

# Mentoring

(what is it and how do I find out more?)

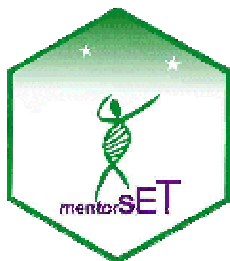
There are many definitions of mentoring. Most include words such as *support*, *realising potential* or *learning*. One of the best-known definitions is from Eric Parsloe of the Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring. He defines the purpose of mentoring as:

**“To support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.”**

Mentoring can greatly benefit mentees. It can improve their performance and help with career planning. It provides mentees with access to a sounding board for testing out new strategies and ideas. It can support people through difficult times such as starting a new job or dealing with conflict. Research has shown that mentoring is particularly beneficial to women. It helps increase confidence and motivation, it provides access to meaningful role models and can address feelings of isolation often felt by women working in very male dominated environments. A mentor can also give advice on work-life balance and support and encourage women facing issues associated with reaching the glass ceiling.

Mentors also benefit from the mentoring process. They gain skills through participation in mentoring and develop a broader network of contacts. Mentoring is an enjoyable challenge and gives mentors the chance to help other women develop.

**Cambridge Association for Women in Science and Engineering** is a voluntary organisation which aims to help retain and enhance the participation of women in science, engineering and technology fields in both industry and academia. We do this through networking meetings, access to the MentorSET women’s mentoring scheme and by gathering and disseminating information.



## Looking at where you are now.

The first stage of mentoring involves looking at where you are now. On a scale of 0-5 tick the number that reflects where you are at the moment.

**Key:**      0: totally lacking    1: not very good    2: not too bad  
              3: fairly good        4: pretty good      5: no problem!

	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have confidence in myself						
I can express myself well						
I can organise my time						
I feel I can try new things						
I am motivated at work						
I am aware of the career opportunities available to me						
I have a clear career plan						

You may also want to think about some of the following -

- do you have any specific work or personal goals?
- do you want to change or get a job?
- do you know what you want to do?
- do you know what you don't want to do?
- do you want to change anything about yourself? If so, what?

## Looking at where you want to be.

The second step is to think about where you want to be in the future. Write down what you want and where you want to be in your life. Don't worry about how realistic these things are, just write quickly, not thinking too much about it, nobody's going to see it!!

# How will I get there?

The next step is to set objectives. Take your most important one and write it here. It can be very effective to write goals down, especially as SMART Objectives.

My objective is:

**Specific** -you should be clear what you aim to achieve, ask yourself would someone understand my goal without further explanation.

**Measurable** -How will I know when I have achieved this target? What will I be doing or saying, will other people notice a difference?

**Achievable** - Is the change that you want to make possible given your current commitments?

**Realistic** - Are you prepared to accept the costs involved in making this change? This may mean having to commit time to working towards your objective rather than socialising or spending time with your family.

**Time bound** - Are you thinking short, medium or long term? Can you specify a date and time by which you should reach your target?

Think about:

- can you split your objective into more easily achievable steps?
- who can help you, what support and information do you need?

Hints:

- *Motivation is what turns a thought into an action* - always select and do the actions that will move you closer to your objective. Think about your motive for wanting to achieve your goal.
- *Write your goal down* - put it where you will see it regularly or find a picture that reminds you of your goal.
- *Write yourself a letter* - explain your situation now, what you want to do and why you want to do it. If your enthusiasm starts flagging, it may help to remind you why you are doing this and how you felt when you first started working towards your objective.

*If you think having someone to talk through your objectives will help you achieve them, why not consider mentoring?*

## Interested in mentoring and networking and want to find out more?

**Cambridge Association for Women in Science and Engineering** is a voluntary organisation whose aim is to 'help retain and enhance the participation of women in science, engineering and technology fields in both industry and academia'. We do this through organising networking meetings, access to a mentoring scheme and by gathering and disseminating information.

### Networking

We provide **networking opportunities**, both social and professional, through our regular meetings. Our network brings together women with common interests and provides inspiration, information and support to women working in SET. Our current meetings concentrate on personal development and career enhancement.

### Information

Our website ([www.camawise.org.uk](http://www.camawise.org.uk)) provides information for women working in SET and we run an email list to inform people about our events and to disseminate information. To join our email list, send an email to: [ucam-awise-request@lists.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ucam-awise-request@lists.cam.ac.uk)

### Mentoring

Cambridge AWiSE is affiliated to the National **MentorSET** Women's mentoring scheme ([www.mentorset.org.uk](http://www.mentorset.org.uk)). **Mentoring** is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool. It is an effective way of helping people to progress in their careers and is becoming increasingly popular as its potential is realised. It is a partnership between two people (mentor and mentee) normally working in a similar field or sharing similar experiences.. The **MentorSET** scheme finds independent mentors for women working in SET fields in both industry and academia. MentorSET is person focused. It is less of a formalised professional relationship, more of a partnership with both the mentee and mentor gaining from the relationship. The scheme is free and open to all women working in SET provided they are members of an affiliated group such as Cambridge AWiSE. **If you would like to become a mentor or a mentee contact us!**

### Contact Details

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