



Mentors: Commencing Your Mentoring Journey

Directions for Mentors:

To set your mentorship up for success, work through the below Capability Assessment sheet with your mentee, taking care to explore the different elements within each capability. Your mentee will rate themselves on a scale of one (1) to five (5) on each of the capabilities.

Work with your mentee to select three (3) capabilities to focus on as targeted growth areas throughout the mentoring journey. Please note that even where a participant rates themselves highly, there will often still be aspects of that capability that they may wish to strengthen. A high self-assessment score shouldn't exclude a capability from being identified as a development focus.

It is recommended that you keep this assessment accessible throughout the year so that you can revisit it together and reflect on your mentee's progress over time. It's valuable to remember that each area of development identified for your mentee also presents an opportunity for you to further develop your own leadership capabilities as a mentor.

The Law Society of NSW recommends that mentoring pairs complete this same assessment again at the close of the program in December. This will allow for reflection on the progress that has been made and for discussion regarding ongoing participation in the Mentoring Program, including the possibility of the mentee participating as a mentor in future program years.

This assessment can also assist mentors in writing a mentoring report, which can be helpful to provide the mentee with a summary of their growth and achievements during the formal mentoring arrangement.

Pre- and Post-Mentoring Capability Assessment

Capability	Rating Scale
Solicitor Skills (i.e., client interviewing, plain English letter writing, document drafting, file note taking, negotiation skills, court etiquette, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Work and Time Management (i.e., productivity, technological proficiency, sustainable work styles, risk analysis, self-management, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Problem Solving (i.e., decision making, critical thinking, analysis, research skills, providing quality legal advice, generating solutions, strategic planning, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Solicitor-Client Relationships (i.e., trust-building skills, sensitive and considered responses, managing and honouring commitments, client satisfaction, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Adaptive Mindset & Resilience (i.e., management of personal resources, openness to challenge and discussion, boundary setting, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Communication (Solicitor-Client, Solicitor-Solicitor) (i.e., clear and productive interactions, cross-cultural awareness, respectful assertiveness, client updating / advising skills, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Collaboration (i.e., working cooperatively, giving and receiving constructive feedback, confidentiality and respect, conflict resolution, interpersonal skills, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Confidence & Initiative Taking (i.e., self-awareness, identifying needs and opportunities for improvement, management of insecurities, proactively contributing, raising ideas, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Legal Knowledge (i.e., ethical and professional responsibilities, trust and office accounting proficiency, specific practice area knowledge, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Self-Awareness & Insight (i.e., self-reflective ability, emotional maturity, professional insight, conviction, motivation, personal values, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Conflict Management & Negotiation Skills (i.e., respectful assertiveness and confrontation, active listening, ethical compromise, mediation skills, conflict de-escalation, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5

Write down your three (3) capability growth areas here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Discussion

To optimise the mentoring experience, it is important that both mentee and mentor have a shared understanding of the goals and purpose of mentoring.

While mentee development is a key focus of the process, mentoring should be a mutually beneficial experience. Open and honest discussions between mentee and mentor on respective experiences and professional development play a significant role in successful mentorship and the extent to which professional development and personal growth take place for both participants.

Below are some recommended questions to start your conversation and to encourage honest, proactive discussion of the growth areas selected, the specific goals to achieve, and potential challenges that may appear. These questions can be posed and answered by either party, and ideally, both participants will have the opportunity to share their perspectives on each item.

Discussion Questions:

- What does ___ mean to you professionally?
- What does doing ___ well look like to you?
- How will you know that you have improved in ___? What will be the key indicators of development?
- What areas of ___ will be most beneficial to focus on? How will these areas be developed? (Please see our Guidance for Goal Setting document for assistance in designing structured plans for development of capabilities)
- What personal or professional experiences have contributed to your understanding of what proficiency looks like in this capability?
- What are potential challenges you think you might face when expanding your ___ capability?