



MANDELA
WASHINGTON
FELLOWSHIP
FOR YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS

MENTEE GUIDE & TOOLKIT

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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INTRODUCTION AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Thank you for your participation in the mentoring program for Mandela Washington Fellows. The goal of this mentorship is for you to reflect on your vision and achieve your goals with the guidance and advice of a skilled and experienced mentor.

Developing a successful mentoring relationship requires commitment, open communication, and a dynamic and flexible attitude. When starting a mentorship, it is important that the mentee and the mentor understand their roles and expectations so that the mentee can achieve his/her professional development needs, and so that both parties can benefit and grow from the relationship. To that end, IREX is asking both parties to complete and sign a [Mentorship Agreement](#) prior to the start of the mentorship. Included in this agreement is a confidentiality clause that the mentee and mentor must sign and abide by to ensure that both are comfortable being open and honest with each other.

While the mentee and mentor will decide when they will meet, how often, and via what medium (virtual or in-person), IREX asks that both parties commit to meeting a minimum of once a month over the course of six months, and more often if their schedules allow. Mentees and mentors can determine at the end of a set time period if they would like to continue the relationship. It is important for both parties to fulfill their commitments to meet or to give advance notice if they will need to reschedule a meeting.

IREX also asks that both mentee and mentor **check-in with an IREX staff member after the second meeting** to deal with any initial concerns and ensure that the remainder of the mentorship is a success. After your second meeting, please email the relevant IREX Regional Manager in Africa to set up a time to discuss the progress of the mentorship. You can find the [IREX Contact Information](#) at the end of this toolkit.

MENTORSHIP CHECKLIST:

- Before Meeting 1:** Complete and Sign [Mentoring Agreement](#)
- Meeting 1:** Fill out [Action Plan](#) with Mentor
- Meeting 2:** Review [Leadership Development Plan](#) with Mentor
- After Meeting 2:** Check-in with [IREX Regional Manager](#)
- Midway through mentorship:** Review goals with Mentor
- Conclusion:** Exit interview with [IREX Regional Manager](#)



HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Before meeting with your mentor for the first time, think about what you would like to achieve through the mentoring relationship and what goals you would like to accomplish. These goals could include improving your grant writing skills, networking with other professionals in your field, or practicing public speaking, to name a few. By thinking about your goals prior to meeting, you will be ready to discuss and complete the Mentorship Agreement with your mentor.

By the time you first meet with your mentor, you will have developed a **Leadership Development Plan (LDP)**, which establishes your vision and goals as a leader. Your mentor should set aside some time to review the LDP and discuss what goals may be achieved through the mentorship. The goals agreed upon should be relevant to your career and vision for the future, and attainable in the long or short-term. Setting attainable and measurable goals helps both parties to mark progress.

WHAT IS MY MENTOR'S ROLE AND WHAT AM I AGREEING TO DO?

It is the mentor's responsibility to set the tone for the mentorship, but you should think about what kind of role you would like your mentor to fill. For example, are you looking for a motivator who will support you as you move forward in your career? Or are you looking more for an advisor who can help you think strategically about your career path? Prior to meeting with your mentor for the first time, think about what you want to get out of the mentorship and what roles you would like your mentor to play. Think about how you learn best, and what kind of role fits your learning style.

BE AWARE, however, that just because your mentor may be more advanced in his/her profession than you are, that does not mean he/she is automatically an expert in all topics. Moreover, while your mentor is receiving a similar toolkit, this may be his/her first formal mentorship and so they will be learning how to make it successful right along with you. As a mentee, there are ways that you can help your mentor be effective and make the mentorship as beneficial as possible. In general, characteristics of successful mentees often include:

- **Receptivity** to feedback
- **Ownership** over your own learning and an ability to take initiative
- **Openness** to new ideas
- **Commitment** to building a relationship with your mentor
- **Patience** when things do not go as planned
- **Embracing** humor
- **Acceptance** of differences between you and your mentor (Zachary 2009)

SET EXPECTATIONS. Your mentor will not be available to you 24/7 as he/she has his/her own career and family, and so it is important that you discuss with your mentor appropriate ways and times to be in touch so you do not intrude on time when he/she needs to be doing something else.

You should **COME PREPARED** with ideas about activities and discussions you would like to engage in with your mentor to achieve the goals written down in the Mentorship Agreement. Please see the [Sample Menu of Activities and Discussions](#) for inspiration, but also consult with your mentor to see what he/she has experience and expertise in. These activities can range from career development seminars, to training activities, networking events, and so on. The [Action Plan](#) in the Mentoring Agreement is an opportunity to brainstorm a schedule of activities early on in the relationship so that your meetings can be as productive as possible. It is important, however, that you also respect your mentor's boundaries.

USING MILESTONES TO CHART THE RELATIONSHIP

When you complete your Action Plan for the mentorship, include dates for reflection and feedback. This feedback should go both ways—your mentor should provide you with feedback and you should give feedback to your mentor as well. Please see the [Guidance for Feedback](#) for suggestions on how to make feedback as constructive as possible. Additionally, you and your mentor should **PERIODICALLY REVIEW** your goals with the intention of charting the progress of the mentorship.

NEGOTIATING VIRTUAL MENTORSHIPS

Virtual mentorships can take place via a variety of media: email, phone calls, video conferences, Skype, and texting apps like WhatsApp. Mentees working virtually with their mentors will have to discuss which media you have access to and would work best for conducting your meetings. For example, you may want to Skype once a month but exchange emails once a week. A critical issue to discuss as well is the reliability of your Internet and/or how often you are online. You may also wish to **ESTABLISH A PROTOCOL** for if you have set a meeting and one party's Internet is not working.

Below are some additional suggestions for navigating a virtual mentoring relationship:

- **Work to build a relationship with your mentor:** It is often more difficult to build trust and establish a relationship virtually without the benefit of face-to-face interaction. Make an effort to build a relationship with your mentor by sharing information about yourself and helping them get to know you in a more personal way.
- **Cross-Cultural Awareness:** If your mentor is from another culture, be aware of cross-cultural differences that might influence your conversations or both parties' perceptions of the relationship. Please see the section below on [Negotiating Differences in Culture](#) for tips.
- **Telephone Manner:** Executive Coach Nicola Shearer on her website LittleSpringtime.com notes that many people act differently on the phone or on Skype than they do in person (Shearer 2013). This may be particularly true for mentees or mentors who did not grow up around technology and are therefore somewhat less comfortable with the medium. Both mentee and mentor should make an effort to act as naturally as possible even if it is not their first instinct. In addition, Shearer advises that natural pauses in conversation occur and, while in person these can clearly indicate someone collecting their thoughts, they can feel uncomfortable over the phone or Skype.
- **Written Communication:** Because it is harder to get in touch when mentee and mentor are not physically close, both should take advantage of email and texting to communicate thoughts and questions so that they do not forget them and so they can keep track of what they want to discuss at the next meeting. Similarly, email and texting can be good ways for the mentee to get feedback or quick answers to questions in between meetings.
- **Active Listening:** Active listening is an important tool to use with your mentor and one that is outlined in the [Guidance for Feedback](#). But it is particularly critical for virtual mentorships. When you are already at the computer for the meeting, it can be tempting to quickly check your email or engage in other online activities. Remember, however, that typing on a keyboard can be heard on the other end of the call, so please give your mentor your undivided attention. (Shearer 2013)

SENSITIVITIES AND ETHICAL ISSUES

It is important that both the mentee and mentor feel comfortable within the mentoring relationship in order to facilitate open and honest discussions. Part of establishing this comfort means respecting each other and understanding personal boundaries.

CONFIDENTIALITY

When you sign the Mentorship Agreement, you and your mentor are agreeing to keep each other's confidence. That means that you will not disclose conversations you have together with outside parties unless you mutually agree to do so. You should explicitly discuss confidentiality with your mentor at the beginning of the relationship, so that you can both speak openly and honestly.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

While you may both belong to similar professions, the mentee and mentor's backgrounds may be very different. These differences should not be a point of friction but rather seen as an opportunity for both parties to learn from each other. The mentee and mentor must be careful not to engage in discrimination (even unintentionally) based on an individual's sex, race, religion, or other factors¹

Mentees should be mindful of differences in race or ethnicity, and how these differences might influence a relationship with their mentor. You should consider developing a strategy with your mentor early in the mentoring relationship on how to handle the issue, either to openly discuss race or to avoid such discussions. Mentees should be aware of their own biases and stereotypes and try to understand the experience of their mentor.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In the U.S., men and women enjoy equal opportunity and equal protection under the law and, for the most part, in practice. Honesty in the mentoring relationship can prevent confusion about the level of intimacy and expectations in a relationship. You should never assume that another person wants an intimate relationship unless he or she explicitly says so.

Sexual harassment is a serious issue and includes nonverbal, verbal, and physical forms.² Sexual harassment can also occur over email, text message, and other electronic forms. If someone tells you that your behavior makes them uncomfortable, you must stop the behavior immediately. Similarly, if someone's behavior is making you uncomfortable, you should tell them to stop.

NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCES IN CULTURE

Open and honest communication is the key to having a successful cross-cultural mentorship. The mentee and mentor may be from different ages, language groups, ethnicities, countries, regions, or even continents. But rather than ignore these differences, it is important for the mentee and mentor to discuss any assumptions or questions they might have about each other from the outset in order to prevent future misunderstandings. Culture moreover does not simply mean differences of language, race, or nationality—rather it is a difference in the way the mentee and mentor view the world. The mentee and mentor need to have a certain amount of self-awareness of these differences before entering into the relationship so that they can discuss them openly.

Karine Mangion of Regent's University London emphasizes the need for mentees and mentors from different cultures to be clear about how they best communicate. She says that, "Communication patterns may result in irritation, frustration and misunderstandings when they are overlooked or overgeneralized. Therefore, communication patterns should be recognized, analyzed and understood like a code with its own signification." (Mangion 2012) Her paper "[Cross Cultural Coaching and Mentoring in International Organizations](#)" provides more information on different kinds of communication patterns.

¹ For more information on discrimination: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/index.cfm>

² For more information on sexual harassment: http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/sexual_harassment.cfm and <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/whatisssh.pdf>

While this exploration of differences may not be initially comfortable, it is necessary in order to deepen the relationship. Both mentee and mentor are encouraged to ask questions about each other's cultures, such as diverging norms regarding gender, hierarchy, punctuality, and family. In addition to asking questions and sharing openly, it is equally as critical to be an active listener. The [Guidance for Feedback](#) contains additional tips for active listening.

By acknowledging cultural differences, communicating effectively, and being open to learning from each other, the mentee and mentor can get far more out of the mentorship than they would have if they attempted to pretend that these differences did not exist.

NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCES IN GENDER

Like cross-cultural mentorships, cross-gender mentorships require the mentee and mentor to be open and honest about their differences. But cross-gender mentorships have additional considerations that should be acknowledged and discussed. Sonja Feist-Price in the *Journal of Rehabilitation* cites Kram (1985) in her presentation of five main complexities in cross-gender relationships, four of which are relevant and adapted below, along with suggestions solutions for navigating these complexities. Feist-Price's article "[Cross-Gender Mentoring Relationships: Critical Issues](#)" provides more information about dealing with these complexities.

- **Collusion in Stereotypical Roles:** When men and women enter into new roles (such as mentees/mentors), they may be more likely to revert to traditional stereotypes to accommodate for the discomfort they feel. For example, if the woman is the mentor and the man is the mentee, this may result in the man resisting his mentor's advice and/or the woman feeling more timid about giving advice to her mentee. *Suggested Solution: By simply acknowledging the tendency to slip into stereotypes out of discomfort, men and women are more likely to resist the urge to do so.*
- **Limitations in Role Modeling:** One of the key roles of a mentor is to be a role model. But a male mentee will face different opportunities and obstacles than his female mentor as will a female mentee with a male mentor. Women in particular face unique challenges that a male mentor may not fully understand, such as gender-based discrimination or taking maternity leave. *Suggested Solution: Mentees should be open about what kind of gender-specific challenges they encounter professionally, so that mentors can be of better assistance.*
- **Intimacy and Sexuality Concerns:** The potential for attraction between a heterosexual mentor and mentee in a cross-gender mentorship can add a degree of tension and anxiety that can complicate the development of an open, honest relationship. *Suggested Solution: Maintain a professional demeanor at all times and please refer to the [Sensitivities and Ethical Issues](#) section above for a discussion of sexual harassment.*
- **Public Scrutiny:** For mentorships that take place in-person, there may be a reluctance to interact socially in public spaces out of fear of gossip or judgment. Further, a man and woman socializing alone together may be looked down upon in certain cultures, which can make it more difficult for the mentor and mentee to forge a deep bond. (Feist-Price 1994) *Suggested Solution: If the mentorship is in-person, the mentee and mentor should have a conversation early on about how they will meet and where. You should be honest about any reservations you might have about appearing in public together and, if that is going to be a problem, arrange to meet at a private office or space instead.*

Being aware of and anticipating these potential complications will help make a cross-gender mentorship successful. It is important that the mentee and mentor recognize these issues and work together to get past them.



EFFECTIVE CLOSURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

On the end date set out in the Mentoring Agreement, you should meet with your mentor to discuss the mentorship and decide whether or not to continue even after the formal mentorship has ended. The closure date should be a celebration of your time together and an opportunity to discuss the mentorship in a positive, fun way.

At the closure of the mentorship, the relevant IREX Regional Manager will ask you to **conduct an exit interview** in order to get your feedback about the program and for IREX and USAID to learn ways to improve the mentorship program in the following years. You can find the [IREX Contact Information](#) at the end of this toolkit. IREX appreciates your participation in this exit interview.

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SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

There are many resources to help you over the course of the mentorship, including the bibliography at the bottom of this guide. For more links to free online resources and a bibliography of helpful reading, please refer to the [Helpful Resources for Mentoring](#). Finally, if you have any questions about the mentorship or require further assistance, please email IREX at WFAalumni@irex.org.

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Zachary, Lois J. *The Mentee's Guide: Making Mentoring Work for You*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

MENTOR INFORMATION

Name

Title

Organization

Business Address

Phone number

Email address

MENTEE INFORMATION

Name

Home Country

Fellowship Track

Address

Phone number

Email address





EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Both the **Mentor** and **Mentee** should outline their expectations for the mentorship and outline any additional responsibilities he/she will be personally accountable for. Examples are provided below.

The **Mentor** expects his/her Mentee to (e.g. be on time, be open to trying new things, provide regular feedback about the relationship):

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The **Mentor** additionally takes responsibility for (e.g. training his/her Mentee in job negotiation skills, improving his/her Mentee's elevator pitch):

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-

The **Mentee** expects his/her Mentor to (e.g. introduce him/her to three new contacts, work with him/her on his/her public speaking skills, take him/her to a networking event)

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The **Mentee** additionally takes responsibility for (e.g. networking with one new person every week, working on his/her resume to reflect discussions with the Mentor):

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GOALS

Both the Mentor and Mentee should commit to at least three goals to be accomplished by the end of the mentorship. Examples are provided.

The **Mentor's** goals include (e.g. successfully coaching his/her Mentee on how to conduct a job interview, refining his/her personal leadership style):

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The **Mentee's** goals include (e.g. applying to five jobs, making twenty new professional contacts):

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-
-

MEETING SCHEDULE

The Mentor and Mentee should agree to a frequency of meetings as well as a start date for the mentorship, and a date on which the Mentor and Mentee will evaluate whether to continue the relationship. While the meeting (which could be virtual or in-person) does not have to occur at the same time/day on each occurrence, it should happen with a certain frequency (e.g. bi-weekly, phone calls weekly and in-person monthly). IREX asks that both commit to meeting for a minimum of 6 times over the course of the mentorship. Each meeting should last no less than 1 hour in order for it to be productive. It is highly encouraged that mentors and mentees meet more often if their schedules allow.

Mentor and Mentee will meet

Starting





ACTION PLAN

The [Sample Menu of Activities and Discussions](#) in provides a number of ideas for discussions, training, and activities the mentor and mentee can/should engage in during the mentorship. Using this handout along with your stated goals, please design an action plan for the mentorship using the attached [guide](#) (if you plan to meet more than 6 times, please copy the page and reuse as needed).

IREX asks that both mentor and mentee check-in with an IREX staff member after the second meeting to deal with any initial problems and ensure that the rest of the mentorship is a success. In addition, at the closure of the mentorship, mentor and mentee will be asked to conduct an exit interview with an IREX staff member in order to get your feedback about the program and for IREX to learn ways to improve the mentorship program in the following years. IREX appreciates your participation in this exit interview.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information between the Mentee and the Mentor shall be confidential and only shared with outside parties if both agree.

Mentor Signature

Date:

Mentee Signature

Date:

ACTION PLAN

	Activity	Goal	Assignment for Next Meeting
Meeting Example	Resume Workshop	The mentee has a sector-specific resume that highlights his/her experience and expertise	The mentee will use his/her resume to develop a 2-minute elevator pitch
Meeting 1			
Meeting 2			
Meeting 3			
Meeting 4			
Meeting 5			
Meeting 6			



Annex 2: Sample Menu of Activities and Discussions

When you fill out the [Action Plan](#) with your mentor, please refer to this list for ideas on discussion topics and guiding questions, activities, and workshops. Talk to your mentor about what topics might be useful for you, or if there is anything not included in this list that you would like to focus on during the mentorship.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

CLIMBING THE CAREER LADDER

- **Mentorship goals and expectations**
- **Career goals and career trajectory**
 - How did you get to where you are today?
 - What challenges do you think you face getting to the next step in your profession?
 - What skills do you need to acquire to move forward and how do you plan to acquire those skills?
- **Leadership Development Plan** (See the section on [Using the Leadership Development Plan during your Mentorship](#))
- **Sector hiring practices**
 - Do you need to know someone in order to get hired? How can you use your existing network to connect with the company/organization you are interested in?
 - What kind of materials does the company want to see (e.g. business plan, writing sample, presentation, etc.) and how can you assess and gain the education and experience necessary to get the job you want in your field?
- **Marketing Yourself**
 - What's your "story" of how you got to where you are today, and what is your vision as a leader? Develop and practice an "elevator speech" with your mentor.
 - Do the steps along your career path make sense to an outside listener? Work with your mentor to craft a story that is compelling and intriguing.
- **Networking**
 - How do you typically introduce yourself at a networking event, and what kind of approach is appropriate and professional?
 - Work with your mentor to develop a system for developing and managing your network (i.e. excel file, database, etc.)
 - Work with your mentor to identify venues and events for networking and expanding your network.
- **Discussion of professional business writing etiquette** (e.g. requesting informational interviews, writing thank you letters, requesting references, and submitting writing samples)
 - Work with your mentor to craft important business correspondence, getting tips on: keeping correspondence brief and professional, crafting an "ask" in a way that will make someone want to respond, and tailoring correspondence to different audiences.
 - References: Who should you ask for references, and what kind of support can you offer them to make writing a reference easier?
 - What kind of writing samples should you submit for different objectives? How should these be formatted?

PROFESSIONAL LIFE

- **Managing conflict within the office or unit**
 - Have you experienced conflict in a professional environment? How did you handle it and what is your conflict management style? How might you change your conflict management style to become a more effective leader?
 - What ways of managing conflict are effective and what kinds are ineffective?
- **Leadership development/Influencing others**
 - What is your leadership style?
 - Do you win people over by inspiring them (i.e. transformational leadership)?
 - Do you earn people's loyalty through mutual benefit (i.e. transactional leadership)?
 - What kinds of leadership styles are most effective in your workplace/organization, and what might you do to better adapt your style to the environment?
- **Managing politics in the office and organization**
 - How political are you, and do you need to become more politically savvy to achieve your objectives? How might you do so?
 - In your country, what does the organizational hierarchy typically look like, and what are some strategies for navigating it?
 - How do you ensure that you continue to grow and develop in your profession while still respecting the unwritten rules of the office environment?
- **Newest trends in technology**
 - How comfortable are you on the computer? What applications do you use most often and what applications do you need to master to be successful in your field?
 - How proficient are you with social media, and what can you do to develop a strategy to use it?
 - What kind of technology is relevant in your sector? Are there free online guides or available courses that can help you improve your skills?
- **Time management**
 - Do you keep a calendar or a schedule? How do you budget your time?
 - What does your typical day look like, and how could you manage your time more efficiently?
 - What do you wish you had more time for?
- **Work/life balance**
 - What in your personal life places demands on your time? Family? Children? Volunteer work? Friends?
 - How much time do you wish to devote to different aspects of your life, and what strategies can you employ to help you maintain a balance in your life?
 - Is your company or organization flexible and understanding about your needs, and have you had a conversation with your supervisor about how you can best manage your work/life balance?
- **Public speaking**
 - Are you a confident public speaker, and if not—what might you do to improve your skills and confidence?
 - Discuss public speaking tools and techniques with your mentor.
 - If this is a potential area of improvement for you, consider practicing speaking in front of your mentor or providing a video of your doing so, and ask your mentor for constructive feedback on body language, tone, posture, presentation skills, etc.



GROWING YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION

• Strategic planning

- What short-term and long-term goals do you have for your business/organization, and what personnel, funding, activities, etc. will help you achieve those goals?
- Working backward, what does your timeline look like for the next year? Next five years?

• Fundraising and attracting investment

- What kind of grants do you have available to you and what donors/partners do you have? Work with your mentor to map out potential funding opportunities and connect with potential partners in your network.
- What is the business environment in your country? Are there barriers to investment?
- What makes investing in your business attractive? How can you advertise that?

• Budgeting

- What is the overall income of your business/organization, and what are the costs associated with it? Work with your mentor to develop a working budget for your organization and to set financial goals.
- Work with your mentor to identify areas where you can reduce costs or to develop key partnerships to secure funding or in-kind donations (e.g. free office space, supplies, etc.).

• Product development from idea to market

- Work with your mentor to conduct a market analysis of your product, including: costs and margins, assessing the market for the product, product testing, launch and advertising, and obtaining consumer feedback to improve the product.

• Proposal writing

- Work with your mentor to develop a proposal for funding. Are you tailoring the proposal to the appropriate audience? Have you thought about what they already know and what they are expecting to learn from the proposal?
- Should you use jargon or stick to simplified language? Should the tone be passionate or stick to the facts?

• Developing an Executive Board/Board of Advisors

- What kind of expertise do you need, and what kind of partnerships do you want to cultivate?
- How will you structure the board, and what are the by-laws?
- What decisions can the Board make without your input? What do they need to consult you on?

• Ensuring transparency and accountability

- How are decisions made within your business/organization, and are there ways to make your organization more transparent, for example by soliciting greater input from staff?
- Who is in charge of the budget, and is it transparent? Do you publish an annual report that outlines the financial decisions you have made in the past year?
- How do people get hired or promoted in your business/organization? Are there hiring and promotions standards in place, and do you have salary standards?

ACTIVITIES

- Sector-specific panel discussions
- Networking events
- Local conferences
- Site visits to other similar or relevant organizations/companies

TRAINING WORKSHOPS

- Tailoring your resume to different cultures, audiences, and companies/organizations
- Perfecting the elevator pitch
- Writing cover letters
- Practicing interviews



Giving and receiving feedback are important aspects of the mentorship experience. While the mentor will be giving most of the feedback, it is also important for you as a mentee to provide your mentor with feedback at critical junctures in the mentorship so that the mentor can have the opportunity to learn and improve as well.

TYPES OF FEEDBACK

- **Positive:** When your mentor teaches you a new skill or advises you in a way that enables you to accomplish one of your goals, you should thank them and give them feedback on how what they did was helpful.
- **Constructive:** Feedback should never be “negative.” Rather, if you see room for improvement in the way your mentor is working with you, you should give him/her feedback on what he/she could do better—not on what he/she did wrong. Remember that your mentor wants you to succeed, and so if you feel that he/she could better help you by doing something differently, you should speak up.

FREQUENCY OF FEEDBACK

- In your [Action Plan](#), you should designate specific meetings to have larger discussions about your mutual progress so far and to reflect back on the mentorship. These are good opportunities for you as the mentee to provide your mentor with feedback so he/she can work on his/her own skills as a mentor.

6 INGREDIENTS FOR GIVING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

- **Trust:** Having a trusting and open relationship with your mentor is necessary for giving and receiving feedback. When you feel comfortable with each other, it will be easier to have these discussions, particularly when giving constructive feedback.
- **Specificity:** Be specific when giving both positive and constructive feedback. If your mentor helped you write an excellent proposal for your project, point out the aspects of that advice that were particularly helpful so that the mentor knows what to repeat next time. Similarly, if your mentor’s assistance was not very useful, discuss how you could better work together next time.
- **Participation:** When giving advice, also make sure you ask the mentor how he/she thinks something could be improved.
- **Goals:** Refer back to the goals in the [Mentorship Agreement](#) when giving feedback so that the mentor can understand how the work he/she is doing contributes to your ultimate goals.
- **Simplicity:** Do not overwhelm the mentor with a laundry list of improvements—keep it simple while still being specific.
- **Listening:** If your mentor is not as available or responsive as you would like him/her to be, lend a sympathetic ear and listen to their reasons.

4 TIPS FOR RECEIVING FEEDBACK

The following are four tips for how to receive feedback in a way that will help your mentor be comfortable:

- **Listen** quietly and try not to interrupt so the mentor can finish his/her thought.
- **Paraphrase** back to the mentor what you heard so you can be sure that you understand.
- **Ask questions** if you need further clarification.
- **Thank your mentor** for the feedback—it is important that your mentor know you are receptive to feedback because it is through such advice that you will continue to improve and achieve your goals.

ACTIVE LISTENING

Even when not receiving feedback, you should engage in active listening. By listening to your mentor and showing that you are listening, you will gain your mentor's trust, show that you respect what your mentor has to say, and—most importantly—learn about your mentor and deepen your relationship. Active listening, however, is more difficult than it sounds. Here are some tips for improving your active listening skills:

- **Face** the speaker. Even when sitting next to your mentor, change your position in your seat so that you are actually facing him/her.
- **Look at the speaker.** Even if you are facing the speaker, you may be distracted by activity in the place you are meeting or—more likely—by your phone or computer. Put the technology away if possible and focus your attention on your mentor.
- **Sit up straight.** By actively fixing your posture, you are less likely to lose your concentration because you will be engaging your muscles as well as your mind.
- **Acknowledge** what the mentor is saying by nodding, saying “yes,” or “uh-huh,” and so on so the mentor knows that you are engaged. This is even more critical when you have a virtual mentorship.
- **Paraphrase** what the mentor is saying. By repeating back to him/her what you have heard, you will ensure your own understanding and confirm to the mentor that you were listening.
- **Ask questions** about what the mentor is saying. This will help clarify the conversation for both of you and also demonstrate your interest.
- **Summarize** the conversation when it is over. This will help both of you understand the conclusion reached and make sure you are on the same page.

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Annex 4: Using the Leadership Development Plan during your Mentorship

The Leadership Development Plan (LDP) is a tool that you can use to plan and document your professional growth and development. It is also a document that you can both use to guide your mentorship. You must complete your LDP before the mentorship starts, but it is a living document that can evolve throughout the next phase of your career as your networks grow and you reach new professional milestones.

BELOW ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW THE LDP CAN BE USED THROUGHOUT YOUR MENTORSHIP:

USE THE LDP AS A STARTING POINT FOR YOUR DISCUSSIONS

The LDP guides you to examine your leadership style and values, articulate your vision, and plan your short and long-term professional goals. By discussing your LDP at the start of the mentorship, you will help your mentor better understand your style and desired career path, and can use the document to examine and discuss your mentor's own career path and how it has evolved. Below are some additional suggestions for discussion topics based on the LDP:

- **Leadership Strengths:** The LDP includes goal-setting exercises and a reflection on your personal strengths and assets. Work with your mentor to identify your key strengths and discuss how to use these strengths to become a more effective leader. The book *Strengths Based Leadership* by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie (Gallup Press, 2009) provides strengths assessment tools and a roadmap for using these strengths to become a better leader.
- **Servant Leadership:** Discuss "Servant Leadership" (see page 12 of the LDP) and what characteristics you think are most important in a servant leader. (For more information about Servant Leadership, see "What is Servant Leadership?" <https://greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/>)
- **Setting goals:** Talk about the short and long-term goals identified in the LDP and how they will help you create change as a leader. Ask your mentor to think back on his/her own experience and consider whether these goals and objectives realistic, measurable, and achievable? If not, how can you modify them?
- **Networking and developing contacts:** Discuss tips and techniques for how you can expand your network, and how to successfully develop and maintain strategic relationships to meet your goals.

USE THE LDP AS A GUIDE TO CHART YOUR MENTEE'S PROGRESS DURING THE MENTORSHIP

You and the other Mandela Washington Fellows will revisit the LDP in July of 2015. You can revisit the LDP with your mentor several times throughout the course of the mentorship, to check in on your goals, discuss if and how your vision and priorities have changed over time, and to evaluate how you have grown professionally over time.

GENERAL LINKS

- United States Office of Personnel Management—Best Practices in Mentoring:
<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/career-development/bestpractices-mentoring.pdf>
- AACEI Mentoring Orientation:
http://www.aacei.org/career/mentor/Mentoring_Presentation/player.html
- Mentoring.org
 - Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, 3rd Edition:
http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1222.pdf
 - How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program:
http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_413.pdf

LINKS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL/GENDER MENTORING

- Brigham and Women’s Hospital:
http://www.brighamandwomens.org/Medical_Professionals/career/CFDD/MentoringToolkit/Ch4_MentoringToolkit.pdf
- Karine Mangion, Regent’s College London:
<http://regentsthoughtleadership.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/article-leadership-thoughts-short-version-karine-mangion2.pdf>

LINKS FOR LEADERSHIP STYLES

- American Express’s “5 Reasons Introverts Make Better Leaders”:
<https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/5-reasons-introverts-make-better-leaders/>
- LinkedIn article on “Why Introverts are Better Leaders”:
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/article/20140901044830-169955770-why-introverts-are-better-leaders>
- Daniel Goleman on “What Makes a Leader”:
<http://hbr.org/2004/01/what-makes-a-leader/ar/1>
- Servant Leadership:
<http://www.butler.edu/volunteer/resources/principles-of-servant-leadership/>





LINKS FOR WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP

- National Democratic Institute’s tools for women leaders in politics:
<https://www.ndi.org/dcc-leadership201>
- UN Global Compact’s Women’s Empowerment Principles:
<http://weprinciples.org/Site/PrincipleOverview/>
- Coady International Institute’s case studies on women leaders:
<http://www.coady.stfx.ca/themes/women/publications/>
- UN Women publications:
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications>
- Sheryl Sandberg on women and leadership:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18uDutylDa4>

GENERAL LITERATURE

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Stone, Florence. *The Mentoring Advantage: Creating the Next Generation of Leaders.* Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2004

LITERATURE FOR CROSS-GENDER MENTORING

Herminia Ibarra, Nancy M. Carter, and Christine Silva. "Why Men Still Get More Promotions Than Women." *Harvard Business Review*, September 2010: 1-6.

Kram, Connie J. G. Gersick and Kathy E. "High-Achieving Women at Midlife." *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 2002: 104-127.

LITERATURE FOR CROSS-RACE/ETHNICITY/CULTURE MENTORING

Robin J. Ely, Debra E. Meyerson, and Martin N. Davidson. "Rethinking Political Correctness." *Harvard Business Review*, 2006: 78-87.

Stacy Blake-Beard, Audrey Murrell, and David Thomas. "Unfinished Business: The Impact of Race on Understanding Mentoring Relationships." *Harvard Business School*, 2006.

Annex 6: IREX Contact Information

Your main point of contact throughout the mentorship will be the relevant IREX Regional Manager. This should be the Regional Manager for the country that you are from. Please find the contact information for the Regional Managers below. If you have any questions, please email WFAumni@irex.org.

Ghana

Aissatou Diajhate, IREX West Africa Regional Manager; adijhate@irex.org

Kenya

Mitra Khaleghian, IREX East Africa Regional Manager; mkhaleghian@irex.org

South Africa

Marcia Small, IREX Southern Africa Regional Manager; msmall@irex.org