



Guide for  
Lampe Foundation Award Winners

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# Guide for Lampe Foundation Award Winners

## Introduction

Congratulations on your award. The Lampe Foundation offers you the opportunity to be matched with a mentor, a person who can help you and guide you in the attainment of your career goals. The purpose of this guide is to provide you with some information that will enable you to have as successful and productive a relationship as possible with your mentor. We define mentoring as a partnership. Each partner has a role, and both need jointly to invest in the relationship in order to gain the most from it.

This guide details the benefits of having a mentor and ways to launch and maintain a successful mentoring relationship. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the information in this guide, and if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact a member of the mentoring committee. If you feel that the present time is not convenient for such a relationship but would like one in the future contact us when the time is right and we will attempt to match you with a mentor.

## The purpose and benefits of having a mentor

Mentoring gives you the opportunity to learn from someone with experience in your field of interest. A mentor can be a guiding hand and someone to ask questions of and share your ideas with as you start a new project or career. For mentors the relationship gives them the meaningful opportunity to share their experience and knowledge gained over many years. It is a fulfilling way to help someone who is just starting out – to give back, as a bright new person embarks on the path the mentor might know a little bit about.

By being matched with a mentor you have taken another important step into the world of networking, an essential aspect of the search for a job for anyone who strives to accomplish his or her professional goals.

Other benefits that come from having a mentor include:

- Tips on developing a professional image
- The opportunity to clarify your career goals
- Knowledge concerning business ethics and etiquette
- Networking contacts
- Enhancement of your employability
- Exposure to the workplace

### Why do you need to network?

You may be unaware of the fact that approximately 80-85% of all jobs are not publicly advertised. Just as an example, put yourself in the shoes of a manager or executive trying to fill a position. Where do you go to find someone great? Before advertising the position, most people would turn to those they know to see if they can recommend someone suitable for the position. Your contacts may also help you find out information about your future industry and the opportunities that you will not find on any website or in any magazine or book. It pays to talk to people. Your network is a group of people who pass on information to you and others on the basis of some form of interpersonal relationship with you. Your task as a networking newbie is to turn strangers into friends. You never know who could be a possible connection to someone in your field. Your neighbour, dentist, postman, a clerk in a store: everyone is a possible link to the hidden job market.

As your mentor is an information resource rather than a job placement resource, he or she will definitely be able to talk to you about his or her industry and point you in the right direction. We hope that he or she will be your first step in expanding your network.

Continue by evaluating your current pool of contacts and always think about expanding them. Begin with your mentor and continue with people you meet at career fairs and career-related events, through social networking sites, through work, volunteering and internship opportunities, and academic activities.

## Now that you've been matched, what next?

- 1. Make sure that your cv is up-to-date and you have thought about what your skills, interests, and goals are.**
- 2. Do some research on your mentor: his or her job, company, and industry.**

This will help you to determine what types of questions you would like to ask when you meet. Your mentor will appreciate the fact that you have taken initiative, an important skill for both networking and job hunting. In some cases your mentor has sent a copy of his or her cv or bio; please ask a member of the mentoring committee if this information is available.
- 3. Prepare questions for your mentor by referring to the ideas in this Guide.**

The suggested questions are tools to help you communicate with your mentor and are organized into different themes. They can help you to structure your e-mails, face-to-face conversations and phone calls. If you eventually run out of questions to ask, you can e-mail a member of the mentoring committee for further assistance.
- 4. Make your first contact.**

Once you have been matched your mentor will be notified that you will be getting in contact with him or her within the next two weeks. When you receive the mentor's contact information, you will also receive his or her preferred means and place of contact. Please respect the mentor's wishes and contact him or her either at home or at work, either by e-mail or telephone as identified. If you contact your mentor by e-mail, cc a member of the mentoring committee to let her know that you have made contact. You should include either a brief bio or a copy of your cv for the purpose of introducing yourself and providing some additional information about your background. You could also let the mentor know your career goals (if you have them).
- 5. Have your first meeting.**

If your mentor is not available to meet face-to face, you can also set-up a meeting via internet or phone. If you are meeting your mentor face-to-face, you can then establish a location that you would be most comfortable meeting in, for instance at a coffee shop or on your campus. The important thing is to be in a public place and to make sure that you are comfortable. If you do not feel comfortable, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the mentoring committee.
- 6. Number and frequency of meetings.**

Each relationship will have its own rhythm. Participants should discuss and establish their own frequency of meeting or communicating. We suggest that contact should occur at least three times with the interval between no longer than six weeks.
- 7. Set up future meetings.**

You can use the list of suggested questions in order to help you determine what the theme of your meetings will be. You can also use your meetings, phone calls and/or e-mails to discuss the steps that you have been taking based on the advice that your mentor has given you. You can use your meetings as follow-ups in order to make sure that you are on track, or you can exchange information with your mentor in order to provide him or her with upcoming research concerning his or her industry, inform him or her of events coming up, or both.
- 8. Send a thank-you note.**

The relationship between you and your mentor will depend on your situation. You are welcome to take full advantage of this great opportunity. Usually the two of you will know when the usefulness of the mentoring relationship has reached its end. At that point, let a member of the mentoring committee know and, of course, thank your mentor for his or her time and advice. Remember to collect your

mentor's contact information so that you can send him or her a courteous note of thanks.

**9. Follow up with the mentoring committee.**

The mentoring committee will be in contact with you, but please don't hesitate to contact a member of the committee if you have any questions or concerns or just to communicate that everything is going well. We are here to support you through these steps.

**Frequently asked questions**

**1. *What should I do if I am unable to reach my mentor within the first two weeks?***

The same day that you pick up your mentor's contact information, the mentor will be sent an e-mail with your name and information about the match. Therefore he or she expects you to contact him or her shortly. If you have tried and are unable to reach the mentor within two weeks, please make sure to let a member of the mentoring committee know.

**2. *If things don't work out with my first mentor, may I ask for another mentor?***

We will look at each case individually and try our best to match you once again.

**3. *Who should pay for coffee, lunch, or dinner when I go out with my mentor?***

It depends on the sort of relationship that you and your mentor have developed. We encourage you to split the tab.

**4. *May I ask my mentor for a summer job or a full-time job?***

No, the goal of the mentor program is not to provide you with summer or full-time employment. The mentor program is an information resource. The mentor is there to advise and help you with your career choices.

**5. *May I give my friends the mentor's contact information because I know it could be helpful for him or her also?***

Unfortunately you may not.

**6. *What if there isn't a mentor in the field that I have requested?***

We will make every effort to recruit one specific to your needs. If that is not possible, we will match you with someone of closest relevance to your choice.

**7. *After I graduate, may I be a mentor?***

Yes! We welcome volunteers.

**8. *May I be matched with two mentors at one time?***

No. We match each student with only one mentor. If in the future you would like to ask for a change, you may contact a member of the mentoring committee to find out if it would be possible.

**9. *I have made contact with my mentor once. Subsequently however I have been unable to reach him or her. What should I do?***

In cases where you have difficulty contacting your mentor, promptly notify a member of the mentoring committee, and we will make every effort to reach the mentor on your behalf or to match you with another mentor.

#### ***10. What should I do if my mentor acts in a way that I consider to be unprofessional?***

Contact a member of the mentoring committee immediately.

#### **Suggested questions to ask your mentor**

The keys to a successful mentoring relationship are your enthusiasm, preparation, and ability to communicate clearly. Before you meet your mentor, think about the type of information that would be helpful for you. The following questions are meant to help you get started.

##### **Questions about your mentor's career path and training:**

- What kind of education or training do you have?
- What was your educational experience like?
- How did your education prepare you for your career? Are your studies at all related to your career?
- How did you manage the transition from education to work?
- How did you get your first job after graduation?
- What has your career path been like to date? Is it representative of most people in your position?
- How important is a graduate degree, designation, or additional certificate in your field?
- Are you a member of any professional orders or associations? Which ones do you feel are the most important to belong to?
- What are the future prospects like in your field? What trends do you see developing over the next few years?
- If you could change any aspects of your career, what would you change?

##### **Questions about the mentor's current position and responsibilities:**

- How did you obtain your current position?
- What are your primary job responsibilities?
- What does a typical day or week in your job look like?
- What do you enjoy the most about your job? The least?
- What are the most challenging aspects of your job?
- What kind of professional development opportunities are available?
- Are there many opportunities for advancement in your position and organization?
- Who are the people who usually excel in your field or position? What personal qualities do you need to succeed?

##### **Questions about working conditions:**

- How many hours do you work in an average week?
- How much autonomy do you have in terms of what you focus on at work?
- What kind of supervision did you have when you were starting out?
- What kind do you have currently?
- How is your performance evaluated?
- What is the average starting salary in your field?
- How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, hours, vacation, or location?

##### **Questions relating to your current situation and future goals:**

- What advice would you like to have heard when you were starting out?

- How would you recommend I try out your line of work while I am still a student?
- Does your organization offer volunteer or internship opportunities for students who are looking for related experience?
- Do you have any recommendations with regard to useful courses to take or extracurricular activities to be involved with?
- Are there any other fields or jobs you would suggest I research or explore?
- How do people find out about job openings in your field? Are they advertised? If so, where?
- When should I start applying for positions and forwarding my resume?
- How is a typical job interview in your industry conducted?
- Is there anyone else in your field you would recommend I talk to?
- When I call him or her, may I mention that you referred me?

### **Members of Lampe Foundation Mentoring Committee.**

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