

The mentors and mentees who attended the program's introductory event at the Bundoora campus brainstormed the following ideas.

What career mentoring is:

- Sharing life experiences, skills and knowledge
- Exploring career paths – broadening horizons
- Building relationships
- Personal and professional development for both
- Providing options and guiding towards a successful career path
- Sharing job interview tips
- Learning from mentor's experience & knowledge of world of work
- The development of an understanding of different worlds
- Transition into the workforce – understanding workplace culture
- Networking
- An opportunity for the mentee to learn what's available and explore what they're interested in and suited to
- Learning what employers want
- Learning from and sharing with each other
- Encouragement
- A two-way relationship that has benefits for both parties
- Learning what to expect after uni
- How to handle new situations
- How to apply knowledge from uni in the workplace
- An opportunity to think laterally
- Learning how to go about getting a job
- Coaching; career counselling
- Assisting in mentee's decision-making about their future and career planning
- Addressing / clarifying mentee's goals
- Helping mentee identify and address their weaknesses
- Potential for long-term connection
- Providing guidance
- An insight into someone's field
- An opportunity to improve skills
- A relationship with someone who takes an interest in your career
- An opportunity to develop in a supportive environment
- Sharing of broader perspectives than just the course the mentee is taking
- Mutually beneficial
- Providing constructive feedback
- A learning process

What career mentoring is not:

- Tutoring
- Asking for a job; a recruitment process
- Mentoring about personal issues

- Mentor making decisions for mentee
- Mentor doing all the work
- To gain permanent residency
- Telling the mentee what they should do
- Having a defined pathway
- Completing assignments
- Taking advantage of mentor/mentee
- A social relationship
- Work experience
- Giving the mentee a job

What makes a mentoring relationship work:

- Regular communication and contact
- A method of communication that suits the people involved
- Good listening skills (active listening)
- Realistic expectations
- Openness, acceptance and understanding
- Cooperation
- Effort
- Gratitude
- Reliability
- Both mentor and mentee ask questions
- Mutual respect and trust
- Commitment by both parties
- Good time management
- Flexibility
- Finding common interests and values
- Willingness to keep going; persistence
- Tolerance and patience
- Enthusiasm
- Willingness to take part and be actively involved
- Understanding what mentoring is about and the roles we play
- Realistic, clear expectations and boundaries that are shared
- Good rapport
- Generosity
- Empathy
- Confidentiality
- Humour, fun
- Research
- Compromise
- People skills
- Mentee feeling free to ask questions
- Mentor takes the time to find out about the current job market, CV requirements for their specific area
- Structured program
- Understanding

- Kindness; compassion
- Genuine interest
- Having things to talk about
- Shared values about what is important
- Sensitivity
- Making the other person feel comfortable
- Both parties making an effort to make the time to meet
- Realising it's a process; building on the relationship to make it work
- Agreeing to disagree
- Being open-minded
- Being honest but constructive
- Willingness to act on advice
- Positive attitude
- Checking that the message has been understood
- Mentor models appropriate behaviour
- Being approachable
- Tolerance of differences

The possible challenges for career mentoring:

- Understanding each other's culture
- Finding the time to meet (and being on time)
- Different learning styles (can lead to difficulties in communication)
- Knowing how much information to give
- Establishing rapport
- Hesitation by mentee to ask questions or seek help
- Making the first move
- Finding "space" where you can meet
- Financial constraints; transport to meeting place
- Mentee is not ready to listen
- Lack of consideration of time constraints
- Mentor disappointed that mentee doesn't follow their advice
- Differing expectations
- Personality differences; mentor and mentee don't "click"
- Cross-cultural misunderstanding
- Disagreement, conflict
- Mentee feels intimidated
- Too many demands placed on partner
- The relationship becomes too personal
- Mentor and mentee speak a different "language"
- Taking each other for granted
- Domination by the mentor