How to be a great Mentor
The purpose of mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person” (Parsloe 2000)
Think about the best Mentor you’ve ever had?

- someone who's been a particularly excellent advisor at some point in your life.
- what made them stand out to you? Was it the example they set? ... you felt like they really understood you.....your working style
- they seemed to always point you to the right resources or give you the right advice when you needed it
- so what exactly does it mean to be someone's mentor, and how can you really stand out as a great Mentor?
At its core ....

- Being a Mentor is being a trusted advisor who makes themselves available to support and advise someone when they need it and always keeping that person's best interests in mind.

- A Mentor/Mentee relationship can last for years, or it can last one meeting.
What do Mentors do?

• Motivate Mentees to achieve goals and objectives
• Support Mentees in their own learning
• Act as a sounding board for Mentees, challenging assumptions, ideas and behaviours
• Provide a safe space for Mentees which is objective and non-judgmental.
• Provide guidance and advise for when Mentees become stuck or makes a mistake
• Inspire Mentees and just be there for them

THATS WHAT MENTORS DO
THE FOLLOWING TIPS SHOW YOU HOW YOU CAN BECOME A GREAT MENTOR …….
Mentoring Spectrum

- I know
- I want you to know how to find out
- I want you to know how to find out

Directive

- Telling what to do
- Solving someone’s problems
- Giving advice
- Offering guidance
- Asking questions
- Helping another solve their own problems

Non Directive

- Do it this way
- Try doing it another way
- What are the various ways you could do it?
Approach each mentorship differently.

- Every Mentor/Mentee relationship is unique. When you first start out, it's important to take the time to assess your own style and readiness, and think about what kind of commitment you can and want to make.

Set expectations together at the very beginning.

- Both you and your mentee will find it helpful to go over expectations -- especially if you're just getting to know each other.
- Understanding exactly where they're coming from is going to help drive your discussion in the direction that's helpful for both of you.

Agree how and when to meet and what to discuss

- Who and when? Who will arrange the meeting, at what date and times, how often will you meet and what would they like to discuss? Allow the Mentee to drive the relationship.
But how can you be a great Mentor.........

Take a genuine interest in your mentee as a person

• A Mentor/Mentee relationship is a very personal one. You can give generic advice without really knowing a person, or stand out as a great mentor, and get to know your mentee on a personal level.

• Getting to know your mentee on a deeper level will help build a strong relationship, and it'll also help you understand who they are as a person, their likes and dislikes, learning styles and how they interact with others.

• If your mentee tells you they had a great weekend, don't just move on ask them what they did.

• **Become an active listener** - make a conscious effort to really listen to what your mentee is saying, asking open questions to dig deeper, and act as a sounding board.
But how can you be a great Mentor....... 

Improve your emotional intelligence.

- Being emotionally intelligent is key to being a great mentor
  - The best mentors get to know their Mentee and know how to unlock their unique personality, their wants and needs, the experiences that have shaped them, and how they deal with different situations. By asking the right questions, reading the mentee's body language, being open-minded, and even acknowledging and controlling their own emotions. (look up our online resources on Emotional Intelligence)
Know when to wait before giving advice.

- When mentoring you may feel the need to give advice straight away. A great Mentor knows how to determine whether or not a situation lends itself to off-the-cuff feedback or give really thoughtful feedback.
- A good mentor knows when to hit 'pause' if you don’t know the answer or feel its not appropriate to discuss.

"Thanks for sharing this with me. I'm going to take some time and give this some serious thought before we continue. It's important to me that I'm giving you the best possible advise. Why don't we continue talking about it the next time we meet? I'll book some time."
But how can you be a great Mentor........

Don’t assume anything about your mentee -- ask

• It's easy to fall into stereotypes or not see a situation from another person's perspective. Great Mentors recognize that it's their responsibility to break through common assumptions by asking questions and digging deeper. This is especially true if you're mentoring someone who's in the early stages of their career, or if the two of you are just getting to know each other and they aren't sure how transparent to be.

Be really forthcoming about mistakes you've made.

• Being open to sharing your own mistakes and failures is one of the best gifts a mentor can give. Not only is it helpful information for problem-solving purposes, but it also helps build trust, gives them permission to share their own mistakes, and strengthens the relationship overall.
But how can you be a great Mentor........

Celebrate their achievements.

• Take the time to highlight and even celebrate your Mentee's successes and achievements, -- you're also building your Mentee's confidence, reinforcing good behaviour, and keeping them focused and motivated.

Give more than you ask for

• The best mentors offer their time and wisdom -- Think about the impact that Mentors have had on your own your career, and offer the same to your mentees. It can be hard to ask for help if you feel like you're a burden on someone else. Giving advice or help freely -- and making it clear you're happy to do so -- is a huge help to easing those anxieties.

Lead by example.

• Your Mentee can learn a whole lot from you by simply observing how you behave. They'll pick up information about your "ethics, values, and standards and style,
But how can you be a great Mentor........

At the end of the day, being a great Mentor takes practice and patience.

The more you work with a given Mentee, the more you'll learn a lot about them: their communication style, how they process feedback, how they go about pursuing their goals.

At the same time, you'll learn a lot about yourself, how effectively you can explain ideas in a way others can understand, how well you're able to control your emotions, whether you're able to provide a vision that motivates others.