

Career Directions

Tips for Finding a Mentor

Finding a Mentor—Can You Help Me?

Mentors can come from within or outside your profession. Most often, mentors are experienced professionals who are able to share their knowledge and foster leadership skills in less experienced colleagues. Informally you can make a request of anyone who you think could help you to achieve your career goals. You could approach a person who has taught or supervised you, you may choose a mentor who is not from a similar profession as you, but it should be someone with whom you can develop a relationship. Make sure the mentor's leadership style is a good fit with your own and that your potential mentor has the time and willingness to devote to you, along with the skills to advise, teach and counsel that fit with your learning style. Don't be hesitant. This is an opportunity for you and for the mentor. Over time, the relationship may grow into one that is more collegial. If you find you need someone with other skills or a different learning style, seek out another mentor. We can have many mentors over the span of a career.

Another approach to selecting a mentor is through a formal program where there is usually a pre-selected pool of candidates to choose from who have registered for the program. There is a systematic method for matching mentors and mentees. For example if research is an underdeveloped aspect of your role you may seek a researcher from the mentor pool because of their unique area of practice and research interest.

However at all times, either informally or through a formal mentorship program, both the mentor and mentee will make the final decision about the fit of their mutual goals, learning needs and learning styles.

If you would like to be a part of the Formal RPNAO Mentorship Program, where you will be able to find or be a mentor and learn about how to have a successful mentoring relationship go to:

- www.rpnao.org/mentorship/home