



## DEVELOP OTHERS.



# Mentoring Tips

In Greek mythology, Odysseus' trusted counsel and friend, Mentor, cared for his household and served as teacher and advisor to his son, Telemachus, while Odysseus fought in the Trojan war. We still think of a "mentor" as a trusted teacher—one who invests in a less experienced colleague to nurture growth and transfer knowledge, wisdom and advice.

Most CCMs can point to at least one person who helped them along their professional development journey, and many have, in turn, developed others through mentorship. Among CCMs, mentoring is common; 77 percent say they've been a mentor, and 74 percent have had a mentor.<sup>i</sup> For the vast majority of those surveyed (97 percent), the experience was positive.

As our population ages and health care grows increasingly more complex, the need for professional case managers has never been greater. Case managers from a range of disciplines—nursing, social work and allied health fields—contribute to the multi-disciplinary care team. Together, we must nurture a larger, more culturally diverse case manager workforce to meet the needs of an increasingly more diverse population. You can play a role and help develop the next generation of qualified, knowledgeable case managers through mentoring.

Successful mentoring relationships are marked by mutual respect, clear expectation, personal connection and shared values. In most cases, both mentor and mentee gain from the relationship. Many translate into lifelong friendships. Because mentoring can have such a lasting impact, we've put together some tips to start things off on the right foot.

### Tips to get started with your mentorship:

1. Consider the match. Unless your employer or other organization sponsors a mentoring program, look for a mentee who has potential to grow as a case manager. Start the conversation by asking about their hopes and professional goals. Then propose mentorship to help them reach their goals.
2. Begin your journey with a mentoring agreement. Mutually agree to the goals of the mentorship, when and where you'll meet, and set a few ground rules from the start.
3. Know your part. A mentor is in it for the mentee. When you become a trusted adviser, supporter, teacher and wise counselor, it's primarily a selfless role.
  - In a survey of CCMs, 92 percent who were mentors said that they would do it again because of the satisfaction of watching their mentees develop and grow.<sup>ii</sup> Although mentoring sharpens your own skills, that shouldn't be your primary motivation.
  - Mentoring is direct engagement, an interpersonal relationship. Your role involves showing care and concern, promoting the mentee's growth and well-being, offering support and assistance and leveraging your experience on their behalf.<sup>iii</sup>
4. Keep the focus on *their* development. Understand that the goal is not to shape the mentee in your own image, but to help the mentee develop to be *their* professional best.

H2R1.28.18



## DEVELOP OTHERS.



5. Set the tone. Get to know your mentee as a whole person. Listen to their plans and aspirations. Check back frequently to review progress and ensure you're on track.
6. Listen to your mentee; become a sounding board for advice. Then respond with objective, respectful feedback. Consider using written feedback when milestones are met.
7. Keep a positive attitude. When challenges come, be compassionate, but respond honestly and constructively.
8. Be ready to give. Mentoring is an investment, and you'll need to be ready with
  - **Time:** Set a regular time to meet, virtually or in person, and commit to keep it.
  - **Access:** Negotiate, through a mentoring agreement, how often you'll meet and when it's OK for a quick email or call in between.
  - **Credibility:** Be honest about what you know or don't know. Model the professional you want your mentee to become.
  - **Vulnerability:** Be willing to share your own failures and successes. And listen to your mentee if they honestly and constructively offer feedback that's not always positive.
  - **Wings:** When they reach their goals, mentees should be set free to soar. Encourage your mentee to pay it forward and become a mentor, too!

*This document does not constitute an endorsement by the Commission for Case Manager Certification of any mentor, mentorship or other arrangement. By using this document, the party or parties agree to release and forever discharge, indemnify and hold harmless the Commission for Case Manager Certification, its respective directors, officers, employees, members, volunteers or agents and its successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims, causes of action, damages and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise.*

---

<sup>i</sup> 2018 CCMC survey of board-certified case managers.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> Keller, T. "Mentoring, Meanings, Models and Metaphors." Portland State University School of Social Work, Sept. 2010.