

02

SESSION 2. WHAT MAKES ME A GOOD MENTOR/MENTEE?

OBJECTIVE

Understanding and learning skills which make a good mentor and mentee.

ACTIVITIES

- **Open discussion.** What are the skills that every mentor/mentee should have.
- **Interactive lecture.** 10 things every good mentor/mentee should do.
- **Exercise on active listening skill.** In pairs, mentors and mentees should try role playing with one telling a story, and the other one responding to it using active listening methods.
- **Exercise on providing feedback skill.** In pairs, mentors/mentees should think of different situations and give feedback to one another, being mindful of how to give corrective and constructive feedback.

Active listening is the basic and one of the most important skills which mentor should develop. To listen actively means to **focus completely on the mentee with the aim of understanding him/her as well as possible**. The mentor can do this by letting the mentee know how he/she heard and understood the mentee's message and leaving space for further clarification. This way, the mentor sends a message that he/she is **trying to understand the mentee**, that he/she is interested in how the mentee is doing, and that he/she accept and respect the mentee as he/she is.

Active listening tips:

- Paraphrase to check if you understood the message
- Reflect on what you have heard
- Think about the body language
- Maintain eye contact
- Try using open-ended questions
- Do not interrupt the mentee during the conversation and do not "finish" his/her sentences
- Let there be silence, be comfortable in it

Exercise - Active listening:

Let the mentee tell you a story. Respond to what you have heard by using active listening skills.

- E.g.: "I feel so stressed lately. I work all the time and do not have any time for my hobbies, no me-time, just obligations. It is like I'm constantly running out of time."
- Response: "It sounds to me that you are feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work and are struggling to find time for yourself. Is that right?"



Feedback is an important tool for learning and developing. Positive feedback and appraisal of certain actions or behaviours can encourage the mentee and make him/her more confident in their development process. **Apart from the positive feedback, corrective feedback is also an important part of learning and growing.** Corrective feedback can be given when the mentee is taking a less than desirable path and/or there is a room for improvement. When giving the corrective feedback, the mentor should be mindful of how it can affect the mentee at that moment. **It should not be given from an authority standpoint, but more as a friendly observation** or advice. Also, the mentor should be open to receiving feedback and reflecting on it.

Tips on giving corrective feedback:

- Discuss if and how does the mentee like to receive the corrective feedback
- Give corrective feedback in private
- Feedback should be given on specific behaviours or actions
- Form the feedback in a positive tone of voice
- Offer suggestions of different ways of acting to the mentee to try next time when in a similar situation

Exercise - Providing feedback:

Imagine you just observed mentee's presentation at school. Provide constructive feedback to their presentation, making sure to highlight the positive aspects, address the areas of possible improvement, while being supportive and encouraging.

