

together

Mentoring Challenges

Mentoring can be rich with internal rewards – you can derive satisfaction from helping a colleague, develop new ideas for your growth and even experience joy when sharing memorable stories about your own career journey.

But mentors may also face challenges. Find out about some below.

1 What if my mentee and I don't have a strong personal rapport?

It is okay if you and your mentee do not develop a strong personal rapport. A successful mentoring relationship is still quite possible. It can take a few sessions before you and/or your mentee feel comfortable and for trust to build. Think about your mentee's personality and cultural background and how they may see the mentoring relationship. You can also watch [this short video](#) on overcoming common challenges for mentors.

2 My mentee has a conflict with a supervisor or a colleague and needs more guidance than I can offer.

If you feel your mentee needs additional guidance in this area, you could suggest that they talk to a colleague from the [Office of the UN Ombudsman and Mediation Service](#). Their consultation service is available in multiple languages to all Secretariat staff, regardless of location. If your mentee works in an UN entity outside of the UN Secretariat, encourage her/him to inquire about similar services in their entity.



3 My mentee may need mental health services.

If you sense that your mentee is struggling with depression, anxiety, substance abuse or another type of mental health issue, encourage them to seek help through staff counseling services. Click [here](#) for information on how to access a staff counselor across UN system entities. Click [here](#) for information on accessing external doctors or therapists with UN health insurance.

4 Our conversations have grown quiet. What should I do?

If conversations with your mentee have too many lulls in them, you could try:

- Suggesting that your mentee complete the Mentoring Agreement available in the Together Platform. This is a planning document for how the mentee will use the sessions with you.
- Ask questions. Some ideas include:
 - What projects are you working on?
 - How did you get to your current position?
 - What do you like or dislike about your current position?
 - How are remote work arrangements affecting your daily work?



For more information, contact mentoring@un.org