

# HOW TO BE A GREAT MENTOR

## MENTORSHIP RESOURCE CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

As a Student Life Professional you already exhibit the keys to being a great mentor every day in your role(s). This list is not meant to be comprehensive but to get you thinking about the interaction you will have with your mentee and how you would like to enhance your relationship.

- 1.** In most circumstances your mentee will be looking for guidance through their career. How will you help fill knowledge gaps and what opportunities will you suggest to help mentee grow and excel?
- 2.** Whether your mentee articulates it or not as a goal, an effective mentor helps the mentee navigate the politics of their organization or profession. In what ways can you help your mentee navigate U of T and the higher education landscape?
- 3.** Relationships take time and effort. An effective mentor takes the time to really get to know the mentee and as a result the mentee can learn more about themselves in the process. A mentor's responsiveness to a mentee's needs, goals, feelings, communication style, etc. can add to the strength of the relationship. What do you need to know about your mentee to form a strong relationship? What does the mentee need to know about him/herself?
- 4.** Sanford's challenge and support theory (1962) is appropriate for growth and development of all ages. While pushing your mentee to take risks what supports can you offer? How can you ask the best questions that make the mentee do the thinking?
- 5.** Working in a large organization it can be easy to fall into a pseudo supervisor role for your mentee. Resist the pull. First and foremost help your mentee focus on their overall career direction rather than on day-to-day concerns. Secondly give guidance and constructive feedback in a non-evaluative way. How will you give feedback to your mentee as a mentor and not as a supervisor? What boundaries/guidelines are important to you in this relationship?