

Leeds Professional Mentorship Program Activity Ideas and Checklist

The following provides a range of ideas for activities that PMP students and mentors may want to engage in over their two-year relationship. It might be useful to review prior to one of your early meetings and then discuss what specific activities and ideas can help you define your Mentoring Goals. It is not intended as a comprehensive list that you need to complete as part of this program, but rather a starting point and basis for discussion and planning as you create your own agenda and develop your own unique mentor-mentee relationship. It is definitely a “work in progress,” so if you have ideas to contribute, please send them to us at: LeedsPMP@colorado.edu, and we will incorporate them in future revisions.

The list is organized according to various phases in the mentor-mentee relationship. We hope you find it useful and have fun in the process!

- Initial Meetings: Getting to Know Each Other
- Ongoing Activities: Professional Development, Exploration and Practice
- Later Stage: Hit the Ground Running.

I. INITIAL MEETINGS: GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Establish the “Ground Rules”

- Communication Goals and Expectations** – frequency, methods, alternate contact information, good/bad times, etc.
- Roles and Responsibilities** – what will each of you give/get from the relationship? Who takes lead on agenda setting, communication, follow-up? What expertise, time commitment, and resources will each of you provide?
- Deliverables/“Homework”** – do you want to establish “deliverables” for your meetings? Consider a “Mentoring Journal” or discussing a book or other resource as part of the process? What is reasonable for both parties?

Build the Foundation

- Student Background Information** – resume, personal statement and mentoring goal
- Mentor Background** – personal and professional background and interests, mentor resume, life-lessons, “ah-ha” moments
- Goal Setting** – develop 2 – 4 SMART goals for the year based on the student’s “mentoring goals”, identify resources needed, action items for student and mentor, deliverables and deadlines
- “Get to know you” Questions** - Describe your “ideal” first job as specifically as possible, Who are your role models and why? What have you liked/disliked about previous jobs? What are you good at/think you are good at? What is your biggest fear? Write responses and review these together.

II. ONGOING: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, EXPLORATION AND PRACTICE

Stock Your Professional Toolbox

- Resume Review** – input from your mentor and/or an HR professional at their company, consider tailoring multiple resumes for different interests
- Professional Communications** – email and cover letters, how to send an email that will get noticed, who is the right person to contact for a request
- Business “Mindset”** – what journals, blogs, reference materials would be helpful and relevant for your interests? Discuss articles, current events in business. Are there professional associations or clubs you might want to consider?

- Other “Soft-Skills” Development** – advice on networking skills, business etiquette, appearance, agenda preparation, meeting planning and note taking, thank you notes/follow-up
- Social Media** – What tools to use and how to use them appropriately, help in developing a LinkedIn profile, learn how to make business connections on LinkedIn

Explore Possibilities/Expand Your Horizons

- Develop a Portfolio** – Brainstorm a range of options you might be interested in pursuing. Think of them in terms of a “portfolio” with some high risk/high reward choices and some “sure bets.” Generate a “balanced” portfolio to pursue.
- Brainstorm Careers in Your Field** – What options are out there for an accountant, finance major, marketing or management major? Come up with a list of job titles in your company or of colleagues in your business that a student in that area might pursue. What are pros/cons from personal and professional perspectives? What positions/titles seem interesting or like a good fit?
- Self-/Career-Assessment** – A variety of assessment tools provide insight into what types of careers/positions are a good fit for your interests. Explore the tests available through Leeds Career Connections and Campus Career Services. Ask your mentor if he/she has ever taken one (Myers-Briggs, Strong Interest Inventory, etc). Discuss the results and their implications (perhaps related to the job list above).

Hands-on Experiences

- Plan a “Shadow Day”** – Invite your student to your office or local office location, meet with a range of departments/individuals depending on interests, sit in on a meeting or other activity.
- Practice and Give Feedback** – Prepare for a variety of different types of interviews, professional meetings, a business lunch or dinner. De-brief with them afterwards, go over surprises, awkward moments, etc.
- Engage in a Project or Event** – Ask your student’s opinion or involve them (if it makes sense) in a current project you are working on, e.g., focus group, survey, new product ideas. Take your student to a professional association meeting or industry conference or event.
- Help them Plan a Trip** – If your student is interested in visiting or working in your location or they are from your home town, help them to plan and organize some informational interviews. Meet over a break. Connect them to your local network.

III. LATER STAGE: HIT THE GROUND RUNNING!

Plan to Action

- Revisit and Refine Goals** – develop or revise goals for your senior year, re-assess plans based on summer internship experience, identify “top 10” list of companies and positions to pursue
- Action Items and Resources** – create a timeline or “PERT” chart for the year, what do you need and need to do and by when, where can your mentor help?
- Prepare and Connect** – research companies or individuals you want to meet with, talk to your mentor about insights into specific companies/industries or connecting them with contacts for informational interviews.

Respond and Revise

- Feedback and Follow-Up** – De-brief your experiences with your mentor, ask for feedback, ideas for new strategies or tactics if you aren’t making progress. Do this EARLY-ON.
- Adapt and Move-On** – Use social media or resources outside of Leeds to expand your search, think “outside the box.” How can you be more flexible/creative? Are there options you haven’t considered? Brainstorm again and re-consider your “requirements.”
- Celebrate Successes!** – Build on these, even if it’s just getting in the door. Figure out how to keep the momentum going.