



**Utah State Bar
New Lawyer Training Program**

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Purposeful Mentoring

A Guide for All Utah Attorneys



Utah State Bar New Lawyer Training Program

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This guide is for all Utah attorneys who mentor in any capacity. It provides helpful information on mentoring with a purpose by providing four possible outcomes of effective mentoring.

Purposeful Mentoring

- **Focused** on a goal or outcome
- Both parties are **invested** in the outcomes of the mentoring relationship.
- Make **efficient** use of time: plan ahead and prepare.
- **Follow-up**. Do not let important discussions or experiences go without taking valuable lessons from them.
- **Evaluate** the relationship periodically. Find ways to improve communication, bolster experiences, learn together.
- Be **creative** in the experiences and discussions. Are there unique opportunities available? Are there others that would provide additional insight to a topic?
- Be open to **learning** from one another.

Practical Mentoring

- **Participation** is ideal, **observation** is valuable, **discussion** is vital. (see page 7)
- Be **clear** about scope of the mentoring relationship.
- **Plan** and **schedule** meetings ahead of time to lessen the chance of inconsistent encounters.
- **Write** a plan for the mentoring relationship. What tasks and goals do you want to accomplish?
- Determine how you will deal with **confidential** information or conflicts.
- **Listen** and provide constructive **feedback**.
- **Ask questions**.

Participate in – Hands on experience with opportunities and experiences is ideal.

Observe – If it is unfeasible to participate in an activity, then observe a mentor or another attorney. Observing court proceedings can teach a lot about the practice of law.

Discuss– Always discuss principles and practices. Use examples as much as possible in these discussions.

If all else fails, use mock examples. Client interactions and other activities can be hypothetically discussed.

Articles & Resources

Ida Abbott. *The Lawyers Guide to Mentoring*. NALP, 2000.

Anna Rappaport, “Seven Ways to Make Your Business Development Training More Effective.” *Law Practice Today*. Sept. 2016.

Dan Pinnington, “Preparing for a Mentoring Relationship.” *Law Practice Today*, Aug. 2004 at: www.abanet.org/lpm/lpt/articles/nosearch/mgt08042_print.html

Gary Seiser, “Mentoring: A Partnership in Growth.” *The Bench*. Jan./Feb. 2005, 14

Maya Eckstein, “If I Knew Then What I know Now...” *The Bench*. Jan./Feb 2005, 13

Nicholas Gaffney, “Professional Development for Lawyers.” *Law Practice Today*, Sept. 2016.

Relationships

“...the legal profession is a service profession.”

-Frank H. Wu, “A Law School Dean Reflects on Law Firm Practice.”
HuffingtonPost.com (Feb. 13, 2013 at 5:15 PM).

Our profession is a service profession. Service is about relationships. Relationships with our colleagues, with opposing counsel, with judges, with our clients, with the public, and with ourselves. Part of mentoring is to give a space where those relationships can develop and where networking opportunities can grow.

“At its core, mentoring is about relationships. Starting with the mentor/new lawyer relationship...we want both the young lawyer and the mentor to continue to create those relationships that will keep the Utah legal community connected. Our profession is one of service. That means that our profession is one of relationships. Learning to communicate, to collaborate, and to be known is the business of a lawyer and a mentoring relationship, especially for one just entering the profession, can create the environment to learn how to build those professional relationships.”

-Emily A. Sorensen, “Why Mentoring?” Utah Bar Journal. Sept./Oct. 2016 40, 43.

Discussion Questions

Are you introverted (need to be along to recharge) or extroverted (need people to recharge)? How does this affect the way you network professionally?
How can widen your networking circle?
What do you value in your relationships and how can you cultivate that?
What do you see is the purpose of professional relationships

Professional Identity/Professional Development/ Professionalism

“The ...profession face[s] a future of continuing exponential growth of knowledge and rapidly changing markets where the lawyer who takes initiative with life-long, self-directed learning skills will be best able to secure meaningful employment and serve clients and others well. This internalized proactive commitment to professional development toward excellence is one of the foundations for a lawyer’s professional formation or professionalism.”

-Neil Hamilton, “A Professional Formation/Professionalism Challenge: Many Students Need Help with Self-Directed Learning Concerning Their Professional Development Toward Excellence.” 27 Regent Univ. Law Rev. 225, 226

The creation of professional attorneys is at the crux of legal mentoring. The activities, meetings, events, and experiences during the a mentoring program should center around that development. All attorneys should focus on the creation of their professional identity, the development of that identity over the course of their career, and the inclusion of the highest degree of professionalism within that identity development.

Discussion Questions

How well do you understand the Standards of Professionalism?
What is one area that you can improve on in the development of your professional identity?
What are your current resources and what skill do you want to pick up?
What are your personal weaknesses? What character traits do you want to develop?
What can you improve in your networking circle?

Work-Life Balance/Well-Being

“Here’s an obvious observation: your employer is never going to tell you it’s time for you to have a bit of downtime. Your to-do list will never magically be completely checked off so that you can have rest and relaxation. If you do not own and take control over your own time, your own schedule, your day will become more filled with other people’s priorities.”

-Jeena Cho, “Why Work/Life Balance is So Hard to Find.”
Abovethelaw.com (Sep. 12, 2016 at 7:35 PM).

Taking care of yourself first means you can better take care of your clients and focus on the development and maintenance of your professional identity.

Developing a sense of your unique strengths and aspirations will allow you to better craft career goals and habits in line with what inherently drives you. Developing resiliency, focusing on creating balance, taking time for well-being – these are all things that new lawyers, and veteran lawyers, should focus on.

Mentoring relationships, because they provide a space to talk about aspects of the practice of law that are beyond writing briefs and learning rules, can help both new lawyers and their mentors understand themselves better. As one new lawyer put it, the mentor helps “develop my own strengths, beliefs, and personal attributes.” (2015 Outstanding Mentor Award Nomination Letter – on file in the NLTP office.)

Discussion Questions

Take the VIA Survey – www.viacharacter.org
What are your strengths?
How do your strengths play into your career goals?
What can you change about your environment OR your mindset to have better balance?
How can you improve your mental health? Physical health? Emotional health?

Leadership

“...effective leadership boils down to five key ‘practices.’ The labels that follow are taken directly from Kouzes and Posner’s book, *The Leadership Challenge*.

Model the way...

Inspire a shared vision...

Challenge the process...

Enable others to act...

Encourage the heart.”

-Dr. Larry Richard, “The Mind of the Lawyer Leader.” *Law Practice Magazine*, Sept./Oct. 2015 at: http://www.americanbar.org/publications/law_practice_magazine/2015/september-october/lawyer-leader.html

Legacy planning or transfer of institutional knowledge. These both refer to the same idea – making sure that those who come after have sufficient knowledge of what came before. It should be no surprise that the legal profession has changed and will continue to change. New lawyers are the rising leaders of the profession and need that institutional knowledge transferred to them. **There are few better ways to do that than through mentoring.**

At the same time, these new lawyers also need to feel like they have a place in the future of the profession. Encouragement, opportunities to act, being challenged all allow them to craft their own identity and stake a claim in the profession.

Discussion Questions

Who do you view as an ideal leader?
What leadership attributes do you want to develop?
Do you view yourself as a leader? How? Where? When?
Choose one or two of Kouze’s and Posner’s leadership practices to incorporate into your relationships.