




Mentoring & Communication Strategies

You can use the Communication Strategies covered in the online training to support your mentoring journey by starting off strong in your first meeting to ending on a positive note in your last. This is a quick reference guide, and all of this is covered in greater detail in the SUCCESS Training Manual.



FIRST MEETING

In this meeting, your general goals should be to:

- Make a connection with your Mentee.
- Explore their goals and needs.
- Provide educational handouts as needed.
- Find a time they can attend a monthly group meeting with you.
- Schedule your next meeting and check in.

First Meeting Tips:

- **Do your Homework.** Review information about your Mentee before meeting. Know their concussion story, what they are studying, and their interests.
- **Be a Good Listener.** Keep the focus on your Mentee, and have a question or two prepared to keep the conversation going.
- **Be Prepared.** Be ready to provide resources, and know how to use all functions of the app. For example- know how to send handouts. Have your personal scheduling system easily available to set up the next meeting.



FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS

In these meetings, your general goals should be to:

- Regularly check in on your Mentee's goals for recovery.
- Provide Learning Resources to reach their goals. To start, you can follow a weekly schedule of talking about the following topics, and their corresponding handouts, with your Mentee:
 - Concussion: Brain Basics, Symptoms, and Recovery
 - Success in School Part 1: Adjustments, Accommodations, & Resources
 - Success in School Part 2: Study Skills and Learning Strategies
 - Return to Life: Activity, Sports, Social Life, Driving, Work – What now?
- Re-evaluate goals as needed and add in more resources as your Mentee mentions needs. Reach out to the SUCCESS team if your Mentee requires more support.



CLOSING OUT THE MENTOR AND MENTEE RELATIONSHIP

Here are some tips for ending well:

- It can be helpful to be clear about why you and your mentee are ending the relationship. If your mentee has achieved his or her goals – celebrate!
- If either of you has chosen to end the relationship for other reasons, please contact the SUCCESS team for assistance with this transition.
- Give mentees clear feedback about what went well, what growth you have seen, what strengths you see in them, and what you gained from the relationship.

Mentor Communication Tips

Here are some quick reminders about other helpful Communication Strategies.

Support Different Coping Styles

- **Emotion-based coping** is good for managing emotional reactions to a situation, especially when a problem cannot necessarily be "fixed." Examples are talking with someone who understands or using positive self-talk ("you can do this!").
- **Problem-based coping** focuses on the steps needed to actually resolve a problem. This might be securing accommodations, or talking to a medical provider who can help with ongoing issues after concussion.

Use Active Listening Tools

- Active listening is fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively hearing someone's message. The **OARS Model** provides four steps toward being an effective active listener:



- O**.....Open Ended Questions
- A**.....Affirmations (Giving Positive Feedback)
- R**..... Reflective Listening (Responding to what your Mentee is saying)
- S**.....Summarizing (Summarizing what you have discussed before moving on)

- Helpful non-verbal behaviors, like making eye contact and showing concern through your facial expressions, are also important parts of active listening.

Focus on I-Statements

- I-Statements focus on the person's needs, whereas You-Statements focus on the other person's behavior.

Try something like this:

"I found that I needed to pace myself and rest before I got completely wiped out."

Instead of this:

"You should really pace yourself."