



# SUCCESSFULLY MATCHING MENTORS AND INTERN/MENTEES

Because the core of a successful mentor/mentee relationship is based on trust, making matches based on shared interests can provide a strong foundation for building that trust. During the matching process, the intern/mentee's preferences should be prioritized where possible.

Use the Mentorship Matching Priorities Survey to determine what characteristics and experiences are important to the intern/mentee when being matched to a mentor—for example, shared interests, life experience, temperament, gender identity, race, ethnicity, or language fluency(s). In assessing traits to make a beneficial match, you will need to strike a balance between respecting privacy and seeking information. (See the ranking survey example below.)

Pairings informed by these shared traits and preferences can encourage greater candor and frankness, which are essential in forging a trusting, supportive, and effective mentoring relationship.

## Addressing a Mismatch of Mentor and Intern/Mentee

Despite best efforts, mismatches will occur. It is important to have a plan to address this. For example, as part of the onboarding process, the intern's supervisor should let the intern/mentee know that they will be checking in to see how the mentoring relationship is progressing. The supervisor should be clear that it is alright to raise any concerns or challenges, and that if a change is warranted and you have the staffing capacity, a mentorship change can happen without consequence. Likewise, the mentor should be attuned to how well things are going and be open to facilitating any changes (as needed) that benefit the intern/mentee's experience. Any change in mentorship should be undertaken as an opportunity to model best practices in navigating professional relationships, problem-solving, and effective communication.

## Ending the Mentored Internship Experience Well

Ideally, once a mentoring relationship exists, it never ends—but internships will. Again, a plan or protocol will provide a framework for this transition. For example, during a final in-person meeting during the internship, in addition to a review of goals and an exchange of gratitude for the opportunity, the mentor and intern/mentee should talk about expectations for their relationship going forward. For example, they could plan on continued weekly check-ins, finding time to sit down over a coffee every few months, or an exchange of contact information and offer of continued support.

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### Example Mentorship Matching Priorities Survey

Intern/mentees should complete the survey. Mentors could complete the same survey as needed. Then, where possible, the intern/mentee's rankings would receive priority.

**Directions:** Read through the criteria for matching you with your mentor (or mentee) and rank your top 5 for importance, using 1 as the most important, 2 as second most important, and so on.

- 10 or more years older (please specify your age: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Less than 10 years older (please specify your age: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Gender identity (please specify preference: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Bachelor's as a terminal degree
- Master's as a terminal degree
- Doctorate as a terminal degree
- Race (please specify preference: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Ethnicity (please specify preference: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Lived experience with behavioral health (personal/family)
- 5 or more years in practice/current position
- Less than 5 years in practice/current position
- Urban roots
- Rural roots
- Specialty/areas of study or work (please specify preference: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Position/role at agency
- Introvert/extrovert
- Religious beliefs (please specify preference: \_\_\_\_\_)

