

Association For Women In Science-Massachusetts Chapter¹

Mentoring Circles: Tips and Topics

General Advice and Tips

- Be realistic about your expectations of the mentoring group
- Be prepared with your topic of discussion
- Be open to how the relationship develops
- Respond to messages and keep commitments
- Have a learning attitude: listen and ask questions
- Be respectful of the other's feelings and decisions
- Honor confidentiality
- Be completely honest
- Know that you offer value to the relationship as well.
- Know that there is no perfect mentoring relationship. Take from it what is relevant to and comfortable for you.
- Periodically assess the relationship and reflect together on how you could each get more out of the experience. The relationship should be mutually beneficial.

What Should We Talk About?

- Short-term and long term goals: Career and Personal goal setting
- Defining what success means to you
- Time management skills
- Managing: up, sideways and down
- Skills assessment
- How to achieve independence
- Planning out your career (including career options, professional resources and continuing education)
- Networking Skills (especially in male-dominated fields –boy's club issues)
- Work-life balance: What you've noticed about people who have work - life balance
- Solving the Two Body Problem (making compromises)
- Negotiation Techniques
- Getting Promoted – How to Ask For It!
- Gracefully declining an offer/leaving a position
- Transitions and Decisions: Where to Next?
- Personal finance tips on taxes, insurance, mortgages, student loans etc.

What Should We Do Together?

- Meet at a coffee shop and get to know each other!
- Have dinner with other groups in the program
- Attend a networking event or talk together and then discuss
- Attend Biotech Tuesdays together
- Attend a fundraising event or do community service together
- Read a book and discuss

¹Compiled by Janet Buhlmann and Tooba Cheema –Aug, 2011