



PREPARE TO MENTOR

LEVEL 3 PROJECT



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INTRODUCTION



Mentoring is a time-honored method of helping others achieve their goals. On the surface, the skills are straightforward—goal setting, listening, offering advice, and providing moral support. In reality, each set of skills is made up of a combination of smaller, often complex skills and capabilities.

In this project, you will determine your personal goals as a mentor, recognize the skills and expertise you bring to a mentoring relationship, and identify your strengths and areas of specialty. You will learn the value of setting clear expectations and boundaries for yourself and your protégé, as well as identify the best motivational tools for working with each individual you mentor.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to spend time learning about your goals, your interest in being a mentor, and your readiness to begin working with a protégé.

Overview: Complete the self-evaluation resources included in this project. When you are ready, have a discussion with your vice president education about being a Toastmasters mentor. Submit the Project Completion Form on page 15 to your vice president education to verify that you completed all forms included in this project.

For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on page 12.



Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



Video: Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



Interactive Activity: Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



Resource: Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Evaluate your current skill level by rating each statement.



Select the appropriate number based on your skills today:

5
EXEMPLARY

4
EXCEL

3
ACCOMPLISHED

2
EMERGING

1
DEVELOPING

Pre-Project					Statement	Post-Project				
5	4	3	2	1	I am able to identify my long-term goals.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I know my strengths and areas of specialization.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I understand the importance of dividing long-term goals into accomplishable tasks.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am comfortable helping another person identify his or her goals.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize all the expectations I bring to a mentoring relationship.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.	5	4	3	2	1

COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- Identify goals and expectations.
- Recognize personal and professional strengths and areas of specialization.
- Measure readiness to fulfill the role of mentor.
- Write long- and short-term goals.

REFLECT ON PERSONAL GOALS & STRENGTHS

Understanding personal goals and strengths serves as a positive foundation for a successful mentor. When you begin a new mentoring relationship, it is helpful to have a clear idea of your relevant skills sets and knowledge. Take time to review your expertise and identify the areas in which you can provide a protégé with support and guidance. When you are clear about your expertise and the areas you feel comfortable sharing, you can set reasonable expectations for your protégé and yourself.

This project includes the Mentor Self-Assessment on page 13. It will guide you through a series of questions that encourage you to learn more about yourself and how your specific skills and past experiences can contribute to a successful mentoring partnership.



MEASURING YOUR READINESS TO BE A MENTOR

Set Expectations

Successful mentors recognize not only the skills they bring to the relationship, but the expectations. It is important to set realistic expectations for yourself and your protégé.

Fulfill Commitments

Realistic expectations include practical elements like attending meetings when expected, completing tasks that were discussed, and following through on requests. If either a protégé or a mentor fails to follow through on a regular basis, the mentoring relationship will collapse with negative feelings likely on both sides.

Recognize Needs

There are other expectations that are less practical, but may have an even greater impact on the mentoring relationship if they go unspoken and unfulfilled. Those include a mentor's need to feel needed, a desire to feel valued, and any expectations of public validation for contributions to a protégé's success.

Put The Protégé First

It is important for anyone entering into a mentoring relationship to understand that the point of the relationship is building the protégé's skills and confidence, not honoring the mentor and his expertise.

Recognize Your Motivation

Often, a mentor's need for personal validation are met within the mentoring relationship, but they cannot be the reason an individual chooses to be a mentor. By nature, mentoring is a selfless act. Taking time to evaluate your reasons for choosing to mentor and assessing your expectations to be sure they are realistic will benefit you over time.

Wait Until You Are Ready

Many highly skilled and brilliant individuals choose to postpone mentoring until they are prepared to step back and allow a protégé to shine. As a mentor, you are one of a protégé's biggest supporters and you need to have a high level of confidence that you are comfortable in that role before you enter into the mentoring relationship.

LEADING AND FOLLOWING



There are times when a mentor leads. For most people who choose to mentor, this is a comfortable place to be. The mentor shares expertise and helps the protégé gain similar knowledge by communicating experiences and suggesting resources.

The challenge comes when a protégé is not ready to move in the direction a mentor wants to lead. It is important for mentors to recognize when to encourage a protégé to follow by applying gentle pressure in the form of encouragement, and when to step back, understanding that the protégé is not comfortable and needs to set a different pace or choose an alternate direction.

There may be times when stepping back is not enough—a mentor may need to get out of the way. By taking the opportunity to follow a protégé who is moving faster than the mentor anticipated or accompanying a protégé when she pursues an entirely different path than the mentor expected, a mentor not only encourages her protégé, but acknowledges the possibility that she will learn something new as well.

A mentor's ability to be flexible enough to lead when needed and follow when necessary will benefit both the mentor and the protégé.

SETTING GOALS

Mentors need to know how to set goals for themselves and be comfortable doing so before they can help a protégé. If you haven't ever listed your goals, or it has been a while since you took the time to commit them to paper, list a few now. Focus on your most important personal goals. You do not need share them with your future protégé.

Evaluate the Process

When you write your goals, be aware of how the process feels. Some individuals find writing goals exciting and motivating, others may feel it is a chore. The same will be true for your future protégé.

Share Your Excitement

If you are excited by the process, consider how you can help another see goal setting in the same way if he does not naturally feel pleasure in the process.

Follow Your Protégé's Lead

If your protégé does feel excited when he sets goals, think about how you will step back, stay out of the way, and be a part of your protégé's excitement.

Accomplish the Task

There is no right or wrong way to design goals. Any way you choose to accomplish the task is acceptable. This is also true for your protégé.

Value Differences

You may be very comfortable creating a long list of specific goals and filling every cell of a thousand-cell spreadsheet, and your protégé may pull out a scrap of paper with a short list of three specific, well-defined goals.

Focus on the End Result

Both methods of completing goals are correct and both have value. What matters is not the process, but that the task is accomplished.

Support and Encourage

A mentor's job is to support and encourage a protégé during the completion of any goal or task. You can make suggestions, but be sure to stop short of insisting your protégé do things the way you would.

MILESTONES

Once you have listed a few goals, the next step is to divide those goals into tasks. For some, this is a greater challenge than writing the goals. For example, if your goal were to become the World Champion of Public Speaking, how would you start?

Dividing a large goal into smaller, accomplishable tasks is an important step in bringing it to fruition. Each of the identified tasks can be set as a milestone. A milestone is a significant step toward the larger goal and a pausing point to check progress.

In our speech contest example, the first task may be to write an outstanding speech. The second task may be to present that speech to your club during a regular meeting. Each of these tasks is a milestone. Once each is accomplished, it is important to reflect on success and places where improvement can be made. By valuing the completion of each separate task along the path to a larger goal, you provide yourself the opportunity to evaluate your progress and adjust your task list to make sure you are still advancing.

SUCCESSFUL SELF-ASSESSMENT

It is important that your Mentor Self-Assessment be done in a way that specifically suits you and your needs. The assessment included in this project is intended to guide you through the process of setting personal goals and identifying your expectations. The way you choose to use it is up to you.

You may find that some of the questions are difficult to answer, either because you aren't comfortable or you have not considered the answers before. The goal of this project is not to fill out a form, but to encourage you to consider all of the benefits, challenges, and ramifications of entering into a mentoring relationship and to help you define your goals and expectations.

COMPLETE AN HONEST ASSESSMENT

This project does not culminate in a speech. It is complete when you report to your vice president education that you are prepared to move to the next step and take on a protégé for a short-term mentoring assignment.

The utmost importance should be placed on earnestness in your answers. An honest assessment will give you the most insight into what you can offer, learn, and expect. Mentorship is not only for you to help protégés reach their goals and become better. It can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your personal and professional life.

REFLECT

Upon completion of your self-assessment, reflect on your answers. Re-read each one and assess how this exercise was helpful to you. Consider other questions that might clarify your goals, expectations, or other responses. Add them and write a response. By using the self-assessment tool as a living document, you practice some of the skills you need to help a protégé work through the same process.

REVIEW AND APPLY

Before you complete the assignment, take a moment to read through the questions you see here. If you are not able to answer them comfortably, review the project.

- What is the value of taking your time during a self-assessment?
- How does breaking a goal into milestones help in accomplishing the goal?
- Why is it important to be honest when assessing oneself?
- Given your expectations, what challenges do you think you might face as a mentor?

COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report.

Review: Return to page 3 to review your assignment.

Organize: Use the Project Checklist on page 12 to review the steps and add your own. This will help you organize and prepare your assignment.

Verify: Submit the Project Completion Form on page 15 to your vice president education. Though you do not need to submit your completed resources, please allow your vice president education to confirm they are completed.



PROJECT CHECKLIST

Prepare to Mentor

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to spend time learning about your goals, your interest in being a mentor, and your readiness to begin working with a protégé.

Overview: Complete the self-evaluation resources included in this project. When you are ready, have a discussion with your vice president education about being a Toastmasters mentor. Submit the Project Completion Form on page 15 to your vice president education to verify that you completed all forms included in this project.

This project includes:

- The Mentor Self-Assessment resource
- Meeting with the vice president education to discuss your readiness to mentor
- There is no speech associated with this project.

Below are tasks you will need to complete for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You may alter the following list to incorporate any other tasks necessary for your project.

Schedule a time to review your mentoring resources with the vice president education.

Review the project and complete all resources associated with preparing to mentor.

Meet with the vice president education to discuss the next step toward becoming a mentor, as well as to submit your Project Completion Form.

After you have completed all components of the assignment, return to page 4 to rate your skills in the post-project section.

MENTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

Identify long-term goals mentoring will help you achieve.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What expertise do you bring to your relationship with your protégé?

List the experiences that have contributed to your expertise.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What are your expectations of your interactions with a protégé?

List three or more short-term goals for a new mentoring experience.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

PROJECT COMPLETION FORM

I completed all components of my "Prepare to Mentor" project, including all self-evaluation resources.

Member Name _____

Member Signature _____ Date _____



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