4
d. The mentoring relationship enhanced social and emotional behaviors.	1	2	3	4

2. What did you like **most** about your mentoring experience?

3. What did you like **least** about your mentoring experience?

4. After being a protégé, do you feel confident in serving as a mentor?

_____ Yes _____ No

5. Would you like to continue with your current mentor?

_____ Yes _____ No

6. Would you be interested in seeking another mentor?

_____ Yes _____ No

7. Were you satisfied with the development of your mentoring partnership?

_____ Yes _____ No

Mentor Evaluation of Protégé

Name:

1. Please answer the following questions about your mentoring experience.

	Not At All	Very Little	Some	A Lot
a. There was sufficient communication between myself and my protégé.	1	2	3	4
b. Adequate training was provided prior to the beginning of the mentoring relationship.	1	2	3	4
c. The protégé understood his/her responsibilities in the relationship.	1	2	3	4
d. Sufficient guidance in developing program activities was provided.	1	2	3	4

2. What did you like **most** about your mentoring experience?

3. What did you like **least** about your mentoring experience?

4. Would you serve as a mentor in the future?

_____ Yes _____ No

5. Were you satisfied with the development of your mentoring partnership?

_____ Yes _____ No

6. Would you like to continue with your current protégé?

_____ Yes _____ No

7. Would you be interested in seeking another protégé?

_____ Yes _____ No

Mentoring Resources

National Mentoring Partnership

<http://www.mentoring.org>

The Mentoring Center

<http://www.mentor.org/>

National Mentoring Center

<http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/>

Who Mentored You?

<http://www.whomentoredyou.org>

The Mentoring Group

<http://www.mentoringgroup.com/>

The Mentor Leadership & Resource Network

<http://www.mentors.net/>

The E-mentoring Network for Women in Engineering and Science

<http://www.mentornet.net/>

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education

<http://www.nfie.org/publications/mentoring.htm>

Mentoring USA

<http://www.mentoringusa.org/>

Creative Mentoring

<http://www.creativementoring.org/>

Center for Coaching and Mentoring

<http://www.coachingandmentoring.com/>

Mentors Peer Resources

<http://www.mentors.ca/learnmentor.html>

Mentoring for the Mentor and Mentee- the IEE

<http://www.iee.org/EduCareers/Mento/index.cfm>

Association for Women in Science Mentoring Guide

<http://www.awis.org/voice/publications.html>

<http://www.awis.org/resource/unamano.html>