

What is Career Mentoring?

Career Mentoring is a Career Exploration activity in which the student is matched one on one or in small groups with an adult professional to explore potential careers and related educational issues. The career mentor serves as a resource for the student by sharing insights and providing guidance about the workplace, careers and education through formal and informal meetings organized at the school, in the workplace or online.

How is it structured?

Each P-TECH 9-14 school has designed a mentoring program customized to accommodate the interests and availability of its employer partners. Mentors may be matched with students one-on-one, or work with small groups of students. While there are some differences across the P-TECH schools, all career mentoring programs share some common features. Each begins with a defined matching process, both formal and informal activities are conducted at the school, in the workplace or online (never alone), a set schedule is provided, and mentors and students are supported by the P-TECH team.

What's my commitment?

- Meet or communicate regularly with your mentee. Some activities will be organized by your P-TECH mentor coordinator and some contact will be generated by your mentee or yourself via email or telephone.
- Follow all school and company rules regarding Career Mentoring (your P-TECH mentor coordinator can help you with this).
- Career mentors are asked to make a commitment to stay engaged for a minimum of one year and hopefully will continue through to the mentee's graduation.

How can I make it a good experience for my mentee?

- Make it real. It's all about the relationship you are able to develop with your mentee.
- Hear what your mentee is really saying. Pay attention and show that you are listening.
- Help your mentee focus on learning about and practicing professional skills.
- Review the information on what your mentee is working on at school, and ask questions about what he/she is learning. Provide feedback on the work.
- Actively participate in activities and group projects arranged by the school.
- Be consistent.

Why is this important for the student I'll be mentoring?

- Research shows that career mentors help students stay in school, stay focused and pursue their goals.
- A career mentor lets a young person know that someone cares, that they matter and can have a bright future.
- A career mentor can help a young person see the connection between what they learn in the classroom and the real world.
- A career mentor can help their mentee better communicate with and relate to adults.

What will I get out of it?

- Serving as a career mentor can be a personally satisfying experience.
- Your company may offer incentives for volunteering to be a career mentor.
- You will learn how to interact with the next generation, some of whom you may be working with and/or supervising soon.
- You will meet other mentors and leaders in your community who will enhance your personal and professional network.
- Its Fun!

What if I have a question, a concern or need some help?

Your P-TECH mentor coordinator is there to help you with any question or concern, no matter how great or small. If you have any concerns about your mentee, bring them to the coordinator's attention immediately.

What if I can no longer be involved?

- Provide as much notice as possible to the mentor coordinator and student.
- Try and recruit someone else to step into the Career Mentoring role.
- Make sure your mentee knows why you need to stop (a new position, new responsibilities, relocation, or some other reason) and assure your mentee that the reason you need to stop has nothing to do with him/her.

Go Deeper

- Consider having your mentee shadow you at work for a day.
- Arrange an Internship at your company for your mentee. Check in regularly around progress.