



## Activity: Fostering a Healthy Work Environment

It is important to build a healthy work environment early in the mentoring relationship. Defining roles/responsibilities and providing a context for the work involved will be important as problems inevitably arise.

**Purpose:** This exercise will aid the mentoring pair in defining the characteristics and expectations of a healthy work environment. The pair can then use these definitions to inform their partnership.

**Time:** 25-35 minutes (10-15 minutes for individual reflection, 15-20 minutes for sharing)

**Materials:** Writing Utensil and Journal (optional)

**Who:** Answer the questions individually and then discuss them together in order to establish shared expectations about your work environment.

### What:

1. Answer the following questions separately:
  - Think about your most positive work or educational relationships. Write down three to five positive aspects of those experiences and be ready to discuss them with each other.
  - How can we work together to develop mutual respect so that we can trust one another? What will mutual respect “look” like?
  - What is the most important thing about you? How will that inform the mentoring relationship?
  - What are the key readings and experiences that each of you should complete in order to help frame the work over the project’s time period?
  - What is the mentor’s role in the work? The mentee’s? Each person should describe their primary area of responsibility on the project.
  - How will each of you know when a deliverable is expected? How often will information about this deliverable be shared? How will you share your work? How far in advance of a meeting does work need to be shared for feedback in a meeting?



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- How is participation in the project demonstrated? If there are typical tasks that will be completed, how will that work be accomplished?
2. Come together to discuss and establish shared expectations about your work environment.

**Tips:**

- This activity should come early on in the mentoring relationship. We recommend visiting it during one of your first mentoring meetings.