

## Professional Leadership in Science

# MENTORING GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

Dear participants

of the management program "Professional Leadership in Science" of the ZWM,

Dear (potential) mentors,

Mentoring as an instrument of personnel development, especially for executives, has been firmly established in many organizations in recent years. The basic idea of the mentoring approach is the transfer of experiential knowledge by a usually older person to a younger, less experienced person in order to support this person in his or her professional development.

As part of "Professional Leadership in Science", the ZWM offers mentoring as a useful addition to the program. Participation in mentoring is voluntary.

In this guide you will find

- ❑ a brief description of the mentoring approach, its objectives, the distribution of roles and the benefits for mentors and mentees,
- ❑ a (recommended) schedule with guidelines for designing your mentoring relationship within the framework of "Professional Leadership in Science".

Mentoring offers you many opportunities, both as a program participant or a potential mentor. The ZWM will be happy to support you in this regard!

## WHAT IS MENTORING?

### Objective

The word mentoring refers to Homer's epic "Odyssey" in Greek mythology. Before Odysseus went to the Trojan War, he asked his confidant named Mentor to take care of his son Telemachus. As a "spiritual father", he was to assist him with words and deeds and introduce him to the customs of society.

The characters Mentor and Telemachos therefore represent a personal relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) contributes to the development of a less experienced person (the mentee) through exchange and transmission of knowledge, as well as offering advice or help. The focus is on the professional development of the mentee, which, of course, cannot be completely detached from his or her other living environment.

In contrast to coaching, the mentor is not specially trained for this activity, but has an advantage over experience and knowledge.

By the way: According to a study, more than half of all Nobel Laureates were supervised by mentors who were themselves Nobel Prize winners ...

## The roles in mentoring

As a mentee, you play the more active part in a mentoring relationship. Your task is to

- clearly define your area(s) of concern as well as goals and communicate them to your mentor,
- approach your mentor, arrange appointments, prepare and follow-up on the conversations (documenting the results), provide feedback and shape the further course of the relationship together with your mentor,
- show willingness to develop and learn as well as openness and respect for the suggestions from your mentor,
- decide for yourself which suggestions you implement.

As a mentor, your task is to

- be an advisor, motivator and last but not least a role model for your mentee,
- treat your mentee with appreciation and to show understanding for his or her concerns,
- willingly share with him or her your own variety and wealth of experience,
- support your mentee in the analysis of his or her personal situation as well as the development of his or her knowledge and skills.

## Benefits of mentoring

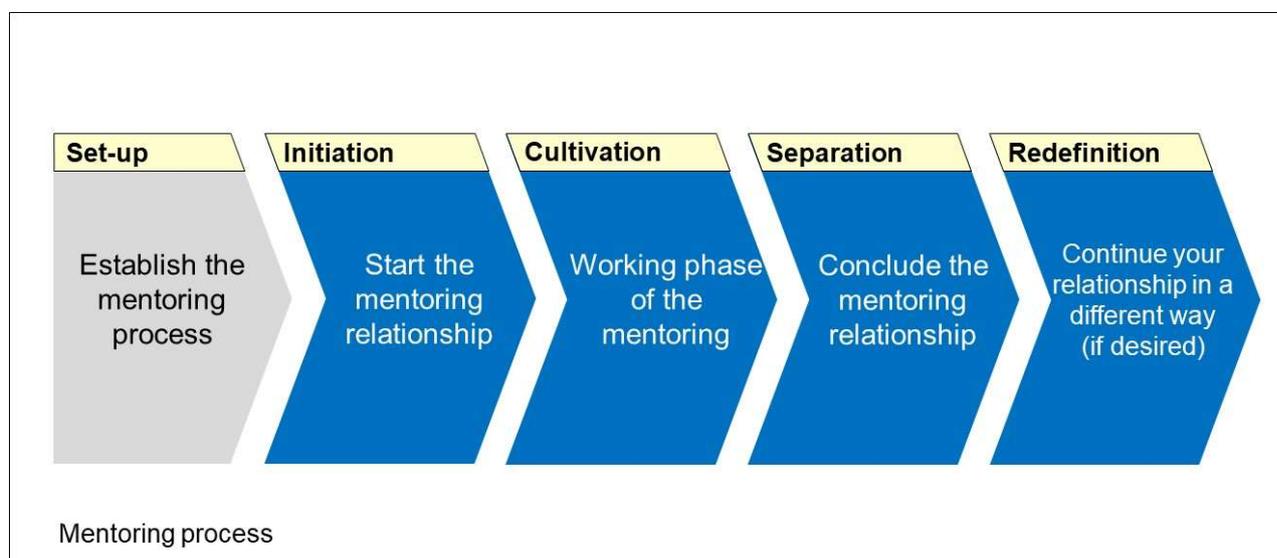
As a mentee, the benefit of mentoring is the possibility to

- get to know and assess your own abilities better,
- work specifically on your personal and social-communicative leadership skills,
- gain extended insights into the structure of your professional environment,
- develop the courage and ideas for your own career planning,
- gain access to new professional networks.

As a mentor, you also benefit from a mentoring relationship, through the opportunity to

- gain insights into new developments and challenges in your own professional field,
- receive fresh ideas and impulses from the ranks of young professionals,
- critically reflect on your own work.

## MENTORING PROCESS



### Set-up

As a participant in the "Professional Leadership in Science" program, you will be made aware of the offer of supplementary mentoring during the kick-off through your course supervisor. You will receive a questionnaire in which you can clarify and indicate possible topics, objectives and expectations for mentoring.

If you opt for mentoring, please submit the completed questionnaire to the ZWM by the specified date. The ZWM team will suggest a suitable personality as a mentor. After you have agreed to the proposal, you will then receive the contact details of your mentor, while he or she will receive your contact details and your questionnaire (matching).

If you do not want the proposed person as a mentor or should you or your mentor not want to continue the mentoring relationship after an initial contact, there is the possibility of further matching.

You can also approach a person from your professional network or the network of your home institution and recommend him or her as a mentor. However, it is recommended that your mentor belongs to a different institution than you do (external mentoring).

There are no specific guidelines for the further course of the (actual) mentoring. The aim is to create a lively and productive working relationship that focuses on your questions and development goals as a mentee. In practice, however, the following phase model has proven to be a helpful structure for mentoring process.

## Initiation

At the beginning of the actual mentoring, you take the initiative as a mentee. You should

- arrange a first interaction with your mentor,
- define the main topics of mentoring, your objectives, and expectations with each other (the questionnaire can serve as a basis), and
- if possible, document these in a short-written target agreement.

## Cultivation

In this intensive phase, the agreed topics and objectives are "worked on". As a mentee and as a mentor, you decide collectively

- when where and how often you want to meet,
- how you want to communicate (e.g., also online),
- how you would like to document the outcome,
- how you want to evaluate initiated measures and the introduced changes,
- how you would otherwise like to build your mentoring relationship.

Important: Mentoring is a highly personal relationship between you as a mentee and mentor. All conversations therefore remain confidential and are not taken up or "discussed" in the course modules.

## Separation

Upon achieving the agreed goals, but at the latest after about one year, you should formally complete your mentoring. For this purpose, it is advisable to

- jointly evaluate the achievement of goals and the process of mentoring, as well as
- document your evaluation as "Lessons Learned"

in the context of a detailed feedback discussion

## Redefinition

Of course, as a mentee and mentor, you can continue your relationship once you have established it even after the actual mentoring has been completed. In case of successful mentoring processes, at least the desire to do so will often be present. You shall therefore decide by common accord:

- whether and, if so, how to continue your personal relationship. This can be done, for example, through a sporadic, more informal "sparring partnership" or even just through a more or less loose contact.

## SUPPORT FROM THE ZWM

If you have general questions about mentoring or the process, please feel free to contact your course supervisor. Please note, however, that we appreciate maintaining the confidentiality of the personal relationship between a mentee and therefore do not make any substantive evaluation of your conversations.

We wish you every success with mentoring!

Your ZWM team