The Mentee’s Checklist

Preparation
Ask yourself – What are my goals? How can a mentor assist me in meeting these goals? What are my competency levels and skill sets?

You are encouraged to take the initiative. Introduce yourself by phone, brief letter or email.

Invite a meeting and suggest potential topics. Be ready to ask for advice and listen thoughtfully.

Look at some of your mentor’s publications.

Update your résumé/CV and send a copy to your mentor in advance of your first meeting.

Think about your Developmental Network (colleagues, juniors, mentees, family and friends) including your Community of Mentors (scholarly/research mentors, career advisors, co-mentors, peer mentors, e-mentors) who you turn to regularly for career advice and support, both inside and outside your lab/ division/department/school. An exercise to help you map and analyze your developmental network is included in the Appendix.

First meeting
Discuss your short- and long-term professional goals and proposed project and work together to develop steps toward these goals, with a timeline.

Consider the skill sets that require additional mentors: What skills do I need to learn or improve?

Who can help me navigate the organizational culture? What do I want to change about my work style? What professional networks and online communities are important? List the people in your Community of Mentors who can provide career advice, coaching, or psychosocial support and review gaps. What online groups and resources can facilitate your research?

Decide together on the frequency of meetings which can vary based on needs of individuals, but occurs as often as several times a week to once every month or two. Interactions may range from brief email to a phone “check-in” to lengthy follow up. Either member can initiate a meeting; do not wait for your mentor.